Correspondence

were found to be cured when they reported after 5 months. Fifty three patients who did not report for follow-up were considered to be cured as they did not report to any of the 3 dermatologists in the city who were informed about this study.

Cost of the medicine is a very important factor for the patient, especially in a poor country like Yemen. Accordingly a cheap and safe method of treatment of CL, which was not in common use in the area of practice (Yemen), was tried out. During the practice of the author it was noticed that the intramuscular injection of ST or its local infiltration led to severe pain, especially when Dermojet was not used. To overcome this problem, a LA was added to the same syringe.

The relatively long interval between injections (2-3 days) gives the rural patients time to go home to their villages and return after two days. This is an important factor that helps in compliance, especially in a country like Yemen with difficult terrain and bad infrastructure.

Moreover, in Yemen like in the other third world countries, due to a poor health care system, people seek help from traditional healers who prescribe various medications like chemical and thermal cautery, plants and plant seed extractions. Though there is a healing of the disease, no one can judge whether this is a spontaneous healing or a healing from the traditional medicine. These methods are also worth studying and evaluating.

In conclusion local infiltration of cutaneous leishmaniasis sores with ST and local anesthetic is a successful, cheap, safe and simple method of treatment.

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High Cost Medical Care Management

Sir,

Umeh has provided a variety of fascinating information, which was neither taught during medical education nor considered during clinical practice. The information provided and the need to consider cost containment measures are applicable to the universe at large. Though stepdown units are an acceptable alternative, the same problem will arise again, once the stepdown units are filled with patients/cases.

To overcome the socio-cultural aspects of the community that interfere, while implementing the laudable ideas and alternatives suggested, could you please enlighten the role of a respectable, non-political and socially conscious person from the community as a member of the case management committee?

Through the community representative, the idea of case management may be explained in an acceptable manner to the patient’s family members, who resist discharge or transfer of the patient or their wards to rehabilitation or other centers. Moreover the representative of the community will encourage family members to undertake their role towards their fellow patients as well as the upcoming new cases. Community involvement is generally acknowledged to be essential to the development of health services.2

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Reply

Sir,

Dr. Thirumalaikolundusubramanian’s suggestion about including what he called a non-political and socially conscious person from the community as a member of case management committees is a very interesting idea. Anything or anybody that could reassure patients and family members about the merits of the critical pathway, is highly desirable. It will be wonderful if such individuals could be found. In situations where such persons are not available, as perhaps in big cities, a Social Worker who is familiar to the family, and preferably Saudi might fill such position. Again, as emphasized in the article, the most important thing in the whole process of case management is to make sure that patients and families fully understand the critical pathway before treatment commences.

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References

References