



President's Bulletin

CAROL WEITZMAN, MD

January 26, 2021

Dear Members, Colleagues, and Friends,

The world continues to turn at a dizzying speed and SDBP continues to forge ahead with many different initiatives! I want to focus your attention to two important pressing issues where we need member's input and help.

First, [US News and World Report](#) is exploring including Pediatric Mental/Behavioral Health as a specialty for rankings starting next year. Children's hospitals are currently being surveyed about this and are invited to give feedback until mid-February. The survey in its current iteration is heavily focused on inpatient psychiatry. It is overly narrow in focus and despite including a number of the common conditions we care for in DBP, Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics is not included in the survey.



Many of us are ambivalent about how much influence USNWR exerts and how much emphasis hospitals place on these rankings. The converse is that because hospitals place so much emphasis on these rankings, resources and funds often are directed towards improving rankings and not being included can lead to marginalization. As [Dr. David O'Banion](#) said the other night, "Be measured or be marginalized!"

Therefore, it's important that division directors at Children's Hospitals provide comments about the inclusion of DBP and broadening the vision of Pediatric Mental/Behavioral Health to include Development with a wider lens. We had a vigorous SDBP Connect meeting about this last week and based on this conversation and input from those who have seen the survey, **Drs. Barbara Felt, Lisa Shulman, Marilyn Augustyn** and I have developed some SDBP talking points.

We invite members to read these talking points and offer comments by clicking the link below. Because of the very short timeframe to offer comments to USNWR, we will only

be accepting comments through [Sunday, January 31st](#), so we can finalize this and send final talking points to division directors.

[USNWR Talking Points](#)

****To add to the document, you can either add comments or add tracked changes. Make sure on the toolbar it says *Reviewing* and not *Editing*!! ****

If you are a division director, and you have not seen the survey, this might take a little detective work! These surveys often go to the quality or marketing departments and they likely directed them to psychiatry departments.

This is an opportunity to make sure DBP's voice is heard! I will also be reaching out to our contacts at USNWR to talk about this too.

Second, the SDBP statement [Recommendations for The Biden-Harris Administration in The Service of Children and Families](#) has just been published in JDBP. This statement outlines the key priorities SDBP has identified for this incoming administration and uses narrative stories that we have heard over the course of the pandemic to illustrate these pressing needs. We are eager to see this information widely disseminated and need the help of our members to do this!



What you can do:

- Please [repost](#) and [retweet](#) SDBP messages to get the word out on social media and share stories you have heard throughout the pandemic

- Share your own posts on social media about the messages that have resonated most with you, using the hashtag [#IAMDBP](#) and/or tagging [@SDBPeds](#)
- Send this to your local AAP chapter and ask them to publicize this to their members
- Send to other local organizations, newspapers, and other groups that you think might be interested in learning about SDBP priorities for our new administration

What SDBP will be doing:

- We will be sending the statement to many news outlets.
- The Communications Committee's social media team led by Michele Ledesma will be putting out a series of posts that include the stories and key messages of the statement - please share, repost, and retweet these statements so that they will reach as broad an audience as possible!

Key Messages:

SDBP has identified the following priorities in this statement:

- Developing a national strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Ensuring the *safe* return of children to school so they can learn and thrive and reducing the technological divide.
- Implementing enforceable policies to ensure racial justice in this country.
- Guaranteeing that all children with disabilities and special healthcare needs have appropriate access to services and supports that will maintain and promote their development and healthy functioning.
- Safeguarding family cohesion by reuniting children separated at the border with their families and permanently ending family separation policies.
- Guaranteeing a clean, livable world for the next generation and those to come.
- Addressing social determinants of health to ensure that children and families living in poverty and under adverse circumstances do not fall further behind.
- Identifying and implementing solutions to the workforce shortage crisis of physician and nonphysician developmental and behavioral professionals needed to care for children with developmental and behavioral disabilities.
- Funding scientific research to determine best practices including telehealth, related to improving outcomes for children's developmental, emotional and behavioral health during the current crisis.

Sincerely,

[Carol Weitzman, MD](#)

President, SDBP