

EDITORIAL

From the Editor-in-Chief

James J. James, MD, DrPH, MHA

This issue of *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness (DMPHP)* marks the beginning of the journal's third successful year of publication. I am pleased to report that together we have made significant progress toward our goal of being both the preeminent and the integrating voice for the disaster medicine and public health preparedness communities. We have further endeavored to expand the journal's scope of content to provide research and insights from the multiple disciplines that contribute to effective preparation and response activities. These disciplines include the medical, nursing, public health, emergency medical services, law, ethics, education, public safety, and public policy communities. As the result of these efforts, we believe that we have made significant progress toward our goal of establishing *DMPHP* as a comprehensive multidisciplinary resource that unifies all of those dedicated to the improvement of the public health, safety, and well-being. The relevance of these efforts to our everyday work in preparedness and response have continued to be underscored by the unfortunate events that have beset our global communities during the course of this past year, including the Sichuan earthquake in China, Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, the Mumbai, India, terrorist attacks, and a multitude of natural disasters within our own borders.

This past year also marked the accomplishment of several specific objectives. First and foremost was the selection of *DMPHP* for indexing by the National Library of Medicine, within 1 year of publishing our first issue. As would be expected, this event has translated into a considerable increase in our credibility and visibility as a scholarly publication. These achievements are evidenced by the increased number of *DMPHP* articles receiving significant media attention during the past year. Moreover, the focus of articles published within the journal has expanded to include guidelines for emergency ventilator allocation,¹ analyses of mental health distress among Hurricane Katrina evacuees,² examinations of the Interstate 35W (Minnesota) bridge collapse,³ and the study of Katrina-related deaths.⁴ In addition to publishing high-quality original articles, the journal also marked its first copublication with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/*Morbidity and Mortality Weekly*.⁵ We look forward to pursuing additional joint publications to provide timely and salient information to our readership.

Also crucial to the continued success of *DMPHP* as a peer-reviewed scientific journal is the continuing increase in both the volume and overall quality of submissions for publication. In the past year we have received in excess of 140 unsolicited

manuscripts, which represent an increase of approximately 50% over those received during our first year of publication. To manage this increase in manuscripts we have had the benefit of doubling our pool of distinguished reviewers to support the journal. Such an increase in manuscripts and qualified reviewers has made it possible for us to become even more selective as we continue our efforts to publish the highest quality research and commentary available within the field of disaster medicine and public health preparedness. We are accepting about 30% of our submissions, a rate that is comparable to that of other well-established and prestigious peer-reviewed medical research publications. Our progress in this regard has translated into steadily increasing subscription rates and citations within other peer-reviewed journals. We anticipate that these accomplishments will translate into a meaningful increase in the journal's impact factor within the next 2 years.

DMPHP's staff has been complemented and supported by a group of august, dedicated, and committed individuals from all relevant disciplines who serve on our editorial board. Together we fully intend to build upon our 2008 successes throughout the 2009 publication year. These efforts will include the continued pursuit of strategic partnerships with key organizations and professional societies. We will also continue our efforts to publish ahead of print articles of significant import to ensure that our readers have direct and timely access to critical information. As more content is made available online, the *DMPHP* staff will continue to expand the content and utility of the journal's Web presence as an additional service to the disaster medicine community. A significant effort will be made to reach out to our subscribers and prospective authors to establish an ongoing and interactive exchange regarding the evolving science within the fields of disaster medicine and public health preparedness, as well as the policies and programs informed thereby. Finally, we are working to encourage additional submissions by taking positive efforts to reduce our turnaround time for reviewing submitted manuscripts to a maximum of 30 days.

In summary, we are proud to report that *DMPHP* has benefited from significant gains in recognition, quality, and distribution. On a personal note, I wish to thank all of our colleagues who have contributed content, reviewed submissions, cited our works, and unselfishly endeavored to bring about the great successes that the journal has enjoyed. I look forward to your continuing support and involvement as we collectively strive to build the journal in the coming years.

About the Author

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