

Guest Editorial

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Page | 1

I was honoured to be asked to write the first guest editorial for this new open access journal that has been launched to encourage students of health and social care to submit their work for publication.

There is no doubt that health and social care practice should be underpinned by robust evidence that is easily accessible to all practising nurses. The introduction of open access publishing will play a massive role in ensuring that such evidence is freely available. However, whilst there are examples of widely published clinicians, writing for publication has traditionally been considered, by many, to sit solely within the realms of academia with many practitioners, and indeed some academics, lacking the confidence or the writing skill to believe that their work is worthy of such lofty ambitions (Driscoll & Aquilina 2011).

The introduction of this journal will allow students of health and social care to hone their craft at an early stage of their career and facilitate the development of both their writing skills and, more importantly, their ability to critically analyse and synthesise their thoughts and those of others. Developing these skills in the formative stage of a health and social care professional's development will hopefully lead to a more mature and analytical professional who is able to articulate their thoughts and base their decisions on the most up to date critically reviewed evidence.

However, the success of this publication will not be solely dependent on the quality of submissions. The editorial team and, in particular, the reviewers will have a key role to play in the journal's success or dare I say it failure. Unlike any other publication, this journal will attract submissions from inexperienced authors who are often taking the first step into the world of academic writing. They may lack the finesse that many reviewers will expect when scrutinising academic papers and there is a need to acknowledge this inexperience during the review process and ensure that feedback is both constructive and encouraging. Conversely, it is vital that the journal aspires to print high quality outputs relevant to the audience. It is therefore imperative that the reviewers do not accept poor quality submissions believing that their role is purely to support the author on their publishing journey. To do so would undermine the quality of the periodical and demean the value of other papers published within the journal. The reviewers will need to adopt a balanced approach when reviewing submissions and if this is achieved the quality and quantity of submissions will no doubt be high.

I would like to congratulate the publishing house and the editorial team for identifying the need for such an innovative journal and would encourage student nurses to consider submitting papers to this unique publication. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing your name in print for the first time and I am confident with the right processes in place that the journal will go from strength to strength and will be a welcome addition to the health and social care press.

Reference

Driscoll J, Aquilina R (2011) Writing for publication: A practical six step approach. *International Journal of Orthopaedic and Trauma Nursing*, 15 pp. 41–48