

EDITORIAL • RÉDACTION

Editor-in-Chief • Rédacteur en chef
John Hoey, MD (hoeyj@cma.ca)

Associate Editors • Rédacteurs associés
Tom Elmslie, MD, MSc; Ken Flegel, MD, MSc
K.S. Joseph, MD, PhD; Anita Palepu, MD, MPH
James Hanley, PhD (Biostatistics • Biostatistique)

Editorial Fellow • Boursière en rédaction médicale
Erica Weir, MD (weirer@cma.ca)

Managing Editor • Rédactrice administrative
Jennifer Douglas (dougjl@cma.ca)

News and Features Editor
Rédacteur, informations générales
Patrick Sullivan (sullip@cma.ca)

Editor, The Left Atrium
Rédactrice, De l'oreille gauche
Anne Marie Todkill (todkia@cma.ca)

Editors • Rédactrices
Glenda Proctor (proctg@cma.ca)
Kate Schissler (schisk@cma.ca)
Barbara Sibbald (sibbab@cma.ca)

Assistant Editors • Rédacteurs adjoints
Jennifer Raiche (raichj@cma.ca)
Steven Wharry (whars@cma.ca)

Editorial Administrator • Administratrice de rédaction
Carole Corkery (corcec@cma.ca)

Manuscript Coordinator • Coordonnatrice des manuscrits
Sylvie Urie (uries@cma.ca)

Editorial Assistant • Assistante à la rédaction
Wilma Fatica (faticw@cma.ca)

Translation Coordinator
Coordonnatrice de la traduction
Marie Saumure

Contributing Editors • Rédactrices invitées
Gloria Baker; C.J. Brown, EL; Charlotte Gray;
Peggy Robinson, EL

Editorial Board • Conseil de rédaction
Nicholas R. Anthonisen, MD, PhD (Winnipeg)
Paul W. Armstrong, MD (Edmonton)
Neil R. Cashman, MD (Toronto)
Hugues Cormier, MD, MPH (Montréal)
Raisa B. Deber, PhD (Toronto)
C.J. de Gara, MB, MS (Edmonton)
David H. Feeny, PhD (Edmonton)
Antoine M. Hakim, MD, PhD (Ottawa)
Judith G. Hall, MD (Vancouver)
Carol P. Herbert, MD (Vancouver)
Neill Iscoe, MD, CM, MSc (Toronto)
Harriet L. MacMillan, MD, MSc (Hamilton)
Allison J. McGeer, MD (Toronto)
Olli S. Miettinen, MD, PhD (Montréal)
C. David Naylor, MD, DPhil (Toronto)
Susan Phillips, MD (Kingston)
Louise Pilote, MD, MPH, PhD (Montréal)
Martin T. Schechter, MD, PhD (Vancouver)
Martin F. Shapiro, MD, PhD (Los Angeles)
Richard Smith, MB, ChB (*British Medical Journal*, London, England)
C. Peter Warren, MB (Winnipeg)

All editorial matter in *CMAJ* represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA). The CMA assumes no responsibility or liability for damages arising from any error or omission or from the use of any information or advice contained in *CMAJ* including editorials, studies, reports, letters and advertisements.

Tous les articles à caractère éditorial dans le *JAMC* représentent les opinions de leurs auteurs et n'engagent pas l'Association médicale canadienne (AMC). L'AMC décline toute responsabilité civile ou autre quant à toute erreur ou omission ou à l'usage de tout conseil ou information figurant dans le *JAMC* et les éditoriaux, études, rapports, lettres et publicités y paraissant.



Deaths, death notices, eulogies and obituaries

This journal published its first death notice in January 1911, in the very first issue. It read: "Dr. H.D. Ayre, of Regina, who had his leg broken last year in a runaway, died on December 1st, 1910, from the effects of the accident. The late Dr. Ayre was for 20 years a member of the North-West Mounted Police, and after retiring from the force was connected with the Dominion Veterinary Department." Since then, almost continuously, we have published brief death notices.

Friends and relatives of the dead occasionally upbraid us for giving short shrift to their loved ones, but death notices always gives short shrift to the dead. And we simply have no easy access to more complete information about the lives of deceased physicians unless a colleague or relative supplies it. This seldom happens. Of the 400 notices published last year, only a handful were embellished by information supplied by our readers.

What can we say about the dead? Death notices, in addition to the name of the deceased, usually mention his or her medical school, year of graduation, professional affiliation, survivors and date of death. At some point the practice of publishing the cause of death was abandoned. But it seems to us that this information would be of interest to readers and would be reasonably — but of course not completely — accurate.² And so, in future notices, we will include the cause of death when that information is available.

Eulogies are always written in praise of the dead. We admit to publishing some of these — recitals of

professional awards, hospital appointments and other, tangible achievements — but by their very form and purpose they give an incomplete and biased description of a life. We are less inclined to publish these.

But we do like a good obituary and are happy to celebrate our departed colleagues through the remembrances of their peers and family. We encourage readers and relatives to send us biographical sketches of up to 200 words for consideration. While we won't be able to publish them all, we will be on the lookout for colourful and well-written pieces that dwell more on character than on accomplishments. For example, Drs. Archibald Young and Albert Phelps remembered John Grandy, their colleague in Chilliwack, BC, this way: "He was the 'compleat' rural physician, carrying out his duties on foot, by Model T, or by horse and sled in the winter. When caught in the country, John was known to have shared a bed with a farmer's family. He was able to call on his excellent training, supplemented by his innate skill and knowledge, to improvise and to respond to the medical needs of his community."³ In 68 words, Dr. Grandy's colleagues painted a vivid picture of a doctor who had served his patients well.

Obituary contributions should be submitted to Patrick Sullivan (fax 613 565-2382; sullip@cma.ca).

References

1. Dr. H.D. Ayre [obituary]. *CMAJ* 1911;1(1):90.
2. Myers KA, Farquhar DRE. Improving the accuracy of death certification. *CMAJ* 1998;158(10):1317-23.
3. Grandy, John D [obituary]. *CMAJ* 1999;161(1):111.