



CrossMark

Highlights from this issue

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Ian Wacogne, *Edition Editor*

As edition editor, I get to bask in the reflected glory of my section editors. I remember reading once, many years ago, that when Bill Gates perceived that he'd passed the peak of his programming skills, he took care to surround himself with clever people. I would struggle to draw any valid comparison between myself and Bill Gates, but this strategy does strike me as a very good one. It does make me a little nervous though, because my section editors do, mostly know more than me—and are good at creating commissions that I'd not thought of.

A good example is Sam Behjati's work in the Interpretations section. When we developed Interpretations some time ago I thought of it a little bit like a British National Formulary for tests. After all, if we can have nationally, or internationally, determined ways, presented in reproducible monographs for the medicines we use, shouldn't we have the same for the tests we use? Part of me thought that after a while we could bundle together the tests into a British National Compendium of Tests—one of many ideas that never went much further. I always get a little nervous, then, when Sam commissions on a test that I've been dismissive of, or have stopped using. I was quite pleased when, over the last few years, my referrals of children who had perhaps had anaphylaxis stopped having mast cell tests included, because I never knew how to use it, and it didn't seem to change what I thought I should do whenever I did try to use it. It was with trepidation, then, that I read the interpretation on mast cell tests (*see page 246*). And I concluded... well. I'm not going to tell

you that, am I? Spoilers and all that. If you need a shortcut, take a look at the boxes in the paper.

When Philippa Prentice joined the team we had some good conversations about what areas she might cover in her guidelines section. We strongly agreed on quite a few things. Firstly, we reckoned that most paediatricians would feel a bit guilty about not having read every relevant guideline in detail, despite the near universal recognition that to do so would take more time than we have in the day job. We also agreed that ordinarily we didn't want the guideline author to write the review. We had some discussion about the level of critical appraisal we should include—with the conclusion that our reviews should be neither sycophantic love letters, nor should they be a place where axes were ground. We also agreed that the constraint of having papers in a journal—the fact that we only allow a couple of pages where many guidelines run to tens or hundreds of pages—should become a virtue, to give brief, focused, readable articles. Until this issue, however, it never occurred to me that a guideline from the General Medical Council, the regulatory and licensing body for doctors in the UK, would suit this format, but again, by having cleverer people than me around, Philippa has commissioned an excellent paper on the guideline on candour (*see page 243*). There are lots of good summaries of this guideline, but this one is excellent, and is my editor's choice this month.

I'm running out of space, but there are two more section editors I'd like you to know about. The first is Mark Tighe, who takes light relief from handling all the images

articles in blue ADC to edit the Epilogue section. For obvious reasons, I'm not describing the articles in this edition, but he gives authors of all skills and backgrounds such tremendous support in getting their paper into print. Believe me, if you've had an interesting clinical experience with good images or data, and you can't get it into print with Mark's help, then I genuinely think that you may be beyond any help. And lastly, I'd like to mention John Apps, who with Bob Phillips edits the Research in Practice section. John's academic background, and apparently endless fascination with the extraordinary things that folk are doing out there in their research means he is always bringing to my attention things which I have trouble distinguishing from science fiction. There are great examples of both Mark and John's papers in this edition (*see pages 265, 268 and 271*).

Now, to close, two caveats. The first is to emphasise that I'm just highlighting a few of my section editors here—the fact that there are some I haven't mentioned should not be taken as any hint of my having lukewarm feelings about them. Sincerely, they're all great. The second is: you know when in a novel you get to the acknowledgments section and the author always thanks people who have helped, but emphasises that any remaining errors are his or her own? That.

As ever, I'm always happy to hear from you, and will be happy to put you in touch with this lovely band of folk if you have an idea that the world needs to hear more about.

ian.wacogne@bch.nhs.uk