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# Editorial

Alan Kerr

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The *Psychiatric Bulletin* was launched in 1971, the same year as the Royal College of Psychiatrists became established. Throughout its evolution, the prime aim of the *Bulletin* has been to reflect the concerns, interests and need for topical information among psychiatrists. It has encouraged colleagues irrespective of seniority to write in on any topic that they think will be of interest to fellow psychiatrists. The particular emphasis given to developments in clinical practice, innovation and audit is now reflected in its newly acquired sub-title, *The Journal of Trends in Psychiatric Practice*.

The majority of papers submitted, currently over 400 a year, will continue to be peer reviewed. This ensures that articles appearing in the *Bulletin* receive independent and rigorous assessment. Abstracts of original articles will now also be included.

Expansion in the range of themes covered has taken place steadily over the past two decades. Regular features on medico-political issues, training, legal matters, interviews with distinguished colleagues, obituaries, historical, cultural and computing topics, and also a lively correspondence column, often in the form of a dialogue, have become well established.

The Editorial Board has been strengthened in recent months. This will enable us to keep members fully informed of the diverse areas of special and growing importance. The enormous impact

of current organisational changes within the National Health Service, such as the development of the fundholder movement and the establishment of trusts, will be given particular prominence. Also, the practical implications of the introduction of continuing medical education (CME) on the working life of the clinician will receive special attention. A regular media column reflecting the public perception and profile of our specialty has been introduced and a series on ethical dilemmas in psychiatry is to be launched shortly. And to ensure a truly international approach, papers from overseas, reporting clinical and organisational developments in other countries, will continue to be encouraged.

A readership survey of the *Psychiatric Bulletin* published last year suggested that most readers had a favourable opinion of its contents and maintained a high level of interest in the publication. However, its design was felt in need of update. Accordingly, the *Bulletin* has been relaunched with a fresh, and firm, cover and a redesign of the internal layout. This will help reflect the changes which have led to the position of the *Bulletin* as a vital source of information about all aspects of mental health care. However, these changes will not affect the interaction which has been achieved in which there are no barriers between the people who are writing for the *Bulletin* and the people who are reading it.