



The constancy of change

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As I write my last editorial as Editor-In-Chief of Spinal Cord Series and Cases, I want to thank all of you that have helped us grow the journal over the past 4 years. I especially would like to thank my Associate Editors and Editorial Board. Moreover, I would like to thank Sterling Alexander as Editorial Assistant, Virginia Mercer as Publication Editor, and Sienna Brown as Production Editor for their excellent support. I am proud to say that the journal has shown tremendous growth under my tenure. As of the beginning of November 2020 we are on track to publish more high-quality papers than in any previous year and that our number of submissions is higher than ever. This year the journal has had 131,176 views and we have had 210 paper submissions and 101 papers accepted, thus our rejection rate is 47%. The quality and breadth of papers we publish also continues to improve, evidence that Jean Wyndaele was on the right track when he initiated the journal in 2016.

Still, as we all know, the world is constantly changing. Our civilization is in the midst of a drastic evolution and the year 2020 rivals 2001 in significance. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst to change our entire lives. The need to work and learn from home, vacation at home and spend more time with one's family is somewhat of a blessing; however, the worldwide morbidity and mortality, loss of human physical contact with social distancing, and repurposing of rehabilitation and SCI beds have been clear detriments.

In addition to the crisis of Covid-19, the sixth mass extinction and climate change are underway and these scenarios portend a dismal future for all of us. As health care professionals we need to expand our mindsets and realize that we have to treat these concerns just as we practice preventative medicine, encouraging people to lose weight, quit smoking or decrease their alcohol consumption. This may put us out of our comfort zones; however, it

is time that we assert our authority and embrace the trust that the public has in us. For there is no other group of people on earth as vulnerable to climate change as those living with SCIs. The lack of mobility, poikilothermia, the need for attendant care and equipment render those living with SCI amongst the groups that will have the most difficulty and need for migration, when temperatures increase further and the terrain becomes uninhabitable.

While as scientists, our first response may be that research will pave the way and that as a group we need to assert the special needs of people with SCIs, I believe, SCI professionals need to be more open and collaborative with other disciplines and to realize that people living with MS, stroke, traumatic brain injury and ALS will be similarly affected by some of these worldwide changes. Moreover, there is strength in numbers, and if we can mobilize greater groups of people around the world to protect the rights of people with disabilities, we will be doing all of humanity a service.

Some may say, we are physicians and specialists and do not need to be concerned with these greater issues. But, these issues impact all of us and we know that in times of crisis there is opportunity for societies to work together create greater good. We just need to own our power and assert our will to create a better future. As for me, I am embracing the opportunity for change. I am happy to say that I believe the journal has matured and has the potential to continue to be a key source of information in the field of SCI. I trust the new Editor-in-Chief will share my vision for one world and continue to promote available education in all countries for people with SCIs. Finally, as I step down from SCSC, I will continue to work towards inclusiveness regarding persons with SCIs and other disabilities and focus on patient education, sexuality and other quality of life issues through Sustain Our Abilities. Moreover, I will continue working on climate change actions as Editor-In-Chief of The Journal of Climate Change and Health. In sum, it continues to be time for change and opportunity. I wish you all well and hope to see you online and maybe even in-person again someday soon!

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