



Carolyn O'Shea

Your new year with AFP

2013 has been around long enough now for us to have passed the 'it really can't be' stage, and hopefully you are approaching the new year with purpose and curiosity and finding it full of kindness, reward and laughter.

2013 brings many new things to, and changes for, *Australian Family Physician*. The first is the significant upgrade to our website (launched toward the end of 2012). The upgraded website has a new look and improved functionality: it adapts to whether you are reading *AFP* on your desktop, laptop or tablet, which makes navigation easier; podcasts can now be found on the front page, or with the relevant issue, for those wanting to consider an article topic in a different way; there is improved search capabilities, with the addition of an option for browsing articles by topic, type or author; articles can be read in HTML and downloaded as a PDF; and references are now linked to allow for easy searching in PubMed or to the relevant URL. You can also download the citation to your common citation managers.

Another exciting new function on our website is 'e-letters', where readers can submit e-letters about the articles published in *AFP*. It is hoped this new function will provide a forum for comment, feedback and discussion about the articles and topics covered in *AFP* and also allow readers the opportunity to engage with the *AFP* authors and with other readers. E-letters (and their responses) will be considered for the printed version of *AFP*, allowing everyone the opportunity to read the best of the discussions. The first of the e-letters, submitted by some of our intrepid readers, are published in the letters section of this issue of *AFP*. I encourage you to visit our website and join in the discussions by submitting an e-letter.

This year, the team at *AFP* brings relevant new focus topics and an exciting new series on non-drug management. Glasziou¹ discusses the

importance of this in his guest editorial, and the first article in the series – the Epley manoeuvre – follows.² Also returning later this year will be our 'Tests and results' series and our 'A is for aphorism' series.

2013 also sees many changes to the *AFP* team. We are sad to lose our two medical editors, Dr Kath O'Connor and Dr Rachel Lee, who are leaving us to focus on new challenges and opportunities. Kath started with *AFP* in 2007 as the inaugural Publications Fellow. Her love of the written word and continual quest to ensure that the authors voice is expressed in clear accurate language has been an invaluable part of what makes *AFP* such a readable and accessible publication for general practitioners. Kath's clinical experience, initially in outer metropolitan regions of Victoria and more recently in rural practice in Castlemaine, has allowed her to articulate what GPs need to help them in their daily practice.

Rachel, also a former Publications Fellow, has been with *AFP* for the past 4 years. Her interest in general practice and all other areas important to our profession, with a desire to provide useful information to readers in all their roles, will be greatly missed.

And Dr Sophie Samuel is finishing her year as *AFP*'s Publications Fellow. We wish Kath, Rachel and Sophie the best for the future and thank them for their wonderful contribution to *AFP*, and for their support and friendship to the *AFP* team. I am certain that they will enjoy and succeed in all their future endeavours.

We are very fortunate to have Dr Glenn Duns, Dr Stephen Margolis and Dr Sarah Metcalfe starting as our new medical editors, and Dr Melissa Tan as this year's Publications Fellow. We welcome them all and look forward to working with them as we continue to ensure *AFP* meets the varied roles of Australia's GPs – as clinicians, researchers, educators, practice team members and opinion leaders.

The focus of this month's *AFP* is 'medications'.

Prescribing is such an everyday yet complex action for GPs. The risks, benefits, comorbidities and alternatives that get considered in the decision to prescribe integrate so many elements of our knowledge – from the individual patient, to the condition, to the medication. Smith³ provides an overview of the assessment of adverse drug reactions to help us ascertain whether a patient's reaction was an allergy, intolerance or side-effect. Bell and colleagues⁴ consider prescribing and the older patient with renal impairment, while Smith and Desmond⁵ consider prescribing in patients with abnormal liver function tests. And finally, Lucas and Donovan⁶ remind us of when drug monitoring may be indicated.

I hope that the articles in this issue of *AFP* – and our upgraded website – help connect you with *AFP* in new and useful ways.

Author

Carolyn O'Shea MBBS, FRACGP, MMed, is Senior Medical Editor, *Australian Family Physician*, Senior Medical Educator, Victorian Metropolitan Alliance and a general practitioner, Greensborough, Victoria.

References

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correspondence afp@racgp.org.au