

Change comes to the *Journal*

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There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order to things.

Niccolo Machiavelli

The *Journal* greets the new millennium with a new Editor-in-Chief and a new panel of Associate Editors. Before turning to what you might expect in the *Journal* over the coming years, I wish to pay tribute to the Founding Editors, Alan Thomson and Noel Williams. Clearly, without their vision and commitment, the *Journal* would not exist. They guided the *Journal* through its early years, including its inclusion into Index Medicus. On behalf of all the readership of the *Journal* and the membership of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology, may I say a sincere “thank you”. I also want to thank the past Associate Editors of the *Journal* and the members of the Editorial Board for their diligent efforts.

Where do we go from here? When attending international meetings, I am always impressed by the high regard in which Canadian gastroenterologists are held. Our research is of high quality and our patient care exemplary. Many Canadians, because of their numerous contributions to research, are considered to be leaders in their field.

The range of Canadian research spans molecular biology to health services. Canadian clinicians practice a high standard of clinical care. As the official journal of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology, the *Journal* should be at the forefront in communicating this message to Canada and the world.

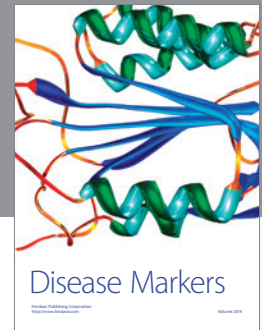
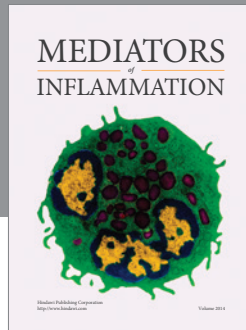
I hope that the *Journal* will celebrate the accomplishment of our community and highlight original research by Canadian investigators. One of the goals for the *Journal* will be to

attract reports of original research, but this goal will be challenging. Publications are the international currency of the academic world. Decisions regarding grants and promotions are often based on an individual's publication record. Experienced investigators often characterize the journal that they wish to publish in by its impact factor, which, to a certain degree, captures a journal's reputation. For example, the impact factors for gastroenterology journals in 1996 were as follows: *Gastroenterology* 9.3, *Hepatology* 6.0, *Gut* 4.6, *American Journal of Gastroenterology* 3.2 and *The Canadian Journal of Gastroenterology* less than 1.0. To attract important original research, we must develop a strategy to improve our impact factor.

Reviews of clinical topics have been an important component of past issues of the *Journal*. These have always been popular. We will continue this section and hope to expand the topics covered. The evidence-based medicine movement had its roots in Canada, and the *Journal* will assist in its ongoing promotion. We hope to publish reports that will assist the readership in acquiring the essential tools of evidence-based medicine.

Please welcome Alan Barkun, Jon Meddings, Brent Scott, Eldon Shaffer, Jean-Pierre Villeneuve and John Wallace as Associate Editors. They will be directly involved in the editorial direction of the *Journal*.

A medical journal was recently compared to an ocean going ship. Both have a great deal of inertia, and changing course requires time! For the first several months, each issue will be a hybrid of decisions made by both the past and the current Editors. By the end of the year, I expect the transition to be complete, resulting in a *Journal* that is somewhat different in its focus but resting securely on the foundations built by the Founding Editors.



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