Pediatric Health in Argentina

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Córdoba, Argentina
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Outline

• Background information
• Structure of the healthcare system
• Most common pediatric diseases
• Vaccination
• Tobacco Use
• Annual health controls
• Conclusions
• Significant personal experiences
- Population of Argentina: 43 million
- Population of Córdoba: 1.6 million (2\textsuperscript{nd} largest city)
- 33.6\% of population between 0-19 years old
- High income level nation
- Primary cultural influences: Italian, Spanish, German
- 92\% Catholic
- 6 military coups from 1930-1976
- Representative democratic republic
Clinical Site:

Hospital Pediátrico del Niño Jesús

- Public, provincial hospital
- Services offered:
  - Outpatient and inpatient care
  - Emergency services
  - Pediatric ICU
  - Dental clinic
  - Specialty services
    (pulmonology, cardiology, ophthalmology, gastroenterology, etc.)

Entrance to Hospital Pediátrico del Niño Jesús
Why Pediatric Health in Argentina?

- Relevant to my profession
- Explore similarities and differences between Argentina and the U.S.
- Introduce a variety of important pediatric topics rather than one specific topic

Entrance to the Emergency Room
Structure of the Healthcare System

- **Public system**
  - Government-funded
- **Social security system**
  - Employer and employee-funded
- **Private system**
  - Patients pay out of pocket or have private insurance

Types of Hospitals:
Hospitals are either national, regional, or provincial hospitals.
Most Common Pediatric Diseases

1. Nutrition, overweight/obesity
2. Gastroenteritis
3. Bronchospasm
4. Bronchiolitis
5. Vector-borne diseases
6. Domestic and sexual abuse

Aedes aegypti mosquito
Dengue
Chikungunya
Zika

Reduviid bug
Chagas disease
Most Common Causes of Death

Children <5 years:
1. Congenital malformations
2. Accidents/injuries
3. Infection

Children 6-10 years:
1. Pathologies

Adolescents (10-18):
1. Accidents/injuries
2. Suicide
3. Homicide
Mortality Rate for Children <5 Years: Argentina compared to U.S.

13 per 1,000 in Argentina
6.5 per 1,000 in the U.S.
Vaccination in Argentina

- Immunization schedule contains 19 vaccines
- 2009 – immunization became required, free of charge
- 2009-2012 – HPV, dengue fever, and pneumococcal vaccines added to schedule
- 2015 – Rotavirus added
- Very minimal anti-vaccination movement, if any
- Comprehensive schedule, high vaccination rates (93-99%)
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Tobacco Use

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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
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<td>19.6%</td>
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- **Global Youth Tobacco Survey:** 25% of 13-15 year olds in Argentina smoke; 30% of Argentine 11-year-olds have tried smoking already.¹
- Lung cancer is considered an endemic disease in Argentina.

“Controles de Salud”
(Annual Health Controls)

- Required annual health checks for clearance to attend school
  - General pediatrician (vaccines)
  - Cardiologist (EKG)
  - Ophthalmologist (vision screening)
  - Dentist (annual dental care)
Potential Strategies and Interventions

• Individual-based
  – Improve nutrition
  – Reduce screen time and encourage physical activity
  – Smoking cessation

• Community-based
  – Nutrition education
  – Community sports teams or physical activity events
  – Healthy cooking classes/events
  – Improve access to healthy foods in rural areas
Potential Strategies and Interventions

• Systems-based
  – Increase physical education/activity in schools
  – Higher cigarette taxes
  – Increase physician salaries
Conclusions

- Obesity and poor nutrition are global health problems
- Although the U.S. healthcare system has its pitfalls, I have a greater appreciation for certain aspects of it
- The U.S. could learn some lessons from Argentina to improve American pediatric health
- Differences in patient care often have to do with a lack of resources in the public hospitals
Profound Clinical Experiences

- **Surgery**: different anesthetic techniques
- **Hospital**: adherence to isolation precautions
- **Medical education**: student and resident roles

Me with the dermatology residents
Profound Cultural Experiences

- Physician salaries compared to other sectors
- Food (positive and negative aspects)
  - Pastries, wine, yerba mate
  - Awareness of nutritional value and cooking styles
The Hospital

Child and baby scales (very old equipment)

Dental clinic

Me and Dr. Hidalgo

Outpatient clinic
Family and Classmates

My Spanish instructor, Sonia

My fellow medical students and our program directors

My host family
Córdoba

“Voting doesn’t change anything. Politicians come and go, but hunger remains. Organize and fight.”
References