

people who value freedom must protest.

Thomas L. Perry
Faculty of Medicine
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1060068

On behalf of the editorial team of the *Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine (CJEM)*, I am writing to express our concern over the dismissal of John Hoey as editor-in-chief and Anne Marie Todkill as senior deputy editor of the *CMAJ* and the apparent conflict between CMA Holdings and the *CMAJ* with regard to the question of editorial autonomy.

We believe that a journal's editorial board should have independent control over the editorial process and journal content. Lack of editorial independence, or the appearance thereof, profoundly undermines the credibility of a medical journal. Our journal, the *CJEM*, is published by CMA Media Inc. The journal is currently being reviewed for indexing by the US National Library of Medicine (NLM); hence, these recent developments are of great concern to us. Any perception that the *CJEM* is published by an organization with apparent ongoing (and high-profile) problems with editorial interference may be an important factor for the NLM indexing committee to consider, one that could compromise the future of our journal.

The ongoing perception that *CMAJ* editorial independence has been compromised will continue to undermine both the working environment at CMA Media Inc. and the stated mission of the CMA "to serve and unite the physicians of Canada and be the national advocate." Clearly, this issue is not uniting Canadian physicians.

Grant Innes
Editor-in-Chief
Canadian Journal of Emergency
Medicine

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1060069

The decision to dismiss editor-in-chief Dr. John Hoey and senior deputy editor Anne Marie Todkill was not an easy one, and it was not taken in haste.

The boards of both Canadian Medical Association Holdings (CMAH), which owns the journal, and the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) were kept informed by publisher Graham Morris throughout. The CMA Board of Directors, which includes more than 30 clinicians from across Canada — representing you the members — supported the decision of the publisher unanimously.

All medical scientific journals struggle with striking the right balance between, on the one hand, the rights of the editor for independence and, on the other, the responsibility of the publisher to protect the organization's legal, financial and liability interests. The *CMAJ* is no exception.

Despite what the media have reported, neither the recent Plan B story — it was a vitally important issue to put before Canadians and I was personally dismayed to learn what women were experiencing — nor the more recent references to the federal health minister were the cause for the dismissals.

The fact is, the relationship between the *CMAJ*'s editorial leadership and its publisher had reached an impasse. A very productive 10-year relationship, one of the longest *CMAJ* has had with an editor in its 95-year history, had become a case of irreconcilable differences.

We have now taken decisive steps to resolve the matter of governance of the journal, once and for all. We have established a new Governance Review Panel. The panel's main job will be to provide us with advice and guidance on how best to deal with the complex relationship between editorial freedom and accountability. This panel will submit its final report in July 2006. In the interim, the relationship will be governed by 9 principles modelled on earlier work done at the international level, including a very strong commitment to editorial independence.

Since *CMAJ* was first published in 1911, it has belonged to no single person and to no single community within

Canadian medicine. It has belonged to all of us. It still does.

As president, I want you to know that your concerns have been taken seriously. Thank you for your patience during this challenging time. We will continue to publish a journal of which you, and the CMA, can be proud. I encourage you to share your thoughts by writing to me at yourvoice@cma.ca.

Ruth Collins-Nakai
President, Canadian Medical
Association

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.1060087

Corrections

The DOI published in a recent News item¹ was mistakenly listed as 10.1503/cmaj.060387. It should have been 10.1503/cmaj.060386.

REFERENCE

1. Kondro W. Apples, oranges and wait times: CIHI report. *CMAJ* 2006;174(9):1246-7.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.060553

The DOI published in a recent News item¹ was mistakenly listed as 10.1503/cmaj.06230. It should have been 10.1503/cmaj.060230.

REFERENCE

1. News @ glance. *CMAJ* 2006;174(7):914.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.060554