

# Editorial

## SOME SUNSHINE THROUGH THE RAIN



Dr. John P. O'Keefe

I have woken these past few weeks to the sound of acorns falling onto the roof of my house and the ground around it. While this makes a beautiful sound, it is a strong reminder that the seasons are changing and summer will soon be a distant memory. In Ottawa, this summer's weather was not encouraging; it seemed to rain most days and every weekend. Despite the gloomy weather, the results of the readership survey we conducted in the May edition of the *Journal* certainly did much to brighten the mood around this office.

I would first like to thank the approximately 2,000 readers who took the time to tell us what they think of the *JCDA*. You shared your views and gave us really solid advice for developing the publication in the future. While we can never be totally sure if non-response bias skewed the results, our external research consultant has informed us that we can be very confident the results are extremely accurate.

Overall, you said that you appreciate the direction the *Journal* has been taking these past few years and that we should continue to refine the content of the publication. It is encouraging to me that you perceive the *Journal* to be a very useful resource in your professional lives.

You particularly appreciate the scientific credibility of material in the *Journal* and you feel that what we publish has relevance to your practice. This confirms that we are right to put such an emphasis on our peer review process, which has been revamped over the past couple of years. You have also confirmed the validity of the question I ask of authors submitting articles for inclusion in the Clinical Practice or the Applied Research sections of the *Journal*, "How will this article help a Canadian dentist make a clinical decision?"

According to the recent survey, more people are spending longer reading the publication than was the case when the last survey was conducted 6 years ago. In the previous survey, far more readers said they preferred *Oral Health* over our publication. That situation has now been reversed on a national basis. Across the country, 43% say the *JCDA* is their preferred publication, while 36% consider *Oral Health* their favourite. While I am encouraged to see this change, there remains much to do to make the *JCDA* reach its potential.

You prefer to read the Clinical Practice, Clinical Abstracts, Professional Issues and Applied Research sections of the *Journal*. As was the case 6 years ago, you told us you want more clinical material you can trust. My commitment to you is that the *Journal's* associate editors, editorial consultants and I will redouble our efforts to attract good quality manuscripts that will help you in your clinical decision making and highlight the major issues facing our profession.

I found the results relating to the electronic version of the *Journal* particularly interesting. Approximately 20% of readers have consulted the *eJCDA*,

despite the fact that 70% have Internet access. It certainly doesn't look as if paper publications are going to be replaced in the near future. A minority of readers really like the electronic version, yet far more say they prefer paper, or feel the electronic version is not sufficiently different from the paper to attract them. I see both versions of the *Journal* being complementary and our electronic publication strategy will be to ensure that the electronic *Journal* will add real value to an increasingly user-friendly paper version.

As part of our commitment to make the *JCDA* more clinically relevant, this special edition is produced in collaboration with the Association of Prosthodontists of Canada (APC). A number of months back, I met with Dr. James Taylor, president of APC, and we agreed to try to devote one edition of the *Journal* per year to presenting clinical material provided by members of his association. In a relatively short time period, APC was able to solicit 7 manuscripts for submission and peer review. The 5 articles in this edition were accepted by our reviewers as being worthy of publication. I would like to say a special "thank you" to Drs. Peter Stutman, Sebastian Saba, Benoit Soucy, Richard Price, Robert Elia and the other reviewers.

I have learned a lot from working with APC on this issue and look forward to developing our relationship. I believe this type of alliance, which should serve as a model for others, will be very beneficial to us in our efforts to provide solid, clinically relevant material. The quantity and quality of manuscripts that have been submitted recently, and the enthusiasm of the associate editors and editorial consultants, are further reasons for me to feel optimistic as summer passes.

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