


Sparkling light in sexual health

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The light of love is always in us, no matter how cold the flame. It is always present, waiting for the spark to ignite, waiting for the heart to awaken and call us.

-bell hooks

How can an academic journal spark the light of love in us? How can we use a journal to ignite new ideas, spur collaboration, and bring people together around the topic of sexual health? Since Professor Christopher Fairley launched the journal *Sexual Health* in 2004, the journal has done just this. The journal is focused on multi-disciplinary research on sexual health as described by the World Health Organization – a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being related to sexuality.¹ The journal is ranked in the top 25% of journals (Q1) in public, environmental, and occupational health.² But more important than rankings, *Sexual Health* research has contributed to important policy changes in Asia and more widely.

As the new co-Editors-in-Chief of the journal, we are excited about taking the journal in four directions focused on clinical impact, open science, building capacity, and improving the submission process. First, we will continue to publish research that directly impacts clinical management and programs. For example, we will launch a new article type on position statements. These articles will review recent evidence on emerging topics related to sexual health. Given that there may not be sufficient evidence for a formal guideline process, position papers can be timely and useful for clinicians and others making decisions. We welcome position papers from professional societies, non-governmental organisations, and other groups.

Second, we are committed to expanding an open science approach to research. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development defines open science as unhindered access to scientific research, public access to research data, and collaborative research enabled by technology and incentives.³ Expanding options for unhindered access to the journal will ensure that published manuscripts have maximal impact, meet funder requirements, and fulfil obligations to the public. We will encourage all original data sets to be deposited in a data repository to increase data use and stewardship. Finally, we will publish data from crowdsourcing open calls^{4,5} and related open science activities.

Third, we aim to build capacity for sexual health research by publishing articles on methods and practical guides. Many journals neglect these types of articles, despite their practical importance. Practical guide articles provide a ‘how to’ approach that facilitates learning, mentorship, and capacity building. This new article type will help build capacity for high-quality sexual health research in diverse settings.

Finally, we will use a human-centred design approach to improve the experience for authors. We are open to suggestions for ways to make submitting to the journal easier, more streamlined, and more user-friendly. Please email us with ideas to make this process easier.

Sexual health is not simply about infections but encompasses a wide range of disciplines. Manuscripts on the integration of sexual and reproductive health, sexual pleasure and well-being, and participatory approaches will be particularly welcome. We thank Professors Fairley and Chan for their enduring commitment and leadership and hope to continue this tradition of excellence moving forward.

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Conflicts of interest. The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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