

Diabetes: That Damned Ugly Disease

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This is my final issue as editor-in-chief of *Diabetes Spectrum*. Although it may be a cliché to say that these 3 years have flown by, it is also completely truthful. Editing this journal has been a challenging and wonderful opportunity.

As I prepare to sign off on the final issue of our tenure, I would like to thank my editorial team for their support and dedication and for the professional manner in which they approached each issue. Roger P. Austin, MS, RPh, CDE; Denise C. Charron-Prochownik, PhD, RN, CPNP; Betsy B. Dokken, PhD, NP, CDE; Katie Weinger, EdD, RN; and Fred W. Whitehouse, MD, have served admirably as associate editors, and Jackie Boucher, MS, RD, BC-ADM, CDE, and Martha M. Funnell, MS, RN, CDE, have been invaluable, first as associate editors and later as deputy editors. I am proud of the 12 issues we have published together.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank Managing Editor Debbie Kendall, the driving force that always kept us on schedule. Her attention to both the meaning and syntax of each article provided the final polishing to ensure the highest quality for each issue. In addition, our numerous editorial board members provided valuable feedback and creative ideas all along the way.

During these 3 years, we have made some significant changes to the mechanics of *Diabetes Spectrum*. Last year, Ms. Boucher and Ms. Funnell stepped up from their role as associate editors to become the journal's first two deputy editors. Ms. Boucher took responsibility for coordinating with the associate editors

and reviewing all of the articles they invited for our standing departments. Ms. Funnell served a similar function for the longer feature articles, both invited and unsolicited. Their work in these new positions allowed me, as editor-in-chief, to focus my attention on the From Research to Practice section that is the centerpiece of each issue. I found these positions to be helpful and expect that they will continue.

Another change we instituted dealt with our peer-review process. Historically, we have sent submitted articles to at least two reviewers. However, because of concerns regarding dualities of interest, additional safeguards have been instituted to ensure that articles are considered by an even greater number of reviewers. In addition, before sending an article out for review, we ask potential reviewers to disclose their own relevant dualities of interest. This additional safeguard is needed to ensure the continuing objectivity of the important information we publish.

As I reflect on the work we have done with *Diabetes Spectrum*, it is difficult not to reflect also on my 26 years as a career volunteer for the American Diabetes Association. A volunteer is defined as a person who offers herself or himself to perform willingly and without pay. So what is the driving force of the volunteer? What encourages people to become volunteers and continue giving of their time and talent? In short, what's in it for them?

A good friend of mine recently said, after learning that a mutual friend who lived most of her life with diabetes had died at age 50, "Diabetes

is a damned ugly disease. Every day we fight it, but it's a damned ugly disease." Volunteering helps us fight that damned ugly disease. The passion that volunteers bring to their many roles provides the force to continue chipping away at that damned ugly disease.

Yet, with multiple competing demands on each of our busy lives, fewer people are volunteering. And many of the former volunteer leaders on whom we could always depend now have less time to be engaged. For those of us who have volunteered for so many years, it is imperative that we identify and foster a new generation of volunteers and support the growth of new leadership within the diabetes community. We need to ensure that passionate volunteers continue to help in the everyday fight against diabetes.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served as editor-in-chief of *Diabetes Spectrum*. Taking this role was one more way I have been able to help to fight that damned ugly disease. And now, it is with great pleasure that I welcome Ms. Boucher as she steps up once again, this time from the position of deputy editor to that of editor-in-chief. An organized and able editor as well as a frequent author herself, Ms. Boucher, I have no doubt, will lend her own creativity and innovative spirit to the journal's tradition of providing critical information to enhance our readers' clinical skills.

At the end of the day, each of us hopes for the same thing; that the small piece we have added to the puzzle that is diabetes will help to improve the outcome for people with diabetes and bring us all closer to finding a cure.