

It takes two types of allergists to serve the needs of all allergic patients

Who would seriously question established specialties such as Cardiology/Ped. Cardiology, Endocrinology/Ped. Endocrinology or Neurology/Ped. Neurology? They obviously have been offering important complementary service for many years and are working peacefully and in fruitful interaction together in an environment, where everyone appreciates the specific expertise of either group.

As the paper by Tsilochristou et al¹ suggests, however, this does not seem to be the case in Allergy/Clin. Immunology, at least not everywhere in the world. In a country like Germany, Allergology is a certified subspecialty, although unfortunately with a poorly defined training curriculum. Specialists with specific organ expertise (ENT, Dermatology, Pneumology) as well as pediatricians can qualify as allergists and may take care of adults as well as children if they like. This means that without a single day of pediatric training of the "specialist," a doctor theoretically can treat children with complex allergological problems. Other countries are reporting similar deficits.

A very stimulating workshop sponsored by the Clemens von Pirquet Foundation took place in summer 2016 in Rome and disclosed that a number of obstacles have to be overcome before the ambitious aim of a certified—and protected—subspecialty of "Pediatric Allergology" is established widely.

In addition to "Adult Allergology," which currently is a full specialty or a subspecialty in several parts of the world, the same is needed for Pediatric Allergology, as:

1. Specific pediatric expertise/training is required for a qualified service.
2. Challenges in both in- and outpatient settings are clearly distinct from adults.
3. There is a specific research agenda for Pediatric Allergology.

It is very encouraging to see the many positive signals that realize and support pediatric activities toward creating the specialty of "Pediatric Allergology" in as many countries as possible:

The European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) recently approved a revised syllabus for a specific pediatric training program in Allergology.

EAACI is currently organizing a modification of the EAACI knowledge examination, which will offer a specific certificate for pediatric allergists/immunologists. It is not unlikely that this certificate will have some impact for national validation sooner or later.

We sincerely hope that the paper by Tsilochristou et al¹ in this issue, which summarizes the key results of the workshop in Rome, will stimulate discussions and enhance this process. Allergy is a relatively young specialty, but it seems that the time has come to become active for the implementation of transparent training curricula and credible criteria for certification.

The aim is clear: For the sake of our children in the twenty-first century, we need the "Pediatric Allergist" as a certified specialist everywhere!

Ulrich Wahn

Department of Pediatric Pneumology and Immunology, Charité, Berlin,
Germany

Email: ulrich.wahn@gmail.com

REFERENCE

1. Tsilochristou O, Maggina P, Zolkipli Z, et al. Current state and future of paediatric allergology in Europe: a road map. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol*. 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pai.12833>