

# PREFACE

When Bill Perkins asked me to guest edit *Seminars*, I accepted the invitation on the condition that the subject matter could be *Efficacy of Speech-Language Pathology Intervention*, a matter of great professional concern to me. Efficacy of speech-language pathology intervention is becoming a major issue for clinicians in every type of employment. No specialty area is immune.

More than ever before, clinicians in the 1990s and into the 21st century will be called upon to address and support the value of their professional services. Administrators, financial analysts, bureaucrats, insurers, the people we serve, and anyone else who "pays" will require more accurate projections about the expected outcome of an intervention. To provide meaningful data to our purveyors and others who may ask, speech-language pathologists must be prepared to address efficacy of intervention in a comprehensive and meaningful way. Thus, my decision to serve as guest editor was enthusiastic when Bill agreed to devote not only one but two issues to this fundamental yet formidable topic.

Together with the assistance of my colleagues in the Massachusetts General Hospital Speech-Language Pathology Department, we identified the various specialty areas in our field and their recognized leaders. Each author was given two questions to address:

1. In what ways are speech-language pathologists effective and helpful?
2. How do we know we are effective; that is, do we make a difference?

Given these general questions, contributors were free to approach the subject within their specialty without restriction of content. Articles resulted in unique and creative ways to resolve the issues, as readers will discover.

We do not purport to have exhausted the entire span of specialty areas or viewpoints. What we have created, however, is a compilation of articles in 13 major specialty areas by knowledgeable contributors in the field of speech-language pathology.

This first issue includes efficacy of intervention articles in the following seven subject areas: Aphasia, Craniofacial Anom-

alies, Dysphagia, Early Language Intervention, Language and Learning Disorders in Adolescents, Phonological Disorders in Children, and Stuttering.

The subsequent issue will include articles on the following six subjects: Autism, Head Injury, Hearing Impaired Children, Laryngectomy, Motor Speech Disorders, and Voice Disorders.

All authors aggressively embrace efficacy studies. Several of them espouse single-subject design studies and provide the steps with which to implement them in a variety of settings. It is my expectation that after reading through these manuscripts, the reader will be better able to defend the value and effectiveness of treatment and to

pursue efficacy studies in the work place. Whether the reader is a generalist or specialist, these issues of *Seminars* will serve as a guide for efficient and effective clinical management through objective assessment of intervention and outcome.

I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to Anna M. Giarrusso and all of the staff of the Massachusetts General Hospital Speech-Language Pathology Department for their assistance and patience throughout this editorial experience.

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Guest Editor