

Changing of the guard

Formerly the *Journal of the Hong Kong Medical Association* which could trace its roots back to 1948, the *Hong Kong Medical Journal* continued in 1995 as the premier medical journal for Hong Kong. Significant changes that have occurred in the past 10 years include the incorporation of professional management, the adaptation of mandatory peer review, and the gaining of the vaunted MEDLINE/*Index Medicus* indexation.

As a world-class medical journal that we aspire it to be, the Journal has long taken the position of putting quality first. Our papers are chosen purely on the strength of the reviewer's recommendation, without regard to where they come from (local or overseas, institution or private practice), or from whom they come (academic heavyweights or medical students, regulars or first-timers). As an official publication of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine and the Hong Kong Medical Association, the Journal places equal preference no matter to which specialty a prospective paper belongs. The final criteria are always appropriateness, soundness, and—not the least—readability.

In the past 10 years, the Journal has had two editors-in-chief. Prof Joseph CK Lee, a pathologist, served between 1995 and 2000, while Dr YL Yu, a neurologist, served between 2001 and 2004. To them, we have nothing but admiration, for they have left us not only with a firm foundation but a clear vision—the Journal must stay with, or even ahead of, its times. Innovations need not be technical, but considered and goal-directed.

How should we, as on-going editors of the Journal, carry on? First, we have to ensure the survival of the Journal—no

small task in these financially challenged days. Second, we must continue to attract and publish quality papers, papers that truly reflect the standard of research and practice in Hong Kong and within our region. We know that many first-class papers go overseas and we have to first improve our standing among the world's medical journals. Getting an 'impact factor' for the Journal is one way, but we risk ending up with an undeservedly low score if our papers are not quoted elsewhere. Third, we must cater to the needs of our readers and authors. Without surrendering the Journal's academic identity, we will publish more articles of educational and general interest. Our editorial process must remain fair, timely, and helpful.

Unfortunately, for our unsung heroes—the reviewers—we cannot promise any innovation other than perhaps some technical improvement of the reviewing process. Their names can be found in another page of this issue of the Journal. Our wish is that they have found satisfaction and enjoyment from being part of the wider academic community.

It is said that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Let's hope that the incoming editorial team will change things, so that the Journal can stay the same—a source of knowledge, a channel of communication, and a means of diversion.

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