



Report From the Indian Third National Workshop on Critical Care Neurology

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The Third National Workshop on Critical Care Neurology was held in Hyderabad, India from March 18–20, 2005. This event was organized by Dr. J. M. K. Murthy of The Institute of Neurological Sciences, CARE Hospital, Hyderabad, India. Dr. Murthy also organized the first two National Workshops in Hyderabad in 2002 and 2003. Dr. Michael Diring (Washington University, St. Louis, MO) was the international faculty member in the first workshop and Dr. William Coplin (Wayne State University, Detroit, MI) and Dr. John Pile-Spellman (Columbia University, New York, NY) were the international faculty members in the second workshop.

This 3-day conference brought together neurologists, neurosurgeons, and intensivists from throughout India and Sri Lanka for a comprehensive program covering a wide range of neurocritical care topics including advanced neuromonitoring of cerebral metabolism, new approaches to stroke revascularization, advances in treatment of intracerebral hemorrhage, management of central nervous system infections, and status epilepticus. On the first day, there were workshops on (1) intracranial pressure monitoring, (2) transcranial Doppler, (3) ventilator strategies in critically ill neurological patients, and (4) ABG and fluid abnormalities with special reference to neurocritical care. The program was organized in such a way to have more interaction and participation by the delegates. Many faculty from across India gave informative and interesting talks. International

faculty (see Fig. 1) included Drs. Venkatesh Aiyagari (University of Illinois, Chicago, IL), Claude Hemphill (University of California, San Francisco, CA), and Stephan Mayer (Columbia University, New York, NY). Dr. Mayer gave the Miss J. Mythili Oration on "Ultra-emergency treatment of intracerebral haemorrhage."

Neurocritical care is still in its infancy in India. There are very few dedicated neurological intensive care units in the country. In most of the hospitals, critically ill neurological patients are cared for in the general intensive care units. Patients with traumatic brain injury are managed mainly by neurosurgeons. Still, there are no dedicated neurointensivists in the country. Most of the neurologists and neurosurgeons involved in the neurocritical care of patients also look after patients with other neurological disorders. There are two national professional bodies for neurology, neurosurgery, and allied specialties in the country: the Neurological Society of India and the Indian Academy of Neurology. Both of these professional bodies conduct some sessions on neurocritical care issues during their annual conferences. For the last 3 years, the Indian Society of Critical Care Medicine has organized workshops, didactic lectures, and "meet the expert" sessions on neurocritical care issues during its annual conference. These workshops and sessions are attended mainly by intensivists.

However, neurocritical care in India is growing. Dr. Murthy, as the key figure in Indian neurocritical care, provided an exciting

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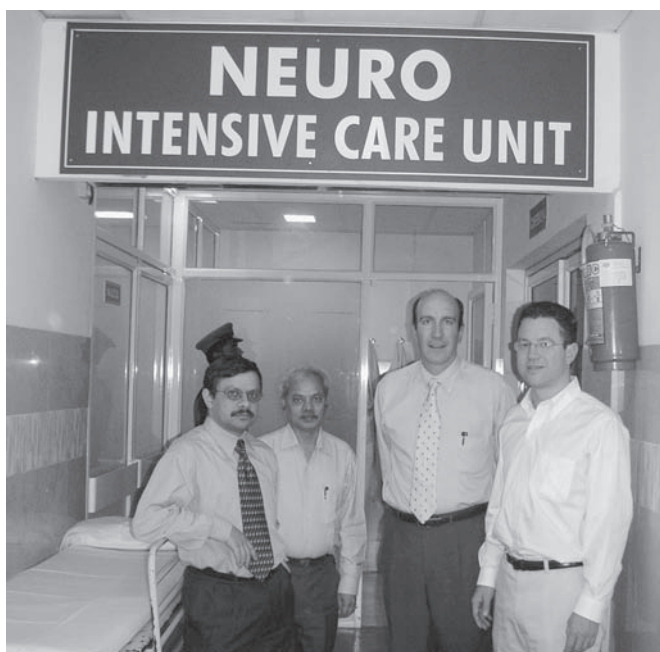


Fig. 1. Drs. Venkatesh Aiyagari, J. M. K. Murthy, Claude Hemphill, and Stephan Mayer (from left to right) at the neurological intensive care unit of CARE Hospital, Hyderabad, India.

forum for exchange of ideas at the Third National Workshop on Critical Care Neurology. The knowledge and experience of the local speakers and nearly 200 attendees was impressive and demonstrated that many institutions in India are delivering high-quality neurocritical care. Indian faculty and attendees openly discussed opportunities and challenges to the delivery of neurocritical care in India, where economic aspects can sometimes limit availability of advanced technology, but where (in my opinion) the dedication, knowledge, and experience of the Indian physicians at the meeting more than compensate. In fact, one of our highlights was a trip to local hospitals, including a tour of the new neurological intensive care unit at CARE Hospital in Hyderabad, where Dr. J. M. K. Murthy works.

The Neurocritical Care Society was pleased to endorse the Third National Workshop on Critical Care Neurology. As an international society, the Neurocritical Care Society seeks to foster development of neurocritical care worldwide and enhance clinical, educational, and research collaboration across countries. Dr. J. M. K. Murthy plans to conduct such workshops once every 2 years. We look forward to future Indian neurocritical care meetings and wish them great success.