The expanding universe of *Pain Research & Management*

With this issue of *Pain Research & Management* we move from quarterly to bimonthly publication. This major change reflects a number of significant advances in the scientific study and clinical management of pain. First, and most basic, there is an abundance of strong to excellent manuscripts being submitted to the *Journal* to support increased editorial pages. Most of the major journals focusing on pain are enjoying this increase in scholarly productivity. The data behind this boost are less clear, but no doubt a growing number of scientists and practitioner-scholars are engaged by studies of the scourge of pain.

It would be of great interest if we knew how many scientists and practitioners were active in the study of pain, and how much public and private research support was being committed to the field. Surveys have not been undertaken, as yet, but there are many signs of burgeoning interest and concern. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research are supporting at least two major Strategic Initiatives in Health Research that focus on training the next generation of pain researchers – one focusing upon Pain in Child Health (1) and the other pursuing the scope of Pain: Molecules to Community (2). There are major research initiatives at Canadian universities; for example, the University of Toronto Centre for the Study of Pain and the McGill Centre for Research on Pain. The province of Quebec has supported the Quebec Pain Research Initiative since 2000 in an attempt to coordinate pain research efforts in the province. Other initiatives known to me are found in St John's, Fredericton, Halifax, Sherbrooke, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton, London, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Prince George, Vancouver and Victoria, and I recognize this is only my personal, surface list.

But of course, burgeoning research and practitioner communities would not exist without expanding recognition of the personal, social and community toll exacted by the immediate and long-term consequences of traumatic or uncontrolled pain. Every issue of *Pain Research & Management* addresses some feature of this serious challenge. Fortunately, there are signs that Canadians at grassroots, public policy and major organizational levels recognize both the problem and the potential for intervening successfully. In 2005, the Senate of Canada

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declared that the first week of November annually would be Pain Awareness Week. Since 2002, the Canadian Pain Coalition has coalesced the interests of pain patient groups, health care practitioners and pain scientists in a concerted effort to confront the challenges of pain (3). The Canadian Pain Society is enjoying an expanded membership, reflecting the increased number of programs and services it offers. Provincial governments are pursuing initiatives to provide better management of chronic pain, bookended on the Canadian mainland by Nova Scotia and British Columbia. These all augur well for the future.

Pain Research & Management will continue to serve the needs these trends reflect. There is some pride in the scope of papers signified by the title of the journal. All science and scholarly work, extending from basic science through clinical practice, to social and cultural determinants of health, and to health service delivery is published. While basic science cultural factors encourage publication elsewhere, *Pain Research & Management* offers a special opportunity to all scientists – whether in the biological, clinical, behavioural or social sciences – to bridge between the lab and practice, and to address the implications of their science for the community at large. As Canadian Institutes for Health Research increasingly promote their parliamentary mandate in both knowledge generation and knowledge translation and exchange, there will be increasing pressure on all investigators to bridge the chasm between understanding and practice, and on practitioners to increasingly use the best that science offers.

In conclusion, I thank our publisher, Pulsus Group Inc, for its unfailing support of the *Journal* in advancing the efforts of the Canadian Pain Society as it confronts the major challenges of pain.

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