



Sociedad Latinoamericana de Radiología Pediátrica (SLARP): taking root for growth

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The Board of Directors of the Sociedad Latinoamericana de Radiología Pediátrica (SLARP) wishes to deeply thank the publisher, Springer, for its kind gesture in renaming our society for all official matters from its Anglo-Saxon name to the more appropriate and original name, “Sociedad Latinoamericana de Radiología Pediátrica” (SLARP) in *Pediatric Radiology*, our official journal. We also take this opportunity to take a brief glimpse of the past, present and future challenges of our society.

The past

In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Oct. 26, 1977, the Sociedad Latinoamericana de Radiología Pediátrica was created within the framework of the XIV International Congress of Radiology with the following aims:

- gather and organize pediatric radiologists of Latin America,
- promote pediatric radiology development and scientific progress,
- contribute to the growth of the specialty in addition to other areas of radiology and pediatrics,
- provide advice in the elaboration of pediatric radiology training programs at the request of pertinent organizations,
- promote and disseminate education and scientific research for member development and promote relationships with other pediatric radiology societies worldwide.

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Since then, SLARP has organized an annual congress in various South American cities. The society’s growth and development have been longitudinal and it is currently incorporating Central America and the Caribbean.

The present: the coronavirus crisis and the opportunities within

In its 44 years of existence, the SLARP has, together with the various countries of Latin America, experienced economic, political and cultural changes. Pediatric radiology and pediatric radiologists were not exempt from these changes.

Latin America is home to 646 million people (8.4% of the global population) [1], with an area of approximately 19.2 million km², almost 13% of the Earth’s land surface area [2]. However, inequality is extensive on the continent, affecting every country in the region and the relationships among them, infiltrating every aspect of life and resilient through time [3].

These inequalities have been exacerbated in the face of heterogeneous and regrettably inadequate responses to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America has snowballed from a public health to a humanitarian crisis, worsened by chronically corrupt systems and government inefficiencies [4]. The region was hit strongly and was the pandemic epicenter for several months in 2020 with some of the highest crude death rates and some of the worst national responses to the pandemic around the world [5].

However, this pandemic has also generated opportunities for new and improved strategies to address the global education of pediatric radiology, with international live webinars and videoconferences gaining momentum as viable tools [6]. Against all odds, we have also grown as a society with more members, now including members in almost every Latin American country. We have also had an active board

of directors who have taken the opportunity to engage in multiple educational activities and our first multinational/multicenter study, which included authors from 11 Latin American countries.

The future: challenges and opportunities

Today, we celebrate the recognition of our society's name in its original language with new challenges. However, our main goal remains to connect all of the radiologists who care for children in our region to the global pediatric radiology network and provide the necessary tools to improve their practices. To fulfill our clinical, research and educational goals, we are approaching this year with three concrete initiatives in mind. First, to further our commitment to the people we serve, we are initiating a formal clinical imaging teleconsulting program for a second opinion. Second, we are continuing to support and staff virtual continuous education activities to provide our colleagues with the necessary tools to improve their practices. Finally, we plan to start a program to support Latin American authors' scientific writing and English editing, closing the gap created by the language barrier.

In short, we are approaching these challenging times with renewed optimism and the determination to grow into a society that is more integrated with the global community,

increase our academic activities standards, and commence an all-out effort to have a stronger presence in the journal.

Declarations

Conflicts of interest None

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