Editorial

An Interregnum, Not!

Most hospital epidemiologists, even those who have experience in preparing articles for publication or in serving as a referee for articles submitted to a journal, have little knowledge of the behind-the-scenes efforts that are required for editing and publishing a scientific journal. We have had an unplanned opportunity the past year to learn more about the mechanics and economics of publishing *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology,* the official journal of The Society for Hospital Epidemiology of America (SHEA). The catalyst for this endeavor was the selection of a new chief editor and a plan for an orderly transition of the editorial leadership of the Journal.

In April 1992, Dr. Richard Wenzel announced his resignation as chief editor of *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* to develop a new journal that he conceived while editing a textbook on clinical perspectives of quality assessment in healthcare. Dr. Wenzel founded *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology,* originally named *Infection Control,* one year before SHEA itself was formally established in 1981. *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* has played a key role in bringing together through its editorial board many of the individuals who would later have important roles in SHEA's history. In 1988, Dr. Wenzel served as midwife to the contractual agreement with the publisher, SLACK Inc, that delivered this respected and profitable enterprise to the society as its official journal. Because of Dr. Wenzel's wisdom and generosity, *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* has become a vital organ of SHEA.

As in our national political life in 1993, the geographic focus will shift to the South. Recently, Dr. Michael Decker accepted his appointment as chief editor by the SHEA Board of Trustees and will move the editorial offices to Nashville, Tennessee. Fortunately, there will be no "interregnum" between editors. Dr. Decker plans to enhance the visibility and prestige of *Infection Control and Hospital* Epidemiology by increasing the quantity and quality of original contributions. In addition, he will aggressively solicit other articles, increase circulation and augment advertising revenues. Of central importance is Dr. Decker's insistence that *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* respond to the evolving needs of SHEA, that we maintain and strengthen its identity as our Journal, and that we expand the involvement of SHEA members in working for and on behalf of *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology,* reinforcing the reality that the Journal is serving our interests.

Dr. Decker already has assembled a team of accomplished associates from Tennessee that assures continuity and that complements the existing editorial board. Thus, we are confident of both stability and appropriate change. The SHEA officers and board congratulate Dr. Decker and will work with him to assure the continued success of *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology.*

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From The Society for Hospital Epidemiology of America, West Deptford, New Jersey.
The Society for Hospital Epidemiology of America. An interregnum, not! Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol. 1993;14:11.

https://doi.org/10.1086/646621 Published online by Cambridge University Press