

Editorial Governance Plan for *CMAJ*

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The *Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ)* was founded in 1911 and after almost a century of operation it has grown to become Canada's pre-eminent peer-reviewed medical journal and one of the most respected general medical journals in the world.

The efforts of recently departed Editor-in-Chief Dr. John Hoey and Senior Deputy Editor Anne Marie Todkill, along with those of the seasoned editorial team they led, have played a significant role in raising the profile and readership of the *CMAJ* throughout the world. As outlined in the editorial ("A catalyst for change," posted at www.cmaj.ca Feb. 24, 2006) signed by members of the *CMAJ* editorial staff, Dr. Hoey and Ms. Todkill are to be commended for their efforts in supporting that growth over the past 10 years.

At the beginning of 2005, the CMA Board of Directors elected to transfer ownership of the journal to the CMAH which subsequently created CMA Media Inc. Its new President, Mr. Graham Morris, has the responsibility to expand its publication program and take full advantage of new publishing opportunities.

The Journal Oversight Committee (JOC) is confident that the Journal's long-standing tradition of fostering scientific knowledge and promoting excellence in research, peer review, authorship and health care will continue. The JOC also reaffirms its commitment to ensure the *CMAJ* remains editorially independent and free to serve and represent its readers.

While it is often difficult initially to regroup following the departure of a team member, change can provide an opportunity for the exploration of new horizons. To this end, it is necessary to consider new trends in the way Canadian physicians use scientific and clinical information. Organizations, teams — even publications with 100 years of history behind them — must continue to adapt, grow and evolve. We are confident that the *CMAJ* and its entire team will make this sustained growth one of their top priorities.

The publisher of *CMAJ* and its management team are

aware that there is, and always will be, room for improvement. As we are accountable and responsible to our members and readers, the JOC will establish a committee to review the *CMAJ*'s governance structure. The committee will consider other governance plans such as that of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Such a review can only serve to strengthen the *CMAJ* and aid in the fulfillment of its mission.

The Acting Editor-in-chief will be invited as a full participant to serve on the review committee. The governance review committee will seek out ways to promote the editorial team's professional autonomy, review the proposed vision for an independent *CMAJ* highlighted in the Feb. 24, 2006, editorial and help set the stage for the next important era at the *CMAJ*.

At its recent meeting, members of the CMA Board of Directors expressed support for the *CMAJ*'s mission to uphold the ideals of the medical profession, to promote the health and well-being of the public and to support Canada's practising physicians. Members also reaffirmed their support for the *CMAJ*'s continued commitment to editorial independence and maintaining excellence in the science and art of medicine.

In conclusion, we continue to support the *CMAJ* as it strives to remain an international-calibre publication with the highest standards. We believe that achieving such results can only come from a relationship — albeit one that is arm's-length — between a management team and an editorial team that builds on mutual trust and respect. We look forward to establishing a constructive and productive dialogue in the coming weeks and months.

Chair of the Journal Oversight Committee (Erlick); Chair, CMA Board of Directors (Cloutier)

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