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## Editorial comments on “Global assessment of the knowledge and confidence in managing allergic disorders among primary care pediatricians across Europe: An EAACI task force report”

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# Editorial comments on “Global assessment of the knowledge and confidence in managing allergic disorders among primary care pediatricians across Europe: An EAACI task force report”

As usual first medical referent of children, pediatricians are key to the initial management of allergic disorders, from atopic dermatitis to allergic rhinitis and venom or food allergy. In the future, these diseases will become more common and severe and primary care pediatricians will be confronted with an increasing number of such cases. It is therefore imperative for them to have sufficient knowledge on allergic disorders. While primary care physicians have knowledge gaps in allergy manifestations,<sup>1</sup> pediatricians are more confident in basic mechanisms and management of allergic diseases, according to previous reports.<sup>2</sup>

One of the EAACI's roles is to promote task force works and guidelines that provide evidence-based information and propose standardized practices in primary care.<sup>3</sup> Standardization may help to reduce socioeconomic inequities<sup>4</sup> and facilitate exchanges between countries for allergic individuals.

A study by Cabrera et al.<sup>5</sup> involved a survey that was completed by 1991 medical professionals from 56 countries including 1482 primary care pediatricians. Results provided interesting information on the organization of allergy management throughout Europe and diffusion rate of EAACI documents. First, only 47% of primary care pediatricians had access to allergy investigations in their Primary Care facility and 4.9% even reported having no allergy investigations in their Area/Health System. Access to immunotherapy varied by country, ranging from 38% to 95%, with global access calculated at 68% across Europe. Second, the rate of pediatricians who have received Allergy teaching as undergraduates was uniformly low (44% across Europe, from 33% to 50%) and as post-graduates only slightly higher (56% across Europe, from 41% to 70%). Then, among primary care pediatricians, 62% were aware of guidelines and pathways for referring patients with allergies, and 82% actually used them. However, there was significant heterogeneity between countries. Only 22% of primary care pediatricians, with 3% in France, were aware of the EAACI competencies document for allied health professionals in allergy. A last key message is that the level of confidence to see patients depended on the allergic conditions: pediatricians were less confident to identify latex or venom allergy than atopic dermatitis or allergic rhinitis, and to provide advice on allergen immunotherapy than on environmental control measures.

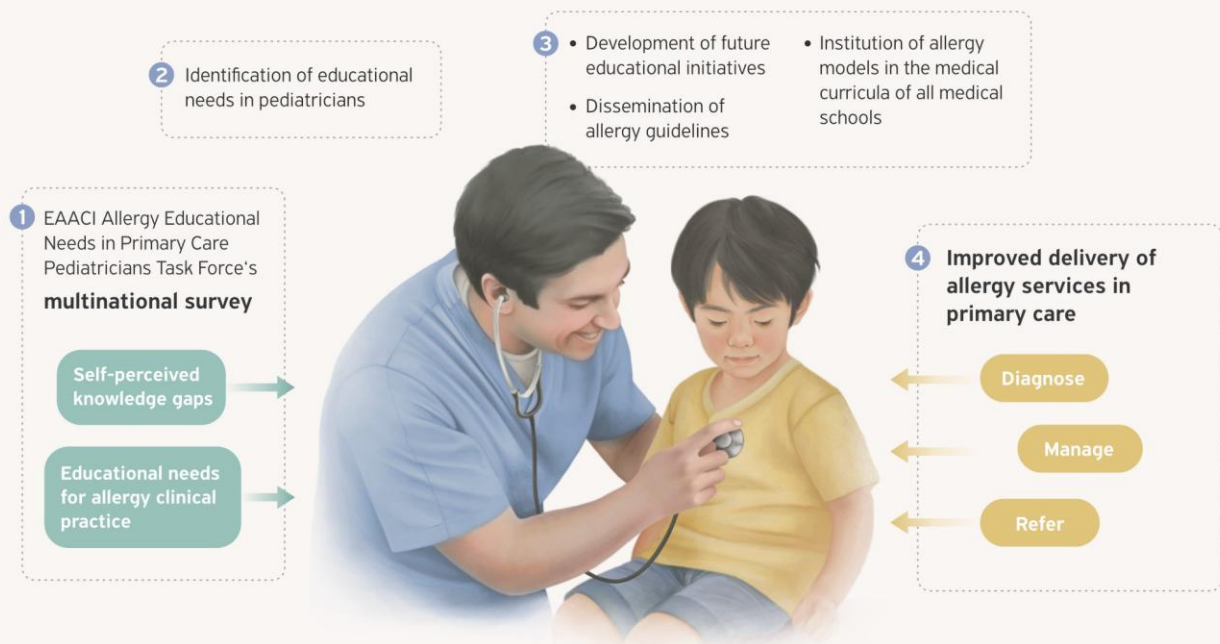
This study illustrates the considerable distance that remains to be traversed in the promotion of universally accessible health, both in terms of organizational structures and scientific inquiry.

It highlights the importance of allergy training, possibly starting as early as undergraduate studies, to reach all future primary care professionals. It also supports the importance of harmonizing allergy care and promoting a multidisciplinary approach through a network of specialists and primary care professionals. It appears especially relevant for lesser-known allergies such as latex and venom allergies or for immunotherapy.<sup>1</sup>

This study also raises questions about how to improve the diffusion of EAACI documents. One important role of task forces is to make emerging practical solutions, such as facilitating official translations involving the national allergy societies or identifying local experts to disseminate the European guidelines within their own countries.

Finally, the results of Cabrera et al. study may be a wake-up call to find new approaches to disseminating EAACI reports and guidelines and standardizing practices across Europe.

# Global assessment of the knowledge and confidence in managing allergic disorders among primary care pediatricians across Europe



PAI Pediatric Allergy and Immunology | Marcela Ataíde Scientific Illustration

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

**Camille Braun:** Investigation; visualization; validation; writing – review and editing; methodology; writing – original draft. **Julie Mazenq:** Investigation; validation; visualization; writing – review and editing; methodology; writing – original draft. **Philippe Eigenmann:** Validation; conceptualization. **Omer Kalayci:** Conceptualization; validation. **Luciana Tanno:** Conceptualization; validation.

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