

EXPERIENCE REPORT: RELEVANCE OF SIGN LANGUAGE OPTIONAL MATERIAL IN TERTIARY CARE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS FOLLOWING HIV AND HEPATITIS B

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Abstract: Introduction: Patients with HIV/AIDS may present with audiological alterations due to the action of the virus on the cochleovestibular system, the ototoxic effect of medication for the treatment of HIV and infection by opportunistic diseases. Thus, professional qualification in sign language and knowledge of technologies that help consultations are needed. **Objective:** To share the relevance of knowledge of Sign language and sign language applications in the care of health professionals. **Method:** This is an experience report, carried out by a medical student in the 10th period of EMESCAM, highlighting the need for Sign language and sign language technology after consulting a patient with hearing impairment undergoing treatment for hepatitis B and HIV, in a philanthropic hospital in the city of Vitória - ES. **Results:** The patient, who was hearing impaired and being followed up by the infectology, attended the consultation alone and presented a letter informing that his mother, a translator, had given up accompanying him. During the consultation, communication was hampered, since it was essential to understand the patient's medication adherence, inform about the evolution of the disease and the next necessary actions. Given the circumstance, a student who was studying Sign language, an optional subject in the medical curriculum at EMESCAM, with knowledge of the classes, instructed about the medication dosage, the exams and the place to schedule them. Doubts about specific terms were clarified by Hand Talk, an application that offers simultaneous translation of words from Portuguese to Brazilian Sign Language. Therefore, the team's experience in instructing itself to offer comprehensive care was obtained, taking into consideration, the particularities of the patient. **Conclusion:** It is understood the importance of training a bilingual professional, offering the subject sign language as regular content

in the professional grid in the health area, in order to make health promotion accessible to all Brazilians.

Keywords: Sign Languages. Communication. Medical care.

INTRODUCTION

HIV is a human retrovirus that comes in two genetically different forms, HIV-1 and HIV-2. It is capable of infecting various tissues, with the two main targets being the central nervous system and the immune system. It is known that sensorineural deafness can present in different degrees and affect up to 49% of people with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Other infectious agents associated with sensorineural deafness are hepatitis viruses (KUMAR, 2018).

Among the various possibilities of hearing impairment in patients with AIDS, it is believed that the multiplicity of factors such as the direct action of the virus on the cochleovestibular system, the ototoxic effect of medication for HIV treatment and infection by opportunistic diseases can alter the hearing ability of patients with HIV (PIGNATARI, Shirley; ANSELMO-LIMA, Wilma, 2017).

Audiometry is an examination performed in an acoustically isolated booth capable of assessing the patient's hearing capacity (PIGNATARI, Shirley; ANSELMO-LIMA, Wilma, 2017). In view of the damage to the central nervous system caused both by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and by opportunistic diseases, audiometry usually shows sensorineural deafness at high frequencies and cochleovestibular dysfunction increases proportionally to the duration and severity of the disease.

METHOD

This is an experience report, carried out by a medical student in the 8th period of EMESCAM, highlighting the need for

knowledge of sign language and technological resources related to sign language after assisting a consultation of a patient with hearing impairment in the treatment of hepatitis B and HIV, at the infectology outpatient clinic at a philanthropic hospital in the city of Vitória - ES.

RESULTS

In a philanthropic hospital in the city of Vitória, ES, the patient, hearing impaired being followed up by infectology due to HIV and hepatitis B, attended the appointment for follow-up with a specialist.

On that day, the patient presented himself and before the doctor started the first steps of the consultation, he delivered a letter prepared by the mother to the team that assisted him. The letter described that the mother, the only person who accompanied her son to medical appointments, was unable to continue helping her son due to the constant demand for a translator, joint pain that hindered locomotion, in addition to the long distance from home to the hospital. which would aggravate the pain. In the letter, the mother made explicit the knowledge that her son needed support to communicate, however she had given up accompanying him.

During the consultation, the major obstacle was communication, since it was essential to understand the patient's medication adherence, inform about the evolution of the disease and the next necessary actions. Given the circumstance, a student who was studying sign language, an optional subject in the EMESCAM medical curriculum, with basic knowledge of sign language learned in class, questioned the points of the anamnesis, evaluated medication adherence, instructed

about medication dosage, the tests that must be performed and the place in the hospital that must be scheduled.

Doubts about specific terms were clarified by Hand Talk, an application that offers free simultaneous translation of words from Portuguese to Brazilian Sign Language. This feature is available on Google Play and the App Store for download and translation depends on internet access. The practicality in handling and functionality of the application has won several awards, such as the Most Innovative Solution in the World, Gifted Citizen award in 2016 in Mexico; Best Social App in the World elected by the UN in 2013 in the United Arab Emirates.

As a result, the team gained experience in instructing itself to offer comprehensive care, taking into consideration, the particularities of the patient who was advised about the clinical condition, the necessary tests, as well as the places to purchase the drugs and the appropriate dosage.

At the end of the consultation, the patient thanked the team for the assistance and showed admiration for the communication and attention being given only to him, since he was used to people restricting dialogue to only his mother, the translator.

CONCLUSION

From this context, it is important to train a bilingual professional, offering the subject sign language as a regular content in the curriculum of professionals in the health area, in order to make the promotion and recovery of health accessible to all Brazilians, regardless of their ability to listening and speaking, communication must be efficient.

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