Commentaries

The End of Medicine and Health/ Rhode Island (on paper)

“Money makes the world go round.” Or so it seems. I became editor-in-chief of this journal in January 1999, at a time when the journal was facing closure due to financial problems. Forces at the Medical Society were in conflict. Money was tight and some RIMS members thought the journal was a luxury that was no longer affordable. Luckily, a core group thought the journal’s relatively low cost was worth the investment despite the financial crunch. I was given an uncertain, but short time to make the journal more solvent and somehow muddled through, until now. The RIMS has always been extremely supportive, but with the prolonged economic collapse all around us, the journal’s support from outside organizations, the RI Department of Health, the American College of Physicians, RI Quality Partners and even Brown University, have dried up, leaving the RIMS with increasing financial responsibility and increasing cost for the journal.

With financing no longer possible, the journal, at the behest of the RIMS, has agreed to halt its publication in print. The journal will not, however, give up the ghost. We will continue, but in a new, web-based format. This will be new territory for this editorial staff and we hope you will make the transition with us. You can access new and old journal issues via the RIMS website, even if you’re not a RIMS member. We invite your suggestions for the journal as we metamorphose.

Our goals are in our mission statement below. We are open to change and welcome your thoughts.

– Joseph H. Friedman, MD

Disclosure of Financial Interests

Lectures: Teva, General Electric, UCB
Consulting: Teva; Addex Pharm; UCB; Lundbeck
Research: MJFox; NIH; EMD Serono; Teva; Acadia; Schering Plough
Royalties: Demos Press

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MEDICINE & HEALTH/RHODE ISLAND:
Its mission and its future.

The monthly medical journal of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS), now called Medicine & Health/Rhode Island, is an independent publication distributed to the physicians and medical students within this state as well as to selected medical libraries elsewhere in the United States. And while it attempts to reconcile the purposes of both the state’s practicing medical community and its academic cadre of physician-teachers, the journal has and will continue to set its own independent agenda. It has no bylaws; and so the membership of its editorial board (and even the choice of its editor) has resulted from a series of informal, ad hoc decisions within the RIMS. Indeed, in the last six decades, the journal has had but three editors.

The funding of the journal, initially, has been borne solely by the RIMS. In recent years modest support has also been provided by the Rhode Island Department of Health, the Warren Alpert School of Medicine, Brown University, and the Rhode Island Quality Partners. And while the bulk of its operating costs have come primarily from the RIMS, the journal considers itself as reflecting the views and purposes of the entire medical community of Rhode Island: the state’s practitioners, medical students, administrators, medical faculty, health professionals and medical research workers.

We see the Journal as a vehicle aimed at the practicing physicians of Rhode Island—whether they be in private practice, on the staff of the state’s hospitals or as part of the many colleges and universities of the state. The journal offers a venue for them to express their clinical or investigative findings; for the academic faculty at Brown University to publish their clinical or research results; but also as a platform for local medical students, resident physicians and research fellows to learn the rudiments of medical writing; for medical professionals to make the community aware of testing or clinical expertise that may not be widely known to be available, even with our small state; and finally, as a forum where allied health professions such as local schools of public health, pharmacy and nursing, may share their concerns and aspirations as the business of health care takes on new and unanticipated challenges.

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