Transport of Patients with Complex Neurosurgical Disorders to the US for Collaborative Multidisciplinary Treatment

Poster 1617

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Disclosure

- None
Introduction

• Giant intracranial tumors, particularly those causing severe deformity are rare

• They develop slowly and are thus treated early unless patients lack access to medical care

• We describe 4 patients from Africa who were turned down for care at centers in Europe and USA and were flown to our center for treatment
Methods

• We reviewed complete medical records, neuro-imaging studies, and costs of care associated with 4 patients flown to our center for complex neurosurgical problems

• Multidisciplinary team included cranial neurosurgery, oculoplastic surgery, craniofacial reconstructive surgery
Results

- Pathologies included: osteogenic sarcoma, ossifying fibroma, meningioma, giant plexiform neurofibroma
- All underwent complete resection with simultaneous reconstruction
- Meningioma and neurofibroma patients achieved good result in one setting returning home
- Ossifying fibroma patient required 2 subsequent cosmetic reconstructions and sought asylum in US
- Osteogenic sarcoma patient returned home after 6 weeks but could not afford adjuvant therapy – he returned 3 years later with recurrence, treated by reresection, but ultimately died
Discussion

• Treatment costs for patients ranged from $125000 to $275000
• Physicians and hospitals waived professional fees
• Feedback was largely positive, but some individuals complained that care was being offered to non-citizens while US citizens struggle to afford care
• This feedback adversely affected hospital’s level of enthusiasm regarding this program given potential for negative media attention
Summary

• Select patients from outside the US with very complex problems may be best served by undergoing treatment at large multidisciplinary centers in US
• Such transport and care is feasible and may be cost-effective
• Large multidisciplinary care teams are needed to care properly for these patients
• Unexpected adverse media attention may represent a limiting factor in such cases

• Thank you!