



Diversity, equity and inclusion in pediatric radiology: a minisymposium

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This minisymposium on diversity, equity and inclusion in *Pediatric Radiology* was inspired by the experiences and insights of a diverse group of authors, many of whom volunteered (and in some instances invited their colleagues) to contribute reviews and scholarly manuscripts.

The overarching premise of this minisymposium is that, to secure a bright future for pediatric radiology, we as a society need to create opportunities for all regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, country of origin, sexual orientation, physical abilities, military status, socioeconomic status, life expectancies and perspectives to attract talent and maintain an engaged and healthy workforce. The aforementioned attributes contribute to our collective creativity and strength as a profession. To develop content, we structured the minisymposium topics around themes that are core to the mission statement of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and central to the Society for Pediatric Radiology (SPR): advocacy, communication and visibility, education, mentoring and research. With this minisymposium we present a series of articles articulating what, why and how diversity, equity and inclusion are important and, in doing so, we move the needle forward toward recognizing existing barriers and building ways to overcome them.

The opening article, “What is Diversity?” by Dr. Servaes et al., provides terminology and descriptions of the positive impact of diversity and delineates the important obstacles and opportunities related to this topic. Next, Drs.

Hall and Brown’s elegant article “Diversity in Radiology: The Right Thing to Do, the Smart Thing to Do” highlights the fact that our best efforts to increase diversity in our specialty are being undermined by our biases and our traditional methods for identifying talents. Drs. Parikh and Leschied’s well-articulated article provides insights about the concept and daily reality of the term “microaggression.” The authors elegantly defined and categorized microaggressions using real-world examples, describing their repercussions and providing ways to appropriately respond on personal and institutional levels.

Dr. Ayyala and colleagues addressed the intersection of two major themes, diversity/equity/inclusion and wellness, in their article titled “Leveraging Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Promoting Wellness in the Radiology Workplace.” The article highlights how stronger practices in inclusivity play a role in creating an optimal workplace culture and fostering both institutional and individual wellness. It is vital for radiology departments to invest in creating work environments that foster high-functioning teams and promote the development of strong networks of mentors, sponsors and allies to optimize belonging, and eventually productivity, fulfillment and happiness.

The article “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: A Survey of Pediatric Radiology Fellowship Graduates from 1996 to 2020,” embraces the premise that knowledge about the sociodemographic diversity of trainees’ experiences is imperative for developing an inclusive pediatric radiology workforce and improving patient outcomes. The survey results described in the article support the notion that more efforts at increasing numbers of underrepresented minorities (URMs) are needed to promote a more diverse and inclusive workforce in pediatric radiology. Drs. Jaimes and Jaramillo described the importance of challenges related to the development of mentor–mentee relationships, particularly regarding URMs, in their article titled “Mentoring for Diversity and Inclusion in

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Pediatric Radiology: Nurturing the Next Generation of Physicians.” The article underscores the concept that mentorship plays a crucial role in these efforts by providing support and timely advice to junior URM faculty, directly contributing to their professional and personal growth, and cultivating the next generation of mentors.

The article by Drs. Victoria and Kline-Fath highlights the important issue of gender equality in relation to the sobering fact that while pediatric radiology as a subspecialty is equally populated by pediatric radiologists of both genders, the leadership has been and remains male-dominant. In the article titled “Re-defining Gender Diversity through an Equitable and Inclusive Lens,” Zavaletta et al. provided detailed definitions to terms related to gender diversity and gender identity and elaborated on the ways that diversity and inclusion policy can be developed to support gender-affirming environments.

In the early months of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic in the United States, it became apparent that underlying health care and socioeconomic disparities were being reflected in disproportionately higher rates of infection, morbidity and mortality for Black/African American, Hispanic and lower-income populations. In their original article “Advanced Imaging of Disease Unrelated to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) during the Pandemic: Effect of Patient Demographics in a Pediatric Emergency Department,” Jarret et al. probed the important issue that the disparity of imaging resources limits our ability to provide equitable care for all patients regardless of their backgrounds. Shah et al., in the article titled “Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Pediatric Magnetic Resonance Imaging: Missed Care Opportunities,” elegantly built on a study of pediatric imaging missed care opportunities (MCOs) by Dr. Efren Flores and his colleagues published in *Pediatric Radiology* in 2021 [1]. The article by Dr. Shah et al. corroborates that pediatric health care providers across specialties must continue to identify systemic barriers to health care access for diverse children and those from socially vulnerable areas.

In the article titled “Creating a Health Equity and Inclusion Office in an Academic Pediatric Medical Center: Priorities Addressed and Lessons Learned,” Ward et al. eloquently described lessons learned during the creation of an Office of Health Equity and Inclusion at a major children’s hospital. In doing so, they provide guidance to other academic health centers committed to paving the way for implementing institutional priorities that focus their equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives on the improvement of pediatric health equity.

The SPR is committed to identifying barriers to a diverse physician workforce in pediatric radiology and to prioritizing policy recommendations and programs to overcome these barriers. It is our hope that these articles addressing important but all too often polarizing and controversial topics enable our field of pediatric radiology to continue to grow through enriched collaborations, innovation and growth. The long-term vision of the SPR Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is to foster a pediatric radiology profession that celebrates diversity and actively promotes inclusion at all levels of training, practice, patient care and leadership.

Declarations

Conflicts of interest None

References

1. Flores EJ, Daye D, Peña MA et al (2021) Analysis of socioeconomic factors and imaging exam characteristics with missed appointments in pediatric radiology. *Pediatr Radiol* 2021:2083–2092

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