



## ***President's Bulletin – October 2017***

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### **Reflections on being stuck**

Friends and Colleagues, this will be my last monthly bulletin to you as President. Strangely, I am having writer's block. I feel stuck, uncertain about what I want to communicate. We all feel stuck sometimes – with a difficult patient and family in clinic, in our professional work, or in our personal lives. Maybe it is the season, when the falling leaves and shorter days remind us of the long winter ahead or the years that pass us by so quickly. Maybe it is the cumulative sense of helplessness in the face of so many recent natural disasters – hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. Perhaps it is despair about the seemingly endless political warfare regarding health care in the US. Perhaps it is the war-mongering regarding the Korean problem, and the horror of watching too many hours of Ken Burns' powerful documentary series Vietnam.

When we are stuck - professionally or personally – it is helpful to remember the old adage that is at the heart of our DBP approach to care. *Focus on strengths* – on the strengths, abilities and resiliency of our patients and their families. Reflect on your own character strengths that have helped you in the past to get unstuck, on the qualities that come most naturally to you – perhaps your perseverance, your creativity, your love of learning, your courage, your empathy, or your sense of humor – and apply your strengths to the sticky situation. To learn more about this, see [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

### **Annual Meeting**

Our Annual Meeting is just 2 weeks away! For me, this meeting has always provided opportunity for renewal of friendships, ideas and collaboration. For the first time, SDBP is embracing a theme for its annual meeting, and this theme - *Improving Outcomes through Partnership and Collaboration* - is reflected in Peter Rosenbaum's Lecture, the Plenary Presentation (also new this year), and in many of the workshops.

Also new this year:

- The meeting schedule has been enhanced
- Additional poster symposia and plenary presentations
- Advocacy workshop is free to trainees
- Full day media training workshop
- Presentation on State of the DBP Workforce – creating a roadmap for viability

I am so grateful to Carol Weitzman, Robyn Mehlenbeck, Kim Zlomke, Janice Wilkins, Amy Schull, Daglyn Carr and others who have worked so hard to prepare for this spectacular event!

My address will be about "Facing the Future – and the future is Now!" I shall speak about value-based care, and the implications going forward for our field. I will emphasize the importance of working together to measure outcomes of DBP care, and I hope to articulate some goals and priorities for SDBP that will help us to face the future with confidence.

### **JDBP papers**

In case you missed them, recent papers in JDBP address important questions regarding processes of care for children with ADHD and autism. The first examined a quality improvement intervention to improve

pediatric primary care providers' use of ADHD rating scales. The second was a DBPNet study of factors associated with prescribing psychotropic medications for children with ASD.

[Distance-Learning, ADHD Quality Improvement in Primary Care: A Cluster-Randomized Trial](#)

[Factors Associated with Developmental Behavioral Pediatricians Prescribing Psychotropic Medication to Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)

Another very interesting recent paper - and the accompanying commentary - focused on an effort to use pediatric neurodevelopmental clinics to answer clinical research questions about the neurobiology of autism. The paper highlighted some of the challenges – especially recruitment - of conducting clinical research in the context of clinical care, but also the great potential of enhancing our clinics to serve as clinical research labs.

[Feasibility of Conducting Autism Biomarker Research in the Clinical Setting](#)

Hats off to our current Board members Carolyn Bridgemohan and Nate Blum, who were senior authors on these papers!

### **Network of Neurodevelopmental Care for NICU Graduates**

Congratulations to the Early Childhood SIG (especially Steve Contompasis, Marie Clark, Howard Needleman, Brian Tang, Nina Sand Loud and Lauren Boyd) on the completion of the Position Statement “Ensuring a Network of Neurodevelopmental Care for Neonatal Intensive Care Graduates.” The paper reviews outcomes of NICU graduates and highlights the tremendous variability in neonatal follow up care. The authors propose integrated systems of care – that are adequately resourced and sustainable - linking tertiary centers to primary care medical homes and community-based early intervention. The final draft will be presented to the Board in the near future. Thanks to everyone who contributed their time and expertise to this project, which exemplifies how SDBP SIGs can bring needed focus to an important clinical issue.

### **CPNow Foundation**

Never underestimate the potential power of our partnerships with parents. Michele Shusterman is the mother of one of my patients with CP. During the past year or two, she has launched a nonprofit the CPNow Foundation <https://cpnowfoundation.org/>

She and her associates have done some truly amazing work, including the CP Toolkit for parents of children diagnosed with CP. Check out their blog and resource website <http://cpdailyliving.com> and their new publication Wellbeing for Parents and Caregivers.

And speaking of CP, October 6 is World CP Day and October is Spina Bifida Awareness Month.