

Challenge and change for the *BJC*

Kim Fox, Terry McCormack, Philip Poole-Wilson, Henry Purcell

Authors

Kim Fox
Editor

Terry McCormack
Editor

Philip Poole-Wilson
Editor

Henry Purcell
Editor

British Journal of Cardiology,
9 Langton Street, London,
SW10 0JL

Correspondence to:
Dr H Purcell
(hpurcell@bjcardio.co.uk)

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Huge changes are underway within the UK's National Health Service (NHS). A far-reaching programme of marketing-orientated changes has resulted in "the emergence of a new NHS where increasingly care is delivered by an 'alphabet soup' of agencies and public and private providers".¹ These changes have affected both primary and secondary care and they continue to impact on the practice of medicine.

Those doctors wishing to pursue hospital practice have taken a major hit from Modernising Medical Careers (MMC) where junior doctors ran headlong in to a disastrous training application process, leading to disappointment and uncertainty for many. In primary care there is a new GP Curriculum, a new General Medical Services contract and Pay-for-Performance programmes, which have attracted unprecedented levels of investment into the NHS. There are other, as yet untested, reforms including Practice-Based Commissioning and re-accreditation, looming.

Never has it been more important for hospital and family practitioners to establish an integrated service providing the highest standards of care to patients. Efforts to achieve this require a major commitment to keep abreast of clinical development and progress. Whether we call this continuing medical education or continuing professional development, it all adds up to sharing knowledge and skills in a learning environment.

The British Journal of Cardiology (BJC) has played, and will continue to play, a major role in this education and learning process. It has been the only peer-reviewed cardiovascular publication linking primary and secondary care over the past 15 or so years. This current issue sees a new phase, where not only is the journal redesigned, but we are also strengthening our links with primary care. Future issues will have a greater focus on cardiology in the community, with increasing contributions from the Primary Care Cardiovascular Society (PCCS) and the National GPSI (General Practitioners with a Special Interest) Forum, nursing and other health professionals and, indeed, all the organisations for whom we are proud to be their official journal.

The *BJC* is also planning e-based learning programmes, and links with other UK and international cardiovascular bodies, news of which will soon be announced on our website. We look forward to your continued support and feedback in the months ahead, for what looks like an exciting time for all those involved in cardiovascular medicine ●

Conflict of interest

None declared.

Reference

1. Talbot-Smith A, Pollock AM (eds). *The new NHS: a guide*. London: Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group), 2006.

New editorial appointments

The *BJC* is delighted to announce that Dr Terry McCormack, General Practitioner, Whitby, North Yorkshire, has become a co-editor of the journal. Dr McCormack is also a Hospital Practitioner at Whitby Hospital and Chairman of the Primary Care Cardiovascular Society (PCCS).



Dr Terry McCormack

We are also delighted to welcome to the editorial board Dr Ahmet Fuat, General Practitioner, Darlington, Co. Durham, and also Deputy Chairman, PCCS. Dr Fuat is a General Practitioner with a Special Interest (GPSI) in cardiology and has been instrumental in setting up the National GPSI Forum, which is affiliated to the PCCS.



Dr Ahmet Fuat