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EDITORIALS

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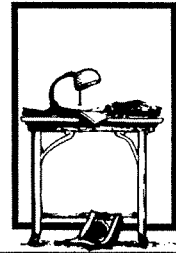


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EDITORIALS



I face the impending end of my involvement as an editor of *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics (P&OTP)* with mixed emotions—first of all, feelings of sadness at leaving behind a publication I was deeply involved in founding and shepherding through its early growth and development. A second emotion is entirely different—exhilaration at the thought that *P&OTP* is a successful enterprise that can be turned over to a new generation of editorship with pride. I eagerly anticipate new creative efforts to foster its continued development. Because I would rather focus on the latter emotions than the sadness, this seems an appropriate time to review what we have accomplished and to provide some food for thought for the new editors.

As Irma Wilhelm and I began the journal, we envisioned an interdisciplinary emphasis. The publication would, of course, concentrate on the interests of physical therapists and occupational therapists practicing in pediatrics, but with the intent to share the work of other members of the team as well. I believe this has been admirably accomplished, perhaps most in the special topics issues, but also through authorships of primary research articles and through inclusion of book reviews by authors from many disciplines. As I review the tables of contents from issues across the years, I see that we have brought psychosocial and environmental issues, studied so well by occupational therapists, to the attention of physical therapists while, on the other hand, bringing articles on biomechanics and

more technical measurement devices, a strength of physical therapists, to our occupational therapist readers. Perhaps what we have done best, however (no doubt in part because of the special interest in this area of the editors), has been to provide many articles on quantitative measurement of a variety of aspects of disability. For example, it gives me great pride that our journal published some of the earliest work on the Pediatric Clinical Test of Sensory Integration for Balance, the Sitting Assessment for Children with Neuromotor Dysfunction, the Functional Reach Test, and the Quality of Upper Extremity Skills Test. Furthermore, insightful critiques of many of our most well standardized and validated tests for assessment of children with disabilities have appeared in these pages to assist clinicians in selecting appropriate measures for use in their practice. I hope these emphases in *P&OTP* won't change.

For the future, what this journal, and indeed all of practice, needs is more clinical trials of the efficacy and effectiveness of interventions employing large numbers of subjects in addition to more well controlled single subject research to generate hypotheses for larger studies. Although many researchers are not likely to choose this journal for reporting the results of large-scale research, much of their pilot work could be of great interest to our readers. An example can be found in the next special issue of *P&OTP* on family-centered intervention. Here Law and others describe pilot work on this type of intervention in which they are engaged as part of the planning of a larger research project. Much food for thought is engendered for clinicians by their reports of this work, as well as an inside view of the trials and rewards of clinical research. Similar information could be more widely shared by researchers in our periodic reports of research in progress section.

A second thing I've noticed while perusing old issues of *P&OTP* is that a variety of articles on service delivery models have appeared, but there has been little to nothing on issues of service delivery that cross the boundaries of physical therapy and occupational therapy. Therapists working in Neonatal Intensive Care Units, for example, along with their medical and nursing colleagues, are confused about the unique roles of physical therapists and occupational therapists. Indeed, some people question whether these roles differ. Overlap of service areas and use of one type of therapy to substitute for another when staff shortages are apparent in public schools is another area that needs addressing. Perhaps a special issue on this topic would engender more research, particularly studies that would address issues of efficiency in practice given the existing pressures of health care reform and managed care. *P&OTP* would appear to offer a unique forum for discussion of practice issues affecting our two fields.

Another aspect of our journal of which I've been proud is its openness and encouragement of publication by students. Features like reports on theses and dissertations, annotated bibliographies, and book reviews have given many students the opportunity to publish student work and to try their hand at writing and critical analysis. I hope *P&OTP* will continue to be student-friendly, but a little pressure to publish those many theses and dissertations reported on in these pages that have never seen full publication as articles might be considered as well! The thesis abstracts section and more special book review sections on books for children that address issues of disability could also be considered for editing by a graduate student editor in order to introduce students not only to writing for publication, but also to editorial work.

Finally, I came to the special issue on cultural diversity edited by Irma Wilhelm and myself which derived from a conference on the topic held under the auspices of the Maternal and Child Health Grant to the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. To my knowledge, this is our only publication derived from conference proceedings, but I would suggest that the editors might consider inviting conference coordinators to plan in advance of programs of special interest to our readers the possibility of publishing conference proceedings. These proceedings could bring to our readers new information on evidence-based practice or new conceptual frameworks for intervention of an interdisciplinary, family-centered nature.

I end this review of our past and reflection on the future with a return to my sadness at leaving the enterprise. It has been my pleasure in the past several years to function as Consulting Editor in the development of special topics issues and I will, perhaps, miss that role most. Although many of the special issues were written by accomplished researchers and writers, my greatest pleasure has come from assisting in the development and writing of those by practicing clinicians who are relatively new to writing and editing. I take great pride in the fact that this work has been shared with all of you in part because of my encouragement and editorial assistance (and a little pressure!) in order to bring this work to publication. I shall miss that role most of all.

Suzann K. Campbell, PhD, PT, FAPTA
Consulting Editor

I share Suzann Campbell's pride in the accomplishments of this publication and her sadness at leaving it as well. After retirement, however, one has to reassess every five years or so, to be sure one doesn't need to re-retire. During my five years of living and playing in Maine, contact with the world of pediatric therapy has been sparse, other than through the editing of *P&OTP* and social contacts with old friends in the field. Keeping up with new developments in pediatric therapy has become a lower priority than, for example, remembering to climb Mt. Pisgah at the best time for picking wild blueberries, attending the Monday morning tennis clinic in hopes of improving my dismal backhand, or playing foster mother to a litter of abandoned kittens from the local animal shelter. The journal needs to have editors, reviewers, and authors who are on the cutting edge, so the time to pass on the editorship is obviously here. This retiring editor is happy resting on whatever laurels she may have earned over the years. I wish the new editor well and will look forward to viewing the future development of *P&OTP*.

Irma J. Wilhelm, MS, PT
Co-Editor

I have enjoyed enormously being a Co-Editor of *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics* for the past five years. I have reaffirmed my respect for my former colleagues and students and have been very positively impressed with the new colleagues I've met through the mail. I, too, am becoming obsolete as a therapist, as I try a whole new array of interests, and it's time for me to move on.

I have been involved with *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics* for a long time—at the beginning of the Campbell/Wilhelm era as a member of the Editorial Board and again as an Editor at the end of their era. Years ago, when Sue asked me to be a member of the first Editorial Board, I was thrilled. At the time, I thought the idea of having a journal that included both Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists was wonderful. I still feel that way. Especially in pediatrics, OTs and PTs and other disciplines, as well, share so much, yet have different perspectives. We can not only learn from each other, but also can sharpen our own identities.

Jane Coryell, PhD, PT
Co-Editor