

FROM THE EDITOR - Heather Dawson

SALUTE TO THE FUTURE

This issue of the *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing* marks yet another change within the life of the journal, as not only is this my last issue as editor, it marks the beginning of a new and exciting era with a new editor. For me it has been a challenging yet rewarding experience and one that I will probably miss over the next few months as I come to terms with the increase in available hours in my day. I am hopeful of spending more time with my family and increasing my research output - both of which have had little of my time over the past four years.

In this last editorial I would like to take the opportunity to summarise the advances made by *AJAN* over the past five years, thank the numerous reviewers and members of the Editorial Advisory Board, congratulate the incoming editor, and also pay tribute to the work of the previous editor, Natalie Newman, who passed away recently after a short illness.

During my time as editor *AJAN* has undergone significant change. While these changes herald significant visual difference, it is the content changes driven by the professional needs of nurses, which have made the most impact on the way in which the journal has operated in the past few years.

During Natalie's editorship, the professional development of nursing was going through first its infancy and then its adolescence where author guidance was often needed. In terms of the editor's role, this meant authors often required help with penmanship as much as with their research format. Natalie helped numerous nurses through this phase to publication and the profession of nursing in Australia has much to thank her for.

More recently, the profession required a place to publish the ever-increasing numbers of research manuscripts pouring forth from all manners of places, including academic, clinical and other research entities. During this phase, the editor's role has focused on building up a cohort of nurse experts in a variety of areas to be

reviewers of the numerous articles sent to *AJAN* and putting in place systems to deal with these. Without these reviewers, the journal would not be able to offer the blind peer review process, and the subsequent professional feedback numerous authors have received over the past few years.

For their part in *AJAN*'s journey, I wish to sincerely thank all those reviewers who have been part of this process during my editorship. I have relied heavily on those who are considered expert in their areas, for, in a journal such as this, which accepts papers from all areas of nursing and includes all research methodology, it would be an impossible task for one person to know it all.

During my time as editor, I have watched while the profession of nursing in Australia has steadily increased their research output to the current staggering amounts. An average week would see two new manuscripts arrive at the journal office. At any one time this equates to approximately 15 manuscripts out to double blind, sometime triple, peer review. Of these, *AJAN* can publish only 20 per year! It is no wonder then that the journal has had a significant increase in the overall quality of the papers published. So much so that leading professors in nursing and related areas can now frequently be seen to publish in *AJAN*.

In addition, with the advent of the Editorial Advisory Board, the general direction of *AJAN* has been guided by the excellent suggestions of the inaugural members and by the current committee members. I would like to thank them all for their invaluable input.

The *AJAN* would not be possible without the authors therefore I would like to congratulate the nurse authors of Australia and ask them to keep up their prolific output. My advice to them is 'if at first you don't succeed, try try again' as perseverance is definitely a must for authors in the current climate.

Finally, let me congratulate the incoming editor.