



CrossMark

Highlights from this issue

doi:10.1136/archdischild-2017-313633

Ian Wacogne, *Edition Editor*

I'm wondering where an August edition of *Education & Practice* might be read. I'm writing this shortly after we've just received the most recent update of our impact factors—and for *Education & Practice* it is gratifyingly stable, especially since impact factor is something we've never chased. Editors of journals have a number of metrics which hint to them that their journal is achieving some sort of relevance in the world. Among other things, we look at impact factor, subscriptions, downloads and web page visits. But I'm not so sure that this tells me what I'd like to know, really. If you've heard me speak about writing for the journal, you might have heard me describe 'wrapper to recycling time'. What I mean here is the time that elapses between you—perhaps reluctantly—removing the journal from the cellophane wrapper and eventually placing it in the recycling. Of course, this might be very rapid indeed—it can be measured in minutes for some journals I am sent—and might be falsely elevated by being placed in a pile for reading later. So, then we could have another metric—the stickiness of the journal. I don't mean whether or not the journal has come within a metre of a toddler—I mean when you start, even casually, looking at the journal, how hard is it then to put down? I could add to that a 'dog-eared-ness'—does it look like this journal is actually carried around for a bit in a handbag or rucksack, glanced at on the bus, referred back to. I could go wandering around emergency departments and assessment units in the middle of the night, trying to find out if people refer back to articles half-remembered to help

them decide what to do. I could amble around conferences, chatting to folk and waiting for them to say: "Actually, I throw all the rest of it away but your bit—I really do read that". I could find some copies of folk who've been on holiday recently and see if I can shake sand from the pages. Well, maybe that's taking it a bit too far—I'd personally prefer to wind down with something completely different.

When I'm commissioning for the Fifteen Minute Consultation section, there's a line I include in all of my formal commissions: that the paper could 'be used at 3am by a tired but intelligent doctor to make the right decisions'. Although our sections in the journal have different emphasis, I hope that you would agree while reading that this aim is mostly met. For example, in the Medicines Update this month Rowena McCartney, Alexandra Bailey and Helena Champion write about ketogenic diets (*see page 194*). Although there will often be expert advice on hand, this isn't always the case—and I will freely admit that I once wrecked a child's ketogenesis with my choice of therapy. The general guidance in this paper—have a look, and the bulleted text in the page preceding this—is a model of clarity, and for this reason it is this month's Editor's Choice. This paper was edited by Sharon Conroy, who has been an absolute bedrock for *Education & Practice*. She authored a paper in the very first edition in June 2004, and now after 13 extremely productive years she's decided to step down as an editor. I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to her for all her support to the journal; I know that I will miss her contribution hugely.

At 3am the reader isn't dim, but they are dimmed. The online cartoon, Saturday Morning Breakfast Cereal summarises our aim in a cartoon—with swears—that you can find by searching for SMBC and 'science writing'. In short, if your subject matter is complex—which ours usually is—and your average sentence is easy to understand, then you are beginning to produce great writing. We try to judge great writing, and we put our authors through quite a lot so that you can read the journal when and where you need to. In these pages, you can find an article on shunts (*see page 170*) you could read in the bathroom near the assessment unit, a paper on a child with persistent tachypnoea (*see page 222*) you could read in the canteen between baby checks and a paper on freckling (*see page 220*) which may well be one of the few papers you should read on the beach. There's a paper you can consult while you are on the phone with colleagues in mental health to share care of a young person with anorexia nervosa (*see page 175*), a paper you might look at while you're settling into a new city having just become a consultant and starting doing clinics, and a paper you might read under a bright light, all about phototherapy (*see page 207*).

One last thing. If you wanted to get involved in writing, and if you wanted one of us to come and talk with your group—at a training or study day, or other teaching event—then please do get in touch and we'll see what we can do. As ever, if you've suggestions, then please do get in touch. I'd love to hear of any strange places you read the journal.

ian.wacogne@bch.nhs.uk