



Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.

Preface

Role of Psychologists in Pediatric Subspecialties



Roger W. Apple, PhD Ethel G. Clemente, MD
Editors

Psychologists are essential in pediatric subspecialties. The COVID-19 pandemic, current mental health crisis for children and adolescents, and an abundance of data highlighting the vast amount of mental health concerns in medical practice overwhelmingly support the need for psychologists in pediatric subspecialties. In addition, for the increasing numbers of medical providers and medical centers focusing on health equity and reducing health care disparities, providing psychological care to their patients is essential. This issue of the *Pediatric Clinics of North America* takes an in-depth look at the role of psychologists across 14 pediatric subspecialties.

Patients in pediatric subspecialty clinics often experience comorbid medical and psychological conditions often requiring the expertise of specialty-trained medical providers and specialty-trained psychological providers who understand the complexities of the mind/body connection. This complexity of clinical presentation necessitates having “in-house” specialty-trained psychologists who work collaboratively with the pediatric subspecialty providers. Referring out to another location for psychological services is quite problematic for several reasons: finding specialty-trained psychologists within local communities can be very difficult, and those that are working in the community often have full caseloads and waiting lists and often do not take all insurance plans. Referring out also significantly limits the collaboration between psychologist and physician that is often critical for patients in pediatric subspecialties.

Improved outcomes can also result from psychologists working in pediatric subspecialties. For example, psychologists can help adolescents with diabetes improve treatment adherence, which can result in improved A1c and help to avoid costly hospitalizations. Patients in pediatric subspecialties also often have complex psychosocial factors impacting their medical care that the medical providers often do not have the time nor the amount of expertise as psychologists to adequately address. Having

psychologists in pediatric subspecialty clinics will provide an opportunity to address these complex needs while allowing the physician to manage the medical concerns and keep up with the pace of the clinic.

This issue of *Pediatric Clinics of North America* focusing on the role of psychologists in multiple pediatric subspecialties will provide a wealth of information that will shine a spotlight on the fact that psychologists are essential in pediatric subspecialties. Fully integrating psychologists into pediatric subspecialties will provide not only improved medical care but also whole person care. This integration will work toward providing health equity, reduce health care disparities, and lessen the bias toward psychology by improving the understanding that psychology is an essential part of medical care.

Roger W. Apple, PhD
Western Michigan University
Homer Stryker MD School of Medicine
Department of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine
Division of Pediatric Psychology
1000 Oakland Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49008, USA

Ethel G. Clemente, MD
2028 Waterfall Court
Modesto, CA 95355, USA

E-mail addresses:

roger.apple@med.wmich.edu (R.W. Apple)
EClemente@valleychildrens.org (E.G. Clemente)