

A Milestone

This special issue of the *Australian Journal of Primary Health* on comparative approaches to primary health care is timely. The AJPH has been published for 12 years. Over that time it has developed a unique blend of research, comment and practice articles covering the range of interests embodied in primary health. We have regularly published special issues to highlight important themes. The first of these was in 1999 on health promotion evaluation. Subsequently, we have had issues on primary health care (2000), the future of primary health care (2002), chronic disease management (2003), addressing inequity through primary care (2004), reflections on the Australian primary health care sector (2005), and health care in community settings (2006).

The AJPH has progressively become more international. The special issue on comparative approaches is part of this process. We are keen to publish papers from both Australian and international authors and to include papers that have both global and local application. It is important that Australian primary care perspectives are part of an international debate.

The aim of all journals is to make a difference to research and debate. This year the AJPH has been selected for coverage in the Social Science Index Expanded (SCIE) and the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). This is a significant milestone for the Journal.

Scholarly publication is driven by an interesting mix of community spirit, commitment to discovery and debate and, of course, self-interest. I hope it's more of the former than the latter for editors and authors, but then why research or write if you don't want it to be noticed and have an impact, and, after all, it's a rare academic or professional researcher who

doesn't occasionally want to be promoted for the work they have produced.

Ultimately, though, the worth of a journal is in its impact as judged by its readers, who use the ideas and results it contains. Beginning a scholarly journal is a significant leap of optimism and hope; success depends on people wanting to publish in the journal and on readers finding it worthwhile. There is little point if no one sends papers or if no one reads them.

Fortunately, we have a loyal and stable readership and, from humble beginnings, demand to publish in the AJPH now significantly exceeds our publication capacity. The quality of the papers in the Journal is good, thanks to strong demand from authors and to the diligent work of that other group that makes a journal successful—our reviewers. Pro bono reviewing of scholarly papers in a busy world is really the ultimate statement of good will to the process of research, scholarship and debate. We have also been lucky to have an excellent production team.

Inclusion of the AJPH in the SCIE and SSCI will make papers published in the AJPH more widely accessible to the international community interested in primary health. It will ensure that Australian debates, interests and findings increasingly become part of the global community of ideas about primary care. It will also allow us to make judgements about the extent to which the Journal is cited by others, as the Journal Impact rating comes on stream. Impact ratings will give us an opportunity to assess the extent to which papers in the Journal influence the debates we cover and to benchmark the Journal against comparable publications.

Hal Swerissen
Co-Editor