INTRODUCTION

Neurosurgical opportunities in global health inequities

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THE focus of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons was entitled, “A World of Neurosurgery,” and it emphasized the accomplishments and opportunities for neurosurgeons in our global community. In an effort to continue this conversation, this issue of *Neurosurgical Focus* presents contributions from neurosurgeons directed at reducing the inequities in the provision of neurosurgical care around the world.

Since 30% of the global burden of diseases is surgical, universal healthcare is not achievable without integrating emergency and essential surgical services at the district hospitals into the healthcare system. If one considers that the leading cause of accidental death worldwide is from a head injury, the provision of safe, timely, and affordable neurosurgical care, as well as the development of local prevention programs, is necessary to reduce mortality and to avert economic losses secondary to long-term disability. Contributors were asked to address 4 thematic areas. These include the following: 1) existing international outreach programs that are meeting a need, 2) the identification of global neurosurgical needs and proposed solutions, 3) the use of technology or big data in helping identify areas of need and how to best address them, and 4) the role of neurosurgical advocacy in problem solving and prevention.

This timely issue of *Neurosurgical Focus* offers in-depth views of established or developing neurosurgical education and care delivery programs in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Opportunistic needs are also recognized and potential solutions offered. The roles of technology and big data analysis are introduced in what seems to be a paradoxical approach to solving the inequities in LMIC neurosurgery. Then lastly, the important role of neurosurgery leadership in advocacy efforts addressing both care delivery and disease prevention challenges is illuminated.

We believe that neurosurgeons can and will change the world for good. This issue delivers both evidence for that premise and the charge to do more.

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