



Founding President's Message

by Prof. Bernard F. Laya, MD, DO

It would be difficult to be an expert in the diagnosis and treatment of all diseases in various parts of the body from all age groups. This is exactly why subspecialties in other fields of medicine have evolved, to allow a physician to focus on a particular field of interest and develop an expertise.

A child's body mechanics and response to injury or stress are different from those of an adult. In general, various diseases, imaging techniques, and even the approach towards a pediatric patient are different from an adult. A Pediatric Radiologist is a physician that utilizes multiple imaging modalities (x-ray, fluoroscopy, ultrasound, CT, and MRI) to diagnose various illnesses in infants, children and young adults. This expert not only interprets results of imaging studies, but also ensures the appropriate study is performed correctly and safely. This way, the referring pediatrician and other pediatric subspecialists would have a point person in radiology, someone who would speak the same language as they do. This would help establish better rapport and communication between the Clinician and the Radiologist, a move that could only increase the diagnostic acumen and improve patient care.

The practice of Pediatric Radiology is already mainstream in the western world and progressive countries. In the Philippines, the practice and recognition of Pediatric Radiology as a Subspecialty is still in its infancy, but is slowly and surely taking off. With more than a third of Filipinos below 14 years of age, Pediatric Radiology is not only inevitable but also crucial. In the past, there were already a few excellent Pediatric Radiologists who have been helping in imaging diagnosis of a children's illness; however, it was not until 2005 when St. Luke's Medical Center opened its doors and started a Multimodality Pediatric Radiology Fellowship Training Program that the subspecialty started to gain higher ground. With more highly trained, practicing Pediatric Radiologists, the medical community becomes more aware of their significance. Finally, in June 25, 2017, the Philippine Society for Pediatric Radiology (PSPR) was born with an overarching goal to enhance the healthcare of children through education and innovation, standardization of practice, and promotion of quality and safety practices in Pediatric Medical Imaging.

PSPR has since been providing our colleagues and trainees with well-organized, high quality radiology education, promoting and disseminating basic and current concepts in the daily practice of Pediatric Radiology throughout the country. This was also made possible through PSPR's collaboration with the mother organization, the Philippine College of Radiology (PCR), as well as PCR local chapters including Northern, Central and Southern Luzon Chapters and PCR Southern Mindanao Chapter. As an effect, Pediatric Clinical Practitioners all over the country, now more than ever, are aware of the value that Pediatric Radiologists bring to the healthcare of Filipino Children.

PSPR also puts high value on research with many of its members engaged in various research endeavors. Several publications about Pediatric Tuberculosis have been released by PSPR members, including a very important article entitled, "Standardized Radiographic Interpretation of Thoracic Tuberculosis in Children", published in Pediatric Radiology Journal in 2017, which serves as the basis for standardized imaging approach and terminology in childhood tuberculosis. Along with PCR and its Subspecialty Societies, PSPR has spearheaded a Forum on Childhood Pulmonary Infections Imaging Forum in celebration of World TB Day on March 23-24, 2018 in Manila Hotel, which was attended by numerous international pediatric TB Imaging experts from different parts of the world.

PSPR also liaises with international organizations including the World Federation of Pediatric Imaging (WFPI), Asian Oceanic Society for Pediatric Radiology (AOSPR), and the Outreach arm of the European Society for Pediatric Radiology. Recently, a taskforce for Quality and Safety has been initiated to help ensure that safety practices, especially those pertaining to radiation and contrast media use are given special attention. PSPR is also proud to be an Alliance Member of "Image Gently Campaign", an international organization whose aim is to promote safer and responsible use of radiation in medical imaging for children.

PSPR also aims to help Hospitals across the country start their own Pediatric Radiology Training Programs, to further increase the number of our local experts who are not only trained in advanced imaging modalities and techniques, but are also child advocates, taking care of the imaging needs of children. PSPR will help ensure and continue to raise the level of Pediatric Radiology practice for the benefit of our children.

Pediatric Radiology is a field of science and validated facts, but just like any other field of medicine, it becomes even more effective if there is passion, compassion, and a lot of kindness. After all, the medical practice is as close to Science as it is to Love.