

The Technology Empowered Academy – At Your Service

BAKUL JAYANT PAREKH

*President, Indian Academy of Pediatrics, 2020
bakulparekh55@gmail.com*

“Technology-driven Change is the New Reality”

A new year brings about new memories, new sciences and also let us not forget, new technologies! The world has seen a tremendous technology-driven change in the last couple of decades. Many things that were expensive and affordable only to the wealthiest people are now within reach of the common man.

The Internet, the World Wide Web, mobile phones and mobile smart phones have reduced the cost of communication to zero. Ready access to knowledge is no longer the privilege of the few. These technologies have also created an explosion of innovative services. These services include social media, search engines, online marketplaces, online stores, mobile payment, app taxis, online health services, and many more.

The next wave of change is even faster and more significant in impact. The wave is born of the convergence of the above technologies with the Internet of things, Artificial intelligence, Genetic engineering and Biotechnology. We have all experienced the change, and in media, we often hear and read of the impending acceleration of change. But what does it mean for clinical pediatrics? What does it mean for the pediatrician? Is this a great opportunity that we must grab or does it threaten to disrupt our purpose, our profession and our practice?

And what does it mean for our Academy? How can we better serve our members and society at large by riding this wave of change?

IMPACT ON CLINICAL PEDIATRICS AND THE PEDIATRICIAN

Technology enables us to diagnose faster and more accurately. Diagnostic algorithms, diagnostic support and advanced diagnostic technology are available at the point-of-care. We can treat better. Standard therapeutic guidelines, Prescription guidelines, Algorithms and Specialist advice are integrated into Point of Care systems.

The increased capabilities at the point of care lead to an increase in the number of services offered by the pediatric clinic. We are thus reducing the need for referring

patients elsewhere for specialized diagnostics or treatment. Pediatricians will have robust patient education and telemedicine tools. So we can expect better-informed patients and improved health outcomes.

The democratization of mobile phone technology has improved the phone density in India and brought it to the same level as in developed countries. In the same way, the democratization of technology for clinical practitioners gives our pediatricians access to the same capabilities that their developed-world counterparts have.

THE TECHNOLOGY ENABLED ACADEMY

Our Academy is very well positioned to play a leadership role to accelerate the availability of technology and its benefits for our member pediatricians.

- We must integrate the output of our Academy's committees, chapters and experts into digital systems. The output must become instantly available to all our members. The creators must have total and direct control over creation, publishing, updating and distribution. All types of one-way or interactive content must be supported – guidelines, papers, courses, lectures, interviews, demonstrations or clinics.
- We must establish physical video conferencing and webinar infrastructure across the nation. This infrastructure will create a vibrant Academy with the in-house capability to have thousands of academic activities, round the year, accessible to all members
- We must leverage the Academy's reputation and large membership numbers to gain access to the latest and best technologies from anywhere in the world to serve our member-pediatricians.
- We must create technology infrastructure for inexpensive assimilation and rapid availability of cutting-edge services and technologies and make it available to all our members at the point-of-care.

DIAP IS PLANNED TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

We conceived and launched the dIAP program for IAP

BOX I KEY COMPONENTS OF dIAP

- A financially self-sustaining professional education service for pediatricians. This service combines accredited courses, scientific reference material and a reservoir of searchable content; all created and published by IAP experts. Direct publishing and editorial interfaces are available to chapters and expert groups, ensuring ownership, credit and regular updates.
- A network of videoconferencing and webinar centers at IAP offices across the country. These centers allow for thousands of online lectures, clinics, webinars and more, accessible by all IAP members and available as an online searchable archive.
- A financially self-sustaining patient education service usable in a doctor/clinic personalized fashion.
- Academy created diagnostic support, specialist advice services, prescription guidelines, and diagnostic algorithms, embedded into a software system available for use at the point-of-care.
- A structured and formal Academy interface with technology innovation groups in the USA, Europe and India for early acquisition of the latest technologies for our members on attractive terms.

with precisely these objectives. dIAP is not only a window to IAP's services, but it is also the institutional, digital and financial architecture that will enable IAP to deliver on this promise – it is an integrated window to all existing IAP online services. The key components of dIAP are shown in **Box I**.

The Plan is Already Activated!

It gives me great pleasure to say that the Plan has already been activated. Some of these services are already available immediately to our members within the dIAP application. The dIAP application will be ready soon and I am sure that all of you will appreciate the hard work and the number of sleepless nights that have been spent by the entire team who have burnt the midnight oil just to

turn our vision into a reality. I look forward to your support so that the rest of the dIAP Plan is implemented and made available to our members in the coming months.

Last, but not the least, I take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate all the elected Office Bearers, Executive Board members and most importantly, one of the past editor-in-chief of *Indian Pediatrics* and a great academician – Dr. Piyush Gupta, who has been elected as the President Elect. I feel truly honored and blessed to be working with such a dynamic team which is focused on taking IAP ahead. On seeing the wonderful team that has been elected by all of you, I can certainly say that IAP is going to achieve much greater heights in the coming year !