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Let me introduce myself

Patricia Casey

FROM THE
EDITOR

I am very privileged to have been honoured on two occasions by RCPsych Publications, the publishing wing of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. The first was when, in 2008, I was appointed editor of *The Bulletin* (now called *The Psychiatrist*). I served as editor for 4 years, just short of my appointed 5-year term. The second privilege bestowed on me was my appointment as editor of *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* in July of this year.

To readers of the journal, affectionately called *Advances*, the selection of a new editor may be a surprise as Joe Bouch, the most recent editor, exemplified imaginative oversight of the journal for a number of years. Unfortunately, the term of office of all editors is now a mere 5 years, a policy that is driven by a desire to introduce new blood into these publications while also maintaining continuity. Joe was a dedicated and innovative editor, who expanded the educational approaches and the focus of *Advances* with the introduction of Mindreadings and Refreshments. The former aim to bring to our awareness the contribution of the arts to our understanding of mental illness. The latter are succinct and learned reintroductions to treatments or practices from which we may have become deskilled, in the drive towards ever more specialisation and, some might say, fragmentation of the services we provide. Refreshments also reintroduce us to concepts that we may have not considered since we sat our College Membership examinations and exegesis of which is not part of everyday clinical practice. So, recent pieces have examined schizoaffective disorder, transference and, in the current issue, supervision (Wickham, pp. 416–418?), stimulating us once again to consider the rationale and purpose of these familiar terms.

Advances has recently been made available, free online, to College members. While this poses financial challenges for the journal's maintenance, it is also an accolade that demonstrates its popularity. Not only is it the prime CPD journal for consultants in the UK, but is also widely read by psychiatrists in training.

Of course, *Advances* would not have happened had it not been for the foresight of its founding editor and former President of the College, Professor Andrew Sims, who recognised that doctors would no longer be able to rely solely on their previously acquired qualifications and would have to demonstrate continuing competence. Alan Lee succeeded Andrew, and firmly consolidated the journal's educational role. Joe further developed *Advances* with the introduction of new sections. The august mantle worn so ably by these colleagues now falls to me.

It is my aim that the primacy of *Advances* among consultants should continue and further expand, as free online availability will inevitably have almost total readership penetration. But there will also be changes, as is expected in any institution following replacements of key personnel. One of my priorities will be to build closer links with the College's CDP Online (www.psychiatrycpd.co.uk), a unique and internationally sought-after teaching medium. Others will emerge over time and hopefully you, the readers, will contribute ideas that can be considered. There is an experienced and dedicated editorial board to steer me in charting the future path for *Advances*. 'Let wisdom guide' us in this task.