

EDITORIAL

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In May 2004, I took over the Editorship of the Scottish Medical Journal from Guy Fletcher. Over the past six years we have seen some changes in the appearance of the Journal, the management of the Board of the Journal and finally a new website by our webmaster Guy Fletcher. The quality of the manuscripts continues to improve as well as the quantity and our acceptance rate has inevitably had to be reduced to keep the high standards that the Scottish Medical Journal readership is accustomed to.

In 2009 we were able to secure funding to maintain the standard of the Journal in very difficult economic times. The Scottish Office funded a Supplement on Professionalism and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow on its Triennial Meeting. We are indebted to the sponsorship of all the Scottish Societies and organisations that have come on board and this number has continued to grow. We welcome the Scottish Urological Society who joined Scottish Medical Journal early in 2009 and also the oldest Scottish Society, the Scottish Paediatric Society, who joined later on in the year. Their Abstracts are published in this issue and apparently there are 150 new members who now receive the Scottish Medical Journal in addition to the current readership of 9,500. We continue to issue the Scottish Medical Journal quarterly and hope to have the next issue totally dedicated to Sports Medicine.

This issue covers a wide variety of highly relevant topics ranging from an audit on severe asthma, patients with haemochromatosis in rheumatology and joint replacement clinics, assisted conception and the safety of early discharge in patients with loop ileostomies. There are two audits in the paediatric population, one is the delivery of the clinical genetic service looking at referral and attendance rates in the paediatric population in south-east Scotland, the second paediatric audit is an analysis of outpatient follow up arrangements and non-attendance in a community of paediatric population.

Other original articles are on the lack of semen quality in assisted conception highlighting the reasons for failure in this method of conception and the ethics and morality of chaperoning during breast examination and the attitude and practice of consultant breast surgeons in the United Kingdom.

The cover highlights the revolution of tele-technology introducing telemedicine in the normal practice of medicine in Scotland. The article that highlights this is entitled 'Safety and effectiveness of telemedicine for neurology outpatients' and it comes from Aberdeen and Northern Ireland. The authors have clearly demonstrated that it confirms the feasibility of seeing new neurological referrals by video link and shows that the level

of patient acceptability is extremely high. This has been reported for the first time in the neurology population. Importantly they have shown that the necessary skill to see patients by video link can be acquired by a clinically experienced neurologist without extensive training in this new technology. The Scottish Executive has encouraged the use of tele-technology in E-health and is supporting this as part of the normal delivery of the services in Scotland for Child Health and for stroke patients initially over the next three years.

The Educational article on the use of statins in chronic renal disease is written by acknowledged experts in this field and it is a state of the art article and very useful for trainees and doctors who wish to be informed about the value of statins in these conditions.

The History section continues to be popular introducing this time 'The strange case of Sir Henry Gray' and also tracing the history of the development of rheumatology in Scotland as a specialty which has risen to dizzy heights in recent years. It also acknowledges the pioneers of the past who started this new specialty many of whom have been intimately associated with the Scottish Medical Journal over the years.

There are four book reviews in this Journal, one on Napoleon, another on the practicality of the foundation programme for junior doctors and two on radiation therapy and radiation biology.

Dr. Jill Murie continues to review the Case Reports and her one liners continue to assess very accurately the importance and the quality of these cases.

More recent changes with the management include Carol Parry as Sub Editor and Karen Anderson who represents the College on the Board of Management. We would also like to thank David Bilsland for his contribution to the Educational side of the Journal and he has now had to resign because of his other commitments as Clinical Director. We welcome Dr David Noble who will be replacing him in this aspect of education. We also welcome Dr Chris Isles as the new Secretary of the Board of Management of the Scottish Medical Journal and also Dr Asad Zoma, the new Treasurer.

Dr. Leyla Sanai has contributed to the Journal on a regular basis in her column *Coventina* on political issues and also recent advances in a wide variety of areas within medicine. Her contribution has always been refreshing and in a journalistic manner which is totally appropriate for the Scottish Medical Journal.

I would like to thank, on behalf of the Editorial Board, all the peer reviewers who have contributed to peer reviewing articles over the past year, 2009, and also the reviewers of books who have continued to help us with the large number of books that come to the Editor for peer reviewing.

Thank you once again.