EDITORIAL

Research in pediatrics nowadays

La investigación en pediatria a día de hoy

M. Moya

Pediatric Department, Universidad Miguel Hernández, Alicante, Spain

If we accept that there are two main classes of investigation: basic and applied, the first one has a leitmotif that is knowledge for its own sake, frequently with no obvious or immediate application (biochemical mechanisms, cell function, etc.). Basic investigation by its definition in a vast majority of cases falls outside our present field of pediatrics that is mainly addressed to specific clinical problems clearly representing applied research. It is important to consider that basic gains will lead to applied gains later on. Basic and applied (which we will now call clinical) are not separated and most of the time they are connected through a third class more recently termed as translational research. It is playing a very important role because of its interaction with both basic and clinical. We do not need to say that each of them has their own actors, their own subjects and their own designs. Once, this formal scheme is put into practice, things become more complex. First, there is no clear border among them. Secondly, the actors can play their part in both of the neighboring types. Thirdly, the institutions that host investigation programs have different aims and ideas about research classes.

If we now consider pediatrics and taking into account its setting in the occidentalized world we can see that the care structures (primary to tertiary) seldom have the required machinery to assess a basic law of nature or its deviation. In a few sectors of each country, this may be possible, for example, Universities and Institutes financed by governments are normally sites where this can happen. The journal Pediatric Research reflects in part this activity. This is the reason why pediatrics following the general trend in clinical research tends to certain subtypes. One subtype is based on the development of new diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and another is based on the evaluation of efficacy and safety of new treatments. This part (also known as clinical trials) has proved to be very useful after evidence based techniques are used. It is pertinent to mention here how reviews are regulated also by these techniques and search strategies.

Part of this clinical research is the epidemiological studies that sometimes are considered as a new branch of research, they have the advantage that with a good design and a vigorous execution, they can be put in practice at primary care level. Retrospective clinical studies are not considered as real research.

The freedom to choose subjects has been and is an inherent characteristic of research. Therefore the variety of lines can be infinite, but if a pragmatic sense is present at the time of deciding the research object the present hot points should be considered. I would like to refer to the five

DOI of original article:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.anpedi.2014.02.028

Please cite this article as: Moya M. La investigación en pediatria a día de hoy. An Pediatr (Barc). 2014;81:67-68.

E-mail address: Manuel.Moya@umh.es

2341-2879/© 2014 Asociación Española de Pediatría. Published by Elsevier España, S.L.U. All rights reserved.
The content is too fragmented and tilted to be accurately transcribed.