

Editorial

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Why do we publish review articles on environmental health topics?

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In the era of an ever expanding number of journals why has the *Reviews on Environmental Health* chosen to concentrate on review articles and not publish original research? We consider that this is an appropriate role for the journal as it allows publication of a broad range of topics that may not otherwise see the light of day. We also very deliberately solicit articles from authors in a wide range of countries. In the current issue we have articles from Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Malaysia, the USA and a set of international guidelines on electromagnetic fields (EMF).

What type of reviews are we seeking to publish? We are happy to receive reviews on controversial topics. In the current issue we have reviews on the history and diagnosis of chemical sensitivity and on environmental exposures to hormonally-active agents (also known as endocrine-disrupting chemicals). The article by Rae titled “History of chemical sensitivity and diagnosis) highlights the overlap between chemical sensitivity and sensitivity to electromagnetic fields (EMFs). While some might challenge the existence of both phenomena, our reviews must withstand the rigors of peer-review. This issue also contains an interesting review from Australia on exposures associated with clandestine methamphetamine production that synthesizes the evidence showing that adverse

exposure occur to others, including children, who are not involved in making or using the drugs.

We are also very happy to receive reviews on traditional or emerging exposures from geographically-diverse locations. While the health effects of exposure to common exposures, such as air pollution or pesticides are well known, the impact of the exposure setting cannot be underestimated. The influence of gene by environment interactions and effect modifiers such as socio-economic status, as pointed out by the review from Canada in the current issue, means that there is value in publishing reviews on the effects of exposures in local or national settings.

Finally, what do we expect a review to contain? All reviews, whether narrative or formally systematic need to include the literature search strategy used and how the articles included were chosen. The literature review section of a PhD thesis often does not include a search strategy, however, by including such a component, many literature reviews could be elevated to the level required for publication. We do encourage students to consider this when compiling their literature reviews!

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