Why we should integrate health and social care

Having been a member of the JCN editorial board for a number of years, I am delighted to now take on the role of editor-in-chief of the journal.

As a district nursing specialist practitioner, I am aware of how important it is to work alongside colleagues in social care. This issue’s ‘community matters’ feature provides some lively debate around this topic, offering some thoughts as to why and how this should be achieved, despite the challenges posed.

With the increasing use of mobile phones to manage day-to-day life (banking, shopping, etc), a campaign has recently been launched in London to show how mobiles can also help manage health. Jane Lindo’s editorial (p. 14) explains why GP online services can lead to improved, patient-centred care.

Improving care is always at the heart of what we do, and none less so than those who are full-time carers at home. Recent research around the role of male carers offers some thought-provoking insight into how we can improve practice and the support we offer older male carers (pp. 63–66). As regular and trusted visitors to the elderly, the mental health piece in this issue looks at how community nurses can improve the psychological needs of this vulnerable patient group and give them hope for recovery from depression (pp. 58–62).

There is also a focus on how to deal with lower limb issues and the different types of compression therapy available to non-specialists (pp. 18–26), while the importance of involving and educating patients and their carers about pressure ulcer identification and prevention is shown through a series of case reports (pp. 36–39). We also take a look at common skin complaints seen in the community (pp. 48–53), as well as how the changes that come with ageing can put patients at risk of malnutrition and how eating for health is not the same as healthy eating (pp. 54–57).

The regular Insight article focuses on empowering patients to self-manage oedema and lymphoedema with the use of a Velcro wrap device (pp. 28–33). This article is accompanied by online multiple choice questions, which not only test your knowledge of the subject, but also provide a useful way of keeping up to date with revalidation (www.jcn.co.uk/learning zone).

I sincerely hope that you will find this issue both informative and thought-provoking and that our many features will facilitate enhancements in practice.

Annette Bades, editor-in-chief, JCN
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As a community-based dermatology specialist nurse I see first-hand the importance of maintaining skin integrity. From the young to the elderly, loss of skin hydration and integrity forms the basis of many skin problems, from infection to other acute and chronic skin conditions. I am delighted to be part of a journal highlighting best practice in skin care, wound management and all the associated issues. Sara Burr.

As a senior nurse researcher, I am passionate about the translation of research into practice to ensure that patients receive quality evidence-based care. I am delighted to be a part of the JCN editorial board because the journal helps to bridge the research-practice gap in community care. JCN is a well-recognised and established journal that keeps clinicians abreast of policy, practice and research in community care. Janelle Yorke

I feel our ‘moment’ in primary care has arrived. Politicians, professionals and patients are all asking a similar question, ‘Can care be provided closer to home?’ This means the spotlight is now on those of us based in primary care and it is important not to provide poorly organised or inferior care. Consideration needs to be given to both clinical and financial outcomes. I am pleased to be on the editorial board of the JCN. It highlights some really important issues and gives clinicians the confidence to consider the kind of care that can be provided. Jackie Stephen-Haynes

As an advanced practitioner and co-founder of Hallam Medical I have been heavily involved in leading the way regarding recruitment best practice and nurse revalidation in the UK, providing training, support, and mentorship for nurses. I have designed admission avoidance services and advised on successful pilot schemes. I am passionate about promoting the roles of nurses and advanced practice within community services. The JCN is a perfect fit as we have the same vision and values. I look forward to sharing my knowledge and experience as a member of the editorial board. Alex Munro
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