

Global Health: Not Just an Interest for Trainees but for Practicing Pediatricians As Well

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Improving the global health of children is part of the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) mission. Many trainees entering our specialty starting in medical school or even earlier are working to equip themselves with the knowledge, skills, and humanistic attributes needed to improve the health of children throughout the world. Of course, many long-practicing pediatricians provide global health services. How many of us out of training have interest or experience in global? Chan et al

([10.1542/peds.2019-1655](#)) reviewed data obtained from AAP periodic surveys in 1989 (n= 638) and again in 2017 (n=668) to look at changes related to interest and experience in global health. The authors found that global health experiences more than doubled from 2.2% to 5.1% between the 1989 and 2017, with significant increases among pediatricians ≥ 50 years. There was also added interest in participating in future global health experiences from the 1989 survey (25.2%) and the 2017 survey (31.7%) and this interest extended from inpatient to outpatient practice settings as well as to subspecialists as well as generalists.

What does it mean that more seasoned pediatricians are also wanting to become more engaged in global health work? We asked Dr. Suzinne Pak-Gorstein, a pediatric leader in global health efforts, to weigh in with an accompanying commentary ([10.1542/peds.2019-3163](#)). Dr. Pak-Gorstein notes that more pediatricians in 2017 versus 1989 are interested in short-term (one month or less) versus long-term global health experiences and raises some great points about the need to better train pediatricians with the cultural humility needed to not burden the welcoming countries with their short-term limited engagement. She also notes that channeling pediatricians to focus their efforts domestically on immigrant populations may be just as important as going overseas to support refugee and immigrant populations in other countries especially if the engagement is short-term. Both the study and commentary provide lots of insight for those of us who wish to contribute globally to improving the health of children—so journey through both articles and learn more. Bon voyage!

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