Africa is the world's second largest and second most populous continent, after Asia. It hosts some of the poorest countries in the world. Many countries have very poor infrastructure and unsurprisingly associated poor health care, especially for women and children. There is a definite evolution and recognition of pediatric surgery as a specialty in Africa. However, the pace of development has been quite variable in different parts of Africa. Despite all recent developments, the practice of pediatric surgery in Africa continues to face multiple challenges including limited facilities, manpower shortages, the large number of sick children, disease patterns specific to the region, late presentation and advanced pathology, lack of pediatric surgeons outside the tertiary hospitals, and inadequate governmental support. Africa has a “grave shortage” of pediatric surgeons. There is no available full time well trained pediatric surgeon in many African countries. The number of full trained pediatric surgeons ranges from 1 in Malawi covering a population of 13 million to 120 in Egypt catering for a total population of 90 million where more than 50% are children. Despite this shortage of pediatric surgeons, Africa continues to lose surgeons and prospective pediatric surgeons to Europe, America, and the Middle East largely because of poor working conditions and lack of job satisfaction. Standardization of pediatric surgery training across the continent is advocated. Only a few centers in Africa have a well-organized and structured training program in Pediatric Surgery. There is significant variability in training of pediatric surgical manpower in various African countries and sometimes within the same country. Collaboration with well-established pediatric surgical training centers in Africa and other developed countries are necessary. The problems of manpower training and delivery of pediatric surgical services need to be addressed urgently, if the African child is to have access to essential pediatric surgical services like his or her counterpart in the high income parts of the world.

Biography

Essam A. Elhalaby graduated from Faculty of Medicine, Tanta University, Egypt in 1981. He completed his general surgery residency program in 1986. He got his Postgraduate Master and MD degrees in Surgery from Tanta University at 1986 and 1996. He spent two years (1991-1993) as a Research Fellow at division of Pediatric Surgery, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He is an international board certified trainer and human resources and development consultant since 2008. He was appointed as a Lecturer, then Associate Professor in Pediatric Surgery in Faculty of Medicine, Tanta University. In addition, he has established, the Quality Assurance Unit at the Medical School on 2004, and is the Director of that unit until now. He has many national, regional and international contributions. He has been invited guest Lecturer or scientific presenter at 187 major national & international conferences. He is the Editor—In-Chief of Annals of Pediatric Surgery, and has been serving as an Editorial Board Member in other journals. He has published more than 63 papers in reputed journals. He has a great interest in Africa and is currently present—elect of Pan African Pediatric Surgical Association (PAPSA), in addition of serving as the Vice Present Egyptian Pediatric Surgical Association (EPSA).

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