

## Introduction to Special Issue of Vascular Anomalies

It is timely and exciting that Pediatric Blood and Cancer has endorsed a supplement dedicated to Vascular Anomalies.

Vascular anomalies are not new diseases, however this generation of physicians is being newly exposed to the field due to revolutions in diagnostic imaging, genetic insights and broadened roles of medical therapies. Many of our mentors have limited experience in vascular anomalies, which has restricted training opportunities. Historically, patients with rare diseases facing many unknowns are managed by brave pioneers. In vascular anomalies, most patients were cared for by surgeons and interventional radiologists who could skillfully resect or debulk or inject these unusual vascular lesions. Over the past two decades, nomenclature of these disorders has become standardized ([www.issva.org](http://www.issva.org)), genetic discoveries have informed classification and treatment decisions, and medical therapy has taken on a larger role in patient care. Many institutions now have dedicated clinicians working in an interdisciplinary “center” to provide comprehensive care to our patients. Hematologists and oncologists were logical members of these teams, given their experience managing bleeding and thrombotic complications and utilizing anti-proliferative and anti-angiogenic therapies. As medical therapies now often target involved mutations or pathways, hematologist/oncologists may soon find themselves leading care for these complex patients. Initiation of clinical trials and calls for evidence-based medicine have positioned hematologist/oncologists as leaders in this field.

In this issue, we provide a background for the most common vascular anomalies the hematologist/oncologist is likely to encounter. Each section is the work of pediatric hematologist/oncologists in different stages of their careers that have a special interest in the field and share their “How do I approach” methods, often with an author representing another specialty. We are excited to share this special issue with the medical community, and hope this will launch even more physicians, fellows, students, and other professionals, into this dynamic, multidisciplinary field.

The authors of this issue are hematologists and oncologists who are members of the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Vascular Anomaly Special Interest Group (ASPHO VA-SIG). Our SIG – one of the first at ASPHO – started in 2013 with the primary mission of improving the care and outcomes for children and young adults with vascular anomalies through multicenter collaboration. Our primary aims were education of ASPHO members, establishing standards of practice and developing collaborative research projects. The group has held educational sessions at every ASPHO meeting since, including a primer course for vascular anomalies and plenary sessions. In addition to meeting at the ASPHO annual meeting, we have held working meetings each fall, rotating to hosting vascular anomalies centers for collaborative meetings to discuss consensus guidelines and multicenter initiatives. Operationally, we function through three sub-committees – education, practice and research – and a rotating executive committee. This group has provided each author leadership and career growth opportunities. ASPHO VA-SIG has paved the way for this field to become part of

the American Academy of Pediatrics Hematology/Oncology sub-boards. While we did not have formal training opportunities in vascular anomalies and relied on case-by-case and shared learning, we are excited to formalize and expedite training for the next generation of “vascular anomalists”.

The ASPHO VA-SIG is growing in membership and productivity. We are grateful to the pioneers who came before us, individual mentors at our institutions and global mentors in this field, especially Drs. Judah Folkman and John Mulliken. We are driven by our patients and families and our thanks goes out to the patient support groups who support our momentum and drive for discovery.

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