

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 5 Issue 2 of the *Journal of Radiotherapy in Practice*.

Now that the restructuring of the Editorial Board is complete, it is timely to welcome the following new members: Jane Head (Cambridge, UK) and Noreen Sinclair (London, UK). We look forward to their contributions towards the Journal's continued development.

The newly reconstituted Editorial Board met for the first time during March 2006 at the offices of Cambridge University Press. A lively and productive meeting reaffirmed the existing aims and scope of the Journal. However, in addition to our aim to publish quality articles and research from the fields of radiotherapy practice and clinical oncology, was a recognition that an evolving aim of the Journal, since its inception, has also been to nurture and support "first time authors" through to publication. This is an aspect of our work which we wish to continue and enhance. To this end the Editorial Board would encourage the submission of manuscripts from new authors, and assure them of a positive and supportive review process towards publication.

The policy of inviting Guest Editorials focussing on current and topical issues will continue, as can be seen again with the contribution from Jane Head and colleagues in this issue. This is very much your Journal, so if you have any suggestions for the topics/foci for Guest Editorials or authors, or if you would like to contribute to this aspect of the Journal's provision, please contact the Editors-in-Chief.

A previously occasional series of Book Reviews will henceforth become a regular feature in *JRP*. To this end, we are delighted to welcome Professor Andy Beavis (from the Editorial Board), in his new role as Book Reviews Editor.

Book Reviews provide a key means of helping practitioners and departments to discriminate between an often bewildering array of new texts

published in the field, and inform purchasing decisions. In this capacity, Professor Beavis will coordinate an ongoing programme of Book Reviews in addition to drawing up clear, revised guidelines for book reviewers in concert with Cambridge University Press. If you are interested in undertaking a Book Review on behalf of *JRP*, or have suggestions for texts you would like to be considered for review, please contact Professor Beavis.

In order to better reflect the international dimension of our readership, a new initiative from the Editorial Board is to promote some cultural comparisons of process and practice in radiotherapy and oncology throughout the world. This will not only foster the dissemination and sharing of experience, but allow meaningful comparison to inform prospective developments. Some members of the Editorial Board are already looking to compare a typical patient pathway across a number of countries. The Editors-in-Chief would be happy to receive ideas or suggestions for other foci for cultural comparison.

This issue of *JRP* commences with a Guest Editorial from Jane Head and Donna Routsis exploring the value of a more business focussed approach in delivering new ways of working in radiotherapy services. This paradigm shift in thinking and approach has contributed significantly to achieving an efficient and effective service, and makes very interesting reading.

The second Guest Editorial in this issue is both timely and topical in the context of mandatory CPD requirements for therapy radiographers and other allied health professionals in the UK and overseas. Linsey Duncan-Pitt and Shane Sutherland explore the potential for using e portfolios with health care practitioners and students. They explore the benefits of e portfolios not just as a means of recording achievement, but to facilitate reflection on practice and help create communities which may enhance learning and development for participants.

Next, Donna Routsis and colleagues investigate the complex issue of whether extended working days are sustainable in radiotherapy, in the context of linear accelerator treatment delivery. Given that internationally we are experiencing a shortage of therapy radiographers, maximising the efficiency of this limited resource is a challenge faced by many colleagues. The authors present some interesting results from a modelling exercise undertaken in their department.

It is both timely and important to receive the article from Tracey Ellis and colleagues regarding the implementation of radiographer-led review clinics in their department. In many departments in the UK and overseas, advances in the role of the therapy radiographer have been implemented in a variety of spheres of practice. It is important that the effectiveness of such initiatives is formally evaluated, and the Editors-in-Chief would welcome the receipt of other such contributions and audits for publication in *JRP*.

Melanie McLean and Denyse Hodgson present the findings of a study designed to investigate patients' perceptions regarding the introduction of breast gowns in a radiotherapy department. With the high workloads and pressures associated with modern day radiotherapy service delivery, it is crucial that we do not lose sight of the patient being at the centre of everything we do. This study explores the issue of breast gowns with a particular focus on privacy and dignity and emphasises the importance of recognising the emotions of patients.

The next article marks a shift towards a more technical flavour in the remainder of this issue.

Jacqueline Richards evaluates the role of ultrasound in the verification of external beam radiotherapy to the prostate. The susceptibility of this organ to movement and alteration of position makes this a timely review of one approach to help mitigate the problem.

Next up, Buskirk and colleagues from the USA evaluate the role of retrograde urethrography in treatment planning for salvage radiotherapy in patients with increasing PSA levels after radical prostatectomy. This technique would seem to diminish the likelihood of a "geographical miss" in terms of the prostate apex.

Finally in this Issue, James Chow and colleagues in Canada verify physics modelling improvements, in a new software release for their treatment planning system, with a particular focus on the previously problematical peripheral dose profile for small fields with MLCs.

As Editors-in-Chief, we would encourage colleagues to continue to interact with "your" *Journal of Radiotherapy in Practice*. We welcome and crave your involvement, participation and views. Whether you wish to contribute Letters to the Editors, an article for submission, or would be interested in becoming a book reviewer or article referee, we would be delighted to hear from you. Further information about *JRP* can be found by visiting the following website: www.journals.cambridge.org/jid_JRP

David Eddy and Angela Duxbury
Editors-in-Chief