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## NEUROCOGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT, SYMPTOMATIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AND DEPRESSION ARE HIGHLY PREVALENT IN HIV INFECTED OUTPATIENTS WITHIN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION: FINDINGS OF THE ASIA PACIFIC NeuroAIDS CONSORTIUM (APNAC) STUDY

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**BACKGROUND:** The prevalence of HIV-related neurocognitive impairment (NCI) in the AP region is unknown. HIV dementia and symptomatic peripheral neuropathy (PN) are reportedly uncommon. APNAC undertook a cross-sectional study in 8 countries of the region to determine prevalence of NCI and PN. Study hypothesis: NCI and PN are prevalent but under-diagnosed. Results from sites in Thailand, Indonesia, China and Malaysia are presented.

**METHODS:** HIV positive outpatients were screened for NCI, PN and depression. The neurocognitive test battery comprised grooved pegboard, finger tapper, timed gait and category fluency. NCI definition: normal: all tests  $\geq 1SD$ ; equivocal:  $\leq 1SD$  on 1 test; mild-moderate:  $\leq 1SD$  on 2 tests, or  $\leq 2SD$  on 1 test, up to  $-4SD$  total; severe:  $\geq 4SD$ . Results were analysed using US and APNAC site control norms. The ACTG PN screening tool was used. Definite PN: symptoms + vibration at great toes  $< 10$  seconds + absent ankle reflexes; probable PN (pPN): symptoms + one of remaining 2 criteria. CES-D 20 was used for depression screening. Student *t*-tests and tests for comparison of proportions were used.

**RESULTS:** 504 outpatients were enrolled and 220 evaluated: median age 33 years; male 73%; median CD4 cell count 177/mL; prior AIDS 61%; 148/220 patients (67%) were receiving HAART with 37% receiving didanosine, stavudine, or both. Mild-moderate and severe NCI were found in 24% and 64% patients, respectively. PN and pPN were found in 6.3% and 52% patients, respectively. 32% of patients reached the CES-D cutoff. Patients with severe NCI were older and had lower nadir CD4 counts than those without NCI ( $p < 0.05$ ). Patients with pPN were significantly likelier to have used dideoxynucleosides than those without PN ( $p < 0.05$ ). <5% of patients received pain relief or antidepressants.

**CONCLUSIONS:** HIV-related NCI, symptomatic PN and depression are common under-diagnosed conditions in HIV-infected outpatients at sites in Thailand, Indonesia, China and Malaysia and require further study

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