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Preface

One of the clearest memories that I have of my first days as Chief of the Pediatric Ophthalmology Unit, after completing my fellowship in Chicago, is my first solo congenital cataract surgery on a 6-month-old boy. I had spent all night reading David Hiles and Albert Biglan papers on the topic. In the late Eighties, YouTube was not available, and reading through articles and book chapters was the only chance to absorb secrets from experts.

Is there still room for books today? Of course the answer is yes, especially when a book is written by people devoted to sharing thorough knowledge and secrets. This is the case for this issue of Developments in Ophthalmology.

Rarely has a topic seen such long-lasting, controversial debate. Whenever and wherever I have participated in a roundtable discussion or scientific session dealing with pediatric cataracts, I have been overwhelmed by different, but totally reasonable, approaches.

The need for a common position has led to the creation of the Infant Aphakia Treatment Study Group in the US and to a more recent and more inclusive worldwide dialog through the Delphi process to establish fundamental points, anchoring ophthalmologists to a clear protocol, which is useful for clinical and medicolegal reasons in daily practice.

For this book, experts from all over the world accepted my invitation, and I hope that this effort will be appreciated by both scholars and physicians committed to the management of pediatric cataract patients.

The book begins by clarifying the roles of genetics and the systemic workup in the diagnosis. In the next chapters, the authors discuss the ‘state of the art’ in this challenging surgery and the changes in ocular growth after cataract operation.

Visual rehabilitation is then covered, offering modern and truly complete insight into all aspects of post-operative treatment of this population.

Then, complications are discussed, along with a dedicated, and apparently overlapping, chapter on the most fearful and difficult-to-treat sequela of congenital cataract surgery: post-aphakic glaucoma.

The book also covers the treatment of complex cases, given the expertise of surgeons who frequently deal with severe and difficult conditions.

The final part of the book presents an overview of a recently published Delphi process providing consensus and non-consensus areas in the management of pediatric cataract.

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