

MY COMMITMENT TO EMERGENCY NURSES



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I became an emergency nurse shortly after graduating from nursing school in the early 1990s. As a new graduate and novice emergency nurse, I remember feeling excited and overwhelmed with my new role. I had so much to learn in those early years. One of my primary sources of information and education was the *Journal of Emergency Nursing* (JEN). There was always a journal copy in the ED break room, and I read every issue cover to cover. I appreciated that the journal published articles that I could apply in practice in real time, and I learned a lot about emergency care standards.

As I gained experience as an emergency nurse, I wanted to give back to the profession. When I finished my master's degree, I decided to become a peer reviewer for JEN. I thought it was a way to give back to the nurses who mentored me and reviewed my work during graduate school. Within a few years, I became a JEN section editor, and eventually, I was invited to join the JEN Editorial Board. I was fortunate to be mentored by Dr. Anne Manton, who appointed me to an associate editor role. I spent 13 years working as an editorial team member at JEN. Each year, I grew fonder of the journal and my emergency nurse colleagues.

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In those early days as an emergency nurse, I would never have imagined that one day I would be the editor in chief of JEN. I am honored and humbled to be back on the editorial team and entrusted with the editor role. I share my background because I want you to know how much the journal and emergency nurses mean to me. I often think about what emergency nurses are experiencing in the current health care climate. I know how hard it is to be an emergency nurse, and I am committed to JEN continuing to provide clinical and research guidance for emergency nurses worldwide. To achieve this goal, I will collaborate with the editorial team, editorial board, publisher, and Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) leadership to make some journal content and delivery adjustments.

According to the recently conducted August 2022 JEN Readership Survey, most readers value the journal, and half of respondents (51%) stated that they read every issue. More than half of the readers who participated in the ENA survey felt the inclusion of clinical practice guidelines (64%) and ENA position statements (52%) were essential to include in the journal. I agree with the readers. A prominent message from the reader survey was that the quality of the articles in JEN is very good to excellent and that readers desire more clinical articles. To that end, I intend to increase the number of clinically relevant articles in the journal and identify and implement methods for making the rigorous research published more accessible to busy emergency nurses. I will be working with the editors and editorial board members to develop a plan for the journal that meets the unique needs of emergency nurses at all levels of practice and in diverse emergency settings. It is my goal that all emergency nurses see the JEN as their journal.

In the coming months, I will be listening to leadership and readers to understand better how the journal can continue to grow while being the premier journal for emergency nurses worldwide. I will meet with several groups to obtain feedback about where the journal excels and where changes are warranted. I welcome feedback from you, the readers of JEN. Some of the areas of focus I am committed to addressing in JEN include, but are not limited to, nurse wellness and healthy practice environments, health and social equity, emerging practice issues such as novel or resurging viruses, and clinical practice guidelines and articles that inform the daily practice of emergency nurses.

Nurse wellness and safe, healthy practice settings are critical in emergency nursing. The upcoming May issue of the JEN will be a special issue on workplace violence curated by guest editor Dr Gordon Gillespie. Workplace violence

continues to be a serious issue in emergency nursing that must be addressed. In addition, emergency nurses are experiencing significant burnout related to a myriad of practice issues, which the current pandemic has exacerbated. Rodriguez et al¹ conducted a multisite United States-based study assessing ED health care professionals' symptoms of anxiety and burnout, work stressors related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), and risk of post-traumatic stress disorder. Findings from this study indicated that 68% of emergency nurses felt some level of stress and anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and 55% of nurses reported experiencing burnout symptoms in the previous week. Another alarming finding was that 23% of nurse respondents screened positive for post-traumatic stress disorder.¹ These findings are consistent with findings from a multicenter study conducted by Chor and colleagues.² Chor et al² found that the mean score for nurses on the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory was 51.3 (SD 19.6), which indicates moderate to severe burnout, and that was the overall average score for all nurses. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a significant toll on emergency nurses worldwide who were already working in stressful practice settings and experiencing high burnout levels.³

When reflecting on the high levels of stress that emergency nurses experience, it is vital to consider the additional stress experienced by nurses who have been historically marginalized and excluded in nursing. A survey conducted by the Commission to Address Racism in Nursing found that 63% of nurses have experienced racism in their practice setting.⁴ Wolf et al⁵ conducted a study exploring the experiences that emergency nurses practicing in the United States had with bias and found that racism and other forms of bias were prevalent and detrimental to nurse wellness and patient outcomes. These issues directly affect emergency nursing practice. A recent *The Future of Nursing 2020 to 2030 Consensus Study Report* from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine⁶ focused primarily on nurse wellness and health equity. In keeping with this focus, I encourage authors to submit articles about nurse wellness, healthy practice environments, bias, strategies to improve health outcomes, and health equity in emergency nursing. Furthermore, the editorial team will modify the journal author guidelines to ensure that articles published in JEN use inclusive and respectful language that honors the diverse nurses and communities that emergency nurses accompany in care.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the recent resurgence of monkeypox demonstrated the importance of timely guidance on managing novel viruses and illnesses that are

emerging or uncommon in specific regions. Emergency nurses must be prepared to pivot and adapt to issues such as novel viruses, climate change, and disasters that will continue to affect their practice. JEN must also be prepared to pivot to address the real-time learning needs of emergency nurses. Therefore, the editorial team at JEN will strive to minimize our time from submission to publication, especially for time-sensitive clinical and research topics.

This year readers can expect to see an increase in clinical and special section articles addressing current practice issues and challenges. The editorial team will continue to publish robust and rigorous research articles and explore ways to make that content easier to comprehend and apply in practice. I understand that measuring a journal's impact goes beyond traditional metrics, and I am committed to JEN positively affecting nurse and clinical outcomes. I welcome your thoughts and feedback as the editorial team develops a shared vision for the future of JEN.

Author Disclosures

Conflicts of interest: none to report.

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