

Editor's Comments: 2019

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Dear colleagues,

This is my last “Editorial Comments” column. Since 2008, I have been blessed with the good fortune to be Editor-in-Chief of the *Community Mental Health Journal*. You have trusted me to be the Editor of this fine journal, and it has been an honor and a privilege. After 12 years, it seems like a good time to pass the torch. It's also a good time to review how the journal has changed, particularly as we transition to a fabulous new Editor (Dr. Sandy Steingard).

No doubt about it, the journal has evolved; hopefully its evolution has mirrored the exciting and challenging revolution ongoing in psychiatric practice, and reflects the movement of the American Association for Community Psychiatry to respond to the changing world.

We have moved from a small publication (literally, it was a small red journal, about 5 × 8 in.) publishing several articles and book reviews quarterly; this year we are on track to publish 8 issues, with close to 200 pages per issue. In 2007, the Journal received 127 submissions; this year we are on track to receive 425. In 12 years, we've had 2889 submissions, ultimately accepting 1401. 911 unique reviewers have provided 4237 reviews. The numbers reflect one of our greatest challenges: a huge increase in submissions requires considerable editorial efforts (I read each one before adjudicating its fate), reviewer effort and recruitment. It now takes querying several reviewers to get the requisite two; our review process has slowed significantly. My apologies, as always, to the authors who have been impacted by our prolonged review process. A new work group has been formed to improve the quality of the process.

I believe the quality of the journal has always been good; hopefully, over the last 12 years, it's gotten even better. Following the expanded mission and vision of the AACP, exclusive focus of the journal on people living with serious mental illness has segued to broader topics, and populations. Submissions related to issues such as public health, systems of care, population health, and increasing technology have exploded. A personal goal I embraced was to expand our reach in terms of publishing from international submissions.

To learn from those providing care and performing research from the far corners of the globe has been eye-opening, humbling, and inspiring.

As our submission numbers grew, we were able to expand our Editorial efforts with Associate Editors (Michael Flaum, then Curtis Adams and Margie Balfour); you all know how much your efforts have helped the journal, and how thankful I am you joined the team. Our relationship with Springer Publisher has flourished and the support of its Editors, and Editorial Assistants has been incredibly helpful and very much appreciated.

A new editor has been identified and approved by the AACP Board and hired by Springer Publishers. Dr. Sandy Steingard picks up the torch effective November 1, 2019 (full disclosure, I will have submitted the Table of Contents for the January and February 2020 issues to allow her to hit the ground running). She is already engaging with advisors to help identify strengths and challenges for the journal and to develop new strategies that will maximize submission and review processes, as well as address the expanding purview of community psychiatry. I am confident she will grace the first 2020 edition with her own editorial comments to include her vision. I look forward to her leadership and the ever-improved journal.

Let me end with these comments. As readers and members of the AACP, you have honored me with this responsibility. As authors, you have honored those to whom you provide care, or administer programs, by creating an incredible array of articles. As reviewers who gave of your time and expertise, you have exceeded my expectation to provide stellar, thorough, helpful reviews that supported your colleagues through their publication process. My heartfelt thanks and appreciation for you all.

The future of this journal reflects the future of the AACP, and hopefully all of psychiatry. I thank you for allowing me to be part of its trajectory. I look forward to its future. I hope you will consider submitting an article, and embrace a review if it is sent your way! I know you will give your heartfelt support to our new Editor, Dr. Steingard.

Much love.

Jackie

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