

Letters

Pseudoscience in the News

“Predatory Publishing: Shedding Light on a Deceptive Industry” (Feature, July) presents an excellent discussion of a serious problem. It cannot be emphasized enough that, in the current climate of instant and wide dissemination of any seemingly important health assertion or claim, a fraudulent article in a predatory publication can result in serious harm to the public.

Science correspondents for both national and local news organizations may have minimal scientific backgrounds and may lack practical experience in the scientific discipline upon which they are reporting. When they report on a new drug or treatment breakthrough, this results in exponential amplification of the information in popular nonscientific publications and on the Internet. However, if it is discovered that a new treatment is a fraud, there will be (sadly) no Internet retraction, as the popular magazines will have moved on.

*Kenneth D. Hansen, MD
Gulfport, Fla.*

How Studying Humanities Enriches Ophthalmology

I appreciated “The Art of Observation” (Opinion, May). I believe that through exposure to the arts and humanities, which emphasize reflection and interpretation, we become more aware of other viewpoints.

Additionally, studying the arts gives us a better vocabulary for explaining disease states and treatment concepts to anxious patients. While specialized training is useful for mastering the knowledge and skills for our work, it does not necessarily teach the communication skills required to make

patients feel comfortable or clear on medical terminology. I hope the Gurwin study¹ encourages more practicing doctors and medical students to pursue broader education that includes humanities.

*Christopher F. Wood, MD
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1 Gurwin J et al. *Ophthalmology*. 2018;125(1):8-14.

ABO on IRIS Registry

In “ABO Diplomates—How to Get Started on Your MIPS/MOC Improvement Project” (Practice Perfect, July), the authors outlined how board-certified ophthalmologists can use IRIS Registry data to build personalized improvement in Medical Practice projects for American Board of Ophthalmology (ABO) Maintenance of Certification (MOC) credit.

The purpose of such projects is for ABO diplomates to identify opportunities for Improvement that are relevant to their specific practices. Insights from the IRIS Registry are inspiring ophthalmologists to implement checklists, create new patient education materials, and make changes in their practice to quantifiably improve outcomes.

The ABO applauds the ophthalmic community’s embrace of the IRIS Registry as a means to achieve our shared goal of continuous improvement of patient care. We encourage our colleagues to visit <https://abop.org/maintain-certification/improvement-in-medical-practice> or contact us at moc@abop.org to learn more about how to leverage their registry data to pursue projects that can make a measurable difference in patient outcomes.

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*Andreas K. Lauer, MD, ABO MOC Committee Chair
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On a Personal Note

While we have made our share of mistakes here at EyeNet, we have never had cause to regret bringing Alfred T. Kamajian onto the team to provide the biomedical illustrations for our covers. Beginning in 1999, Al illustrated a dizzying array of topics in his signature hyper-realistic style. And although he was game for whatever we threw at him, he was particularly excited when assignments involved genetics and molecular structures. Sadly, Al died on June 23, 2018, at age 60. It is no exaggeration to say that he will be missed.

