

EDITORIAL

Transitions

As of this issue I'm taking over the reins of the editorship of this Journal. It is an honor to do such a job because it has been done so well by the previous editors. Recently that job was held by Dr. H. Jason, who only left it because his eyes acted up when he did the intense reading required of an editor. During his 3 years he has been able to do many things for which I am very grateful. In this space I will mention only three of his many accomplishments—the manuscript tracking system (fondly known as the "MTS" in the business!) to improve the correspondence with authors, reviewers, etc., the submission to Medline, and the "Making a Difference" section of the Journal in which stellar persons in our field are highlighted. In my country we have a saying: "If it's not broken, don't try to fix it!" The Journal, in my view, is certainly not broken, so I'm not about to try fixing it. In a few words, taking over from Hill Jason has been a pleasure for many reasons. Thank you, Hill, from the Network, its Journal, and from me.

For many reasons this has been a very difficult time in our world. For those of us who place a high value on human life as anyone in the helping professions does and especially those in the Network, I know we wish war and terrorism would stop. Gandhi once said something to the effect that if we follow the dictum of "an eye for an eye..." the world would soon be blind. I just hope and pray that such will not be the case. In any event I look forward to renewing the spirit of those who contribute to and read this Journal. During this very difficult time I received e-mails from such diverse places as the Philippines and Cuba. Many thanks to all of you.

The Network and anyone who believes in the values of the Network lost a very special friend this Fall, Professor Dr. Zohair Nooman. He was an inspiration to many of us, most certainly to me. I could go on and on about the many ways that he touched my life, but I'll save that until the next issue of the Journal, which will include not only my thoughts but also those of a person who worked with Zohair very closely as Associate Secretary General, Professor Dr. Henk Schmidt.

This editorial is for telling you about the Journal's future under a new editor. There are six things which I know Hill has been working on and certainly I will as well. They are: maintaining the overall quality of submissions; maintaining the integrity of the Journal especially its relation to its sponsor;

seeing to it that the Journal is useful to those who take the time to read it; increasing subscriptions; assuring that the educational innovations in health are addressed; and looking often at the dynamics of health professions education and communities. Since the Journal needs no immediate fixing, we have decided that issue 15(3) would be the appropriate one for the introduction of several changes. That will give me time to receive the input of people at the biennial meeting in Londrina. Generally, I hope to increase the inputs of faculty from developing countries and from students everywhere, increase the attention we pay to submissions from health professions other than medicine, and increase the attention paid to articles that highlight, as the name of this Journal does, the important relationship between education and health. In a recent volume of this Journal there was an interview of Professor Henk Schmidt, done by one of our able associate editors, Dr. Jan van Dalen. The question was asked of him, "(What) new issues (should) the Network focus on...?" His first concern is as pertinent to the Journal as it is to the Network as a whole. He said, "(Focus on) whether community-based education has had any effect on the practice of health care..." The Journal will certainly do its part in this regard.

In this issue there are several papers about teaching and learning, one on organizational issues, one on enhancing education and practice and one on community-related topics. In addition, of course, there are the usual sections on Abstracts from Other Journals, Reports and Announcements, Practical Advice, Making a Difference, Book Reviews, and the International Diary.

I want to end by expressing my heartfelt appreciation to all of those who contribute to the Journal—authors, reviewers, book reviewers, the book review editor, the managing editor, the associate editors, the editorial board, and others too many to mention. The Journal has been an important part of the Network's contribution for many years and I hope it will continue to be so.

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