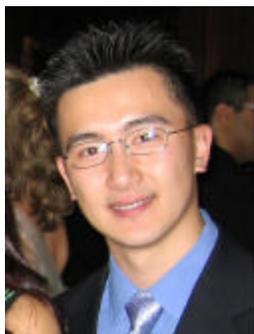


EDITORIAL

THE *MJM*: FINDING ITS PLACE IN A NEW ERA OF MEDICINE

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There is currently a shift in paradigm in medicine towards the practice of evidence-based medicine (EBM). Although EBM has been around for years, it has only recently received much-deserved attention. In short, EBM is the conscientious practice of using the best current evidence in making health care decisions for individuals or for the general population. EBM is firmly grounded in research-based evidence. In this issue, we are honoured to have two of McGill's experts, Drs. Eddy Lang and Joyce Pickering, write our featured articles on EBM.

The shift in focus in medicine has had an impact on other journals. For example, in June of 2004, the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* announced that it would no longer publish its student section, the *Student JAMA*. Since 1975, the *Student JAMA*, previously the *Pulse* and *MSJAMA*, primarily published commentaries, essays and editorials of interest to medical students. In addition, students made up the majority of the editorial staff while *JAMA* staff managed and assisted the editors. In reference to the dissolution of the student section, *JAMA* Editor-in-chief, Dr. Catherine D. DeAngelis, wrote, "today, with medical schools incorporating teaching about research design and critical appraisal of the literature into the curriculum, medical students are increasingly aware of and learning the importance of emphasizing evidence rather than opinion."⁽¹⁾ The student editorial board will continue to assist in reviewing student manuscripts submitted for publication directly to the *JAMA*. The end of the *Student JAMA* marked the beginning of a new elective programme in medical journalism open to fourth-year medical students at the *JAMA*.

So where does the *McGill Journal of Medicine* stand in these changing times? The *MJM* continues to be an

advocate of high quality medical and scientific research. The journal appreciates the value of the scientific method and devotes the majority of its pages to scientific evidence in the form of original research and review articles written primarily by students worldwide. However, we believe that it is important to maintain a balance in medicine and to recognize that not all aspects of medicine lend themselves to rigid study. The art of medicine still involves an exchange of ideas and opinions. Thus, in all of its issues, the *MJM* also features editorial letters, commentaries, and our Crossroads section, which explores the intersection of medicine and the humanities.

It has been almost ten years since the *MJM* began to publish student research and to train medical students in the process of peer review. We believe that our balanced approach to medical science will enable the *MJM* to continue to serve its goals of encouraging student research and thought in medicine. Since its inception, the *MJM* has been honoured to receive praise for its endeavours from many scientific authorities, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA*, and *Annals of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada*. We are also proud to announce that the *MJM* can now be found in online databases such as EMBASE. Thus, it appears that the *MJM* has stood the test of time. On the eve of its tenth anniversary publication, the journal continues to grow in its impact worldwide.

REFERENCES

1. DeAngelis CD, Fontanarosa PB. *JAMA* and Medical Students New Opportunities. *JAMA* 291:2872; 2004.

Steven Lin and **Naomi Lear** are the *MJM*'s ninth Editors-in-chief. They are both second year medical students at McGill University. Steven Lin received his B.M.Sc.(Hon.) in physiology from the University of Western Ontario. His research in cardiovascular disease has earned him scholarships from the Heart and Stroke Foundation and St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, Canada, and a publication in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. Naomi Lear completed her B.Sc.(Hon.) in psychology, with research focusing on depression and eating disorders. Her work in women's health earned her the YWCA Women of Distinction Award and the Forces Avenir Personality Award.