



On Groundhog Day — a popular tradition in North America — we try to use the reaction of a rodent in February to predict how long winter will last. Though this may seem silly, it is somehow easier to accept 6 more weeks of a rough winter with the promise of a warmer spring ahead. If you are feeling COVID-19 fatigue, you are not alone. This has been a long winter already and 2022 brings the promise of a new, warmer “normal.” The team at *International Journal of MS Care* looks forward to many positive changes in 2022 with hopes for broader international reach and potentially new types of submissions incorporating videos and trainee work.

We can tell from a record number of submissions in 2021 that MS clinicians and researchers are not hibernating. The work goes on. Our 2021 theme issue celebrating 25 years of NARCOMS shows how far we have come in our understanding of the epidemiology, outcomes, interests, and needs of people with MS. We remain committed to advancing MS care globally and you will see from this issue’s articles that there is much work yet to be done.

As usual, our first issue of the new year includes abstracts from the International Symposium on Gait and Balance in Multiple Sclerosis (see the online version of this issue for the full abstract listing). The 11th annual meeting focused on people with mild or severe mobility disability, as these groups are often underrepresented in rehabilitation studies. Awareness of specific care needs and potential care interventions can have a significant impact on quality of life.

We are aware that people with MS can come from any ethnic or socioeconomic background. Effective patient care means meeting patients where they are. Berkovich and colleagues remind us how much influence providers have in helping patients understand the risk vs benefit of treatment. Our Iranian colleagues (Damanabi et al) reiterate the importance of

communication, understanding of MS, and the source of information in their qualitative study of self-management needs. Our CE article by Sullivan et al shares recommendations for management of transgendered persons with MS based on clinical experience and a literature review.

It’s a new year and, statistically, the most popular New Year’s resolutions are related to physical activity. A successful exercise plan depends on an honest assessment of current state (mostly chasing after kids for me), consideration of goals (back to running half-marathons), and review of successful interventions (lots of online advice). Sikes et al provide an assessment of the current state of activity in youth with MS based on actigraphy measurements compared with non-MS controls. Joveini and colleagues consider the goal of decreasing fatigue and the evidence supporting sensory interventions such as vestibular rehabilitation, vibration therapy, and robot-assisted therapy. Finally, Farrell et al report on the benefits of functional electrical stimulation cycling on lower limb asymmetry.

While our attention is focused on personal growth and improvement in a new year, we should remain mindful that others are experiencing stress and distress in ways that are difficult to quantify. Morrison and colleagues developed and validated the STRESS-MS scale to help identify persons with MS who are experiencing abuse or neglect. Opening a dialogue about this is important. Understanding what someone is facing and the resources available to them is the first step in making plans for a warmer spring.

Alas, Mr. Groundhog has predicted yet another 6 weeks of winter, but there’s no time like the present to start preparing for what lies ahead. Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2022 from the *IJM*SC crew!

—Mary Alissa Willis, MD
Associate Editor