The Cost of Suspected and Confirmed Bacterial Meningitis Cases in Jimma University Specialized Hospital in Southwest Ethiopia.

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The Global Health Network

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BACKGROUND: Infections of the central nervous system (CNS) such as meningitis or encephalitis can be caused by myriad microorganisms and may be life-threatening. In Ethiopia, it is an important cause of premature death and disability, being the 9th most common cause of years of life lost and loss of disability-adjusted life years. The objective of this study was to estimate the cost of suspected and confirmed bacterial meningitis among inpatient managed patients in JUSH, 2018.

METHOD: A facility-based cross-sectional study was conducted from July 28 to September 12, 2018. A semi-structured questionnaire was used in this study. Checklists were used to get types of laboratory tests performed and prescribed medications. This cost of illness study was conducted from the patient perspective. We employed a micro-costing bottom-up approach to estimate the direct cost of meningitis. The human capital approach was used for estimating wages lost.

RESULT: Among total patients admitted and treated in JUSH, higher proportions (69.8%) were suspected of bacterial meningitis but have been treated as confirmed bacterial meningitis. Total median total costs for both suspected and confirmed bacterial meningitis patients were estimated to be ETB 98812.32 (US $ 3593.2) (SD + 73). Total median direct cost was ETB 79248.02 (US $ 2881.75) (SD = 90.20)).

CONCLUSION: This finding indicates that the cost of meningitis is high, especially for resource-limited countries like Ethiopia. About half (45.3%) of the patients were responded that they were either admitted or given medication in JUSH or elsewhere before. Patients diagnosed and treated as suspected bacterial meningitis might be viral. To minimize the burden of meningitis and avoid unnecessary hospitalizations, the availability of diagnostic techniques is vitally important.