
FROM THE EDITOR

A scientific and spiritual home

With the printing and distribution of this issue of *Palliative & Supportive Care* (*PS&C* Volume 2, Number 4), we complete and celebrate the second year of publication of this rather unique scientific journal. It may seem to be a small affair really, this scientific journal business, yet it is in fact larger than one initially appreciates. It requires the immense diligence and hard work of a rather large cadre of editors, publishers, reviewers, and of course the scientists and writers who so graciously present their work into our trust. But, what has been the most profound realization of the last year is the fact that scientists and clinicians around the world actually read and appreciate our “small” journal.

Gratefully, we can look to a rather impressive list of institutional and individual subscribers that has been amassed in the first two years of publication of *PS&C*.

We have had an average of 50 manuscripts a year submitted for each of the past two years, for publication in the four issues of *PS&C* that are published each year. Over 50 “Original Articles” representing empirical research in the field of psychosocial/existential/spiritual issues in palliative care have been published in the first eight issues of *PS&C*, averaging six per issue. This is a substantially larger number and percentage of manuscripts devoted to empirical research than that which is found in most journals dealing with palliative care, and we are proud of that fact. In addition, *PS&C* has been privileged to provide a home for both quantitative as well as qualitative research, by a multidisciplinary group of clinicians and scientists representing the fields of Psychology, Psychiatry, Nursing, Palliative Care, Oncology, Geriatrics, Social Work, Medical Sociology and Anthropology, Art and Music Therapy, and Integrative Medicine.

PS&C has also been a home for comprehensive reviews of topics of importance and interest to our readers, as well as an extensive clinical update and literature review to help our readers stay in touch

with the larger literature. Perhaps most unique, and dear to my own heart, is the fact that *PS&C* has been a home and outlet for the creative endeavors of our scientific community through our sections on Personal Reflections, Essays, and Poems/Fiction. Many of us are moved by spiritually intense experiences in our work with patients, and in our own lives, and I am proud to say that *PS&C* has been an outlet for expressions of this aspect of our lives.

Although the field of Palliative Care has experienced a decade of growth and emergence, I believe it is fair to say that the universe of clinicians and scientists who are particularly interested in the psychosocial, psychiatric, existential, and spiritual aspects of palliative care is relatively small. Of course, we are hopeful that, through the presentation of rigorous empirically based research, we will be able to expand this universe significantly to include all scientists and clinicians in the field. Still, the typical reader of *PS&C* may in fact feel that he or she is a “rare bird,” a lonely figure struggling to promote an agenda not easily adopted in a health care system whose priority is the financial bottom line.

That is why several recent experiences have been striking and meaningful to me as Editor-in-Chief of *PS&C*. I attend many conferences and scientific meetings around the world, as a presenter, participant, and in my efforts to promote readership of *PS&C*. I have had several experiences where young investigators in palliative care, psycho-oncology, and related fields have approached me and expressed gratitude for our efforts at *PS&C*. These young investigators (nurses, psychologists, social workers) expressed their delight that they at last had a “scientific and spiritual home” for their clinical and scientific interests. Perhaps Carrie Lethborg, M.S.W, and Family Therapist from Melbourne, Australia, put it best when she wrote: “I hope you don’t think this is too corny, but I just received my latest issue of *Palliative & Supportive Care* in the mail and

realized that, unlike other journals that arrive with some interest but also some despair, I was excited to rip open the package and see what was in this issue. For me the journal ‘hits the spot.’ It speaks to the depth of my work, but comes with the assurance of quality and rigour.” Thank you, Carrie.

Thank you to our readers, our editors, our reviewers, our contributors, and our colleagues at Cambridge University Press. This has been a won-

derful two years. We look forward to many more years marked by growth and expansion, but always keeping in mind that we must never stop being a “scientific and spiritual home” to our community of researchers, clinicians, and readers.

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Editor-in-Chief