

JOURNAL OF WELLNESS

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Why a New Journal?

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Journal of Wellness, an open access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the scholarly pursuit of wellness for all healthcare professionals. JWellness will publish research and editorials to enhance resilience, physical strength, nutritional completeness, disease prevention, and mental health. We will apply for indexing in the Directory of Open Access Journals after 20 publications, and PubMed after 50.

What is Wellness?

Paradigms for wellness have been elegantly described across medical and social science journals. Most models in healthcare recommend optimization of system factors, individual resilience, and promoting a “culture of wellness” [1]. Physicians in different specialties operate in silos; and even when doctors converge, they frequently exclude professionals in nursing, dentistry, education, pharmacy, and administration.

Why a New Journal?

Recognizing the diversity of valuable scholarly work, we identified the need for a new journal devoted to this topic. One person asked why we would start a journal when several publications already offer some space for wellness research. The question provides the answer – we need a central repository solely dedicated to quality research on healthcare professional wellness.

Why Open Access?

Because of the large scope and diverse audience, it is crucial that we ensure no article processing fees for authors or readers. Operating within the University of Louisville Libraries will allow this to continue indefinitely. We envision healthcare professionals across all practice settings benefitting from research conducted. We invite anyone with quality data, regardless of funding, to freely submit their work for uninhibited distribution of content.

Why Peer Review?

Peer review legitimizes a journal by ensuring methodologically sound publications while educating reviewers and authors. Peer review is crucial for indexing, which maintains a positive feedback cycle by recruiting quality readers and authors. We are grateful to the editors at the Journal of Wellness who are donating time and expertise for these purposes.

Mission

Searching medical literature and history, we can find no description of burnout prior to the 20th century. Martin Seligman warns that divorcing a vocation from its inherent benefits (e.g. making medicine about the bottom line) creates a zero-sum scenario [2]. In the business of medicine, patient-doctor relationships become means to the ends of financial compensation and avoidance of litigation. In order to define the path to wellness, we must change this paradigm. We can sharpen ourselves by regaining autonomy, chasing mastery, and recalling our purpose [3].

If we claim to be experts on health, why are we not healthy? We are exhausted by patients who appear to have no self-compassion, continuously failing to assume responsibility in improving their health; yet we struggle similarly. Those who strive to optimize physical and mental health are accused of radically shunning the workaholic badge of honor. By presuming normalcy of disease, preventive medicine can appear pessimistic. Are we approaching burnout in the same manner? To paraphrase Craig Becker: If burnout prevention works, nothing happens [4]. The Journal of Wellness will move beyond describing the pathogenesis of burnout to prioritize methods of salutogenesis and flourishing [5]. We will strive for complete health rather than the millennia-old target of disease, in our patients and in ourselves.

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JWellness will publish manuscripts from standard categories: Original Research, Reviews, Editorials, and Humanities. We challenge authors to submit “Wellness Case Reports.” Let’s harness the power of narrative by publishing chronicles of professionals who suffered from burnout and successfully made the hero’s journey to the other side. Once diagnosed, burnout can be a catalyst for change. Though under recognized, post-traumatic growth is just as prevalent as post-traumatic stress [6].

CONCLUSION

The Journal of Wellness welcomes healthcare professionals to submit manuscripts relevant to all (equally important) domains of wellness. Let’s collect in one place our experiences, triumphs, and failures. Why should each discipline in medicine reinvent the wheel? We can work together to enhance our own wellness, ultimately improving the health of our patients.

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