

***The Psychiatrist* – a new name to reflect the ambition of your journal and the status of your profession**

Readers of the *Psychiatric Bulletin* (the *Bulletin*) will have observed several changes over the past year or so. The most obvious is the referencing system, which has changed from the Harvard (author, date) to the Vancouver (numbered list) system. The editorial board has expanded its membership beyond these islands to include colleagues from the USA, New Zealand and Korea. Authors' instructions now encourage the submission of longer reports and, behind the scenes, peer-review has been made more rigorous so that papers are now scrutinised by at least two assessors.

However, many things remain unaltered, including the number of papers submitted, especially by trainees, and the popularity of the journal itself. This is because it deals with clinical issues that affect everyday practice, written in an accessible style. In some respects the *Bulletin* has equivalents elsewhere: *Psychiatric Services*, published by the American Psychiatric Association, and *Australasian Psychiatry*, from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. These journals, like the *Bulletin*, are focused on psychiatric services, broadly defined, and are readable by all psychiatrists, from trainees to consultants. But in one important respect the *Bulletin* differs from these others – both are indexed in MEDLINE and are thus cited in the world's largest medical database, greatly enhancing their impact on practice. No such accolade attaches to the *Bulletin* and this may well be a legacy rooted in its origins.

In 1971, with the formation of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, a College newsletter entitled *News and Notes* began publishing information relating to College activities. Renamed *Bulletin of the Royal College of Psychiatrists* in 1977, in later years it began gradually accepting descriptive papers about service-related matters and metamorphosing into the *Bulletin* that we know today – no longer a newsletter for a membership organisation, but a learned, peer-reviewed journal.

To signal the progress made by the *Bulletin*, and to support its future development, the editorial board, with the backing of the Publications Management Board of the College, has taken a number of major decisions.

The most significant will be a name change from the January 2010 issue to *The Psychiatrist* (accompanied by a redesign). While the *Bulletin* is held in affection, the name harks back to the parochial newsletter of the 1970s. Why *The Psychiatrist*? The proposed change has been discussed at every editorial board meeting for the past year. Titles that reflect the multidisciplinary nature of modern psychiatric practice were put forward but these were all unavailable as they are already being used by other journals. Since the main readership will continue to be psychiatrists, and the College's other journals, as well as similar journals mentioned above, all incorporate the word 'psychiatry' it was deemed appropriate to include this in some form. Indeed, it could be argued that abandoning the term 'psychiatry' would be seen as a betrayal of the profession – hence the new title. As with the *Bulletin*, papers from other disciplines will continue to be welcomed but we should not be ashamed to call ourselves psychiatrists or of what psychiatrists do.

The second change is that we are now seeking indexing in MEDLINE in the course of 2010. Some will greet this news with alarm and may see this aspiration as showing a greater interest in the Impact Factor than in the needs of the readership. There is significant confusion about indexing and the Impact Factor. Inclusion in MEDLINE is different and distinct from indexing by ISI, the Institute for Scientific Information (owned by Thomson Reuters) that generates the Impact Factor. So if *The Psychiatrist* is fortunate enough to be accepted by MEDLINE, it still will not generate an Impact Factor and there are no plans to seek indexing by ISI.

Finally, so that more lengthy papers can be published, the extent of *The Psychiatrist* will increase.

How will these alterations affect the nature and quality of the papers to be published? The sections will continue as before and in particular papers on Education and Training will continue to be prominent as trainees are particularly engaged by these. The popularity of the e-Interview, obituaries and correspondence will also ensure their survival. It is hoped that the quality of papers generally will achieve a standard that will influence psychiatric practice internationally and, in keeping with the international ambition of the journal, submissions from outside Britain and Ireland will be welcomed. Information, for example, on the announcement of elections of College Officers will be published in *The Psychiatrist*, but most other College news will reach its members via the eNewsletter.

Change is always difficult as we leave the comfort zone of familiarity for uncharted waters. However, the purpose of these changes is to create a journal of influence while retaining its relevance and readability for practising psychiatrists. With your continuing support in the form of submissions, letters and peer-reviewing this can be achieved. The editorial board and I are most appreciative of all you have given to the *Bulletin* over the years and hope that you will feel able to embrace its successor, *The Psychiatrist*, as you come to know it.

Patricia Casey, Editor