

Halfway Through the 40th Year of Pediatrics in Review

June 25, 2019

This month *Pediatrics in Review* (PIR) is halfway through its 40th year of publication. PIR first appeared in July 1979, its purpose to help improve child health by providing useful information to professionals who cared for infants, children, and adolescents.

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To ensure that information was indeed useful, founding editor Dr. Robert Haggerty assembled an editorial board whose members were or were to become well-known leaders in pediatrics (Fig). Besides being experts, these editorial board members taught well and wrote well. The result was and continues to be published review articles that are readable, comprehensible, and practical. *Useful*.

In this month's issue, **Drs. Morrison, Glick, and Yin write about health literacy**, the "degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions."¹ As practitioners we may know and understand the many tenets and facts of pediatrics, but what good is such knowledge if we prescribe instructions that our patients and their caregivers do not understand? Have we provided *useful* information for patients to act on? The article "**Health Literacy: Implications for Child Health**" points out that 35% of the adult US population have low health literacy and only 15% have the highest level of health literacy. Morrison, Glick, and Yin stress that when we communicate with our patients and their families we must use "language that is clear, concise, well-organized, and easy to understand for the intended audience."²

It is just happenstance that the article "**Health Literacy: Implications for Child Health**" was assigned to this June's issue, but I must chuckle at the irony of the unintentional juxtaposition. While the PIR editorial board challenges authors to teach pediatric care that is useful to the readers of PIR, authors Morrison, Glick, and Yin challenge the readers of PIR to make pediatric care useful for their patients. Sharing our medical knowledge with a patient is an essential part of care, but if the patient is not perceiving and incorporating that knowledge, we are only halfway through sharing that knowledge.

This month PIR is halfway through its 40th year of sharing knowledge. May the journal remain readable, comprehensible, and practical, and may the journal be always “halfway through” the years providing useful information to professionals who care for infants, children, and adolescents.

References

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2. Morrison AK, Glick A, Yin HS. Health literacy: implications for child health. *Pediatr Rev*. 2019 Jun;40(6):263-277

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