



Introducing a New *Cancer Control* Department

A key challenge facing researchers, educators, and clinicians is to determine the appropriate content and context, methods, and delivery channels for improving care across the continuum of cancer prevention and control. Too often, research interventions, communications, and educational programs do not achieve their intended effects because they are based on what professionals view as important as opposed to what the intended audience deems important. As such, *Cancer Control* introduces a new series of articles that focuses on cultural and literacy tenets to address this challenge. The new department features articles on such topics as health disparities, community-based participatory research methods, cancer education and training innovations, and health policy. Of particular interest are articles that emphasize methodological issues related to the study of culture and literacy.

As background, we previously published two supplements to the journal on the topic of cancer, culture and literacy as part of an NCI-funded cancer education project (Cancer, Culture and Literacy Institute - R25 CA90654). The education project fostered a new group of researchers who are addressing culture and literacy in their work, and the supplements provided a venue for dissemination of new knowledge. Working with John Horton, MB, ChB, journal editor, Moffitt's *Cancer Control* staff, and Dinorah Martinez, MA, MPH, from the Cancer Education Research Program, the supplements were published in September 2003 and November 2005 and are available at www.MoffittCancerCenter.org/ccjournal. Based on our experiences with producing the supplements and feedback received from researchers around the country involved in this area of scientific inquiry, a logical extension of the R25 project was to create a sustainable mechanism for disseminating information in this evolving field. Thus, a new department has been created as part of the existing

Cancer Control that will host articles in each issue on this topic.

Kicking off the department is an article by Edwin Rogers, PhD, and colleagues that examines whether family medicine residents could identify patients who might have difficulty understanding medical information because of limited literacy. Their study reinforces the Institute of Medicine's Health Literacy Report¹ recommendation that professional schools should include health literacy in their curricula as an area of competence. In a second article, June Strickland, PhD, from the University of Washington addresses community-based participatory research implementation issues in cancer prevention research with American Indian tribal communities in the Pacific Northwest. She provides practical examples on how to produce more useful and culturally appropriate cancer prevention interventions, and she also offers a model for empowering communities to become partners in the elimination of cancer health disparities.

Enjoy the new department and send along manuscript ideas and suggestions. We encourage you to share your creative wisdom, educational insights, and research advancements for addressing culture and literacy in cancer care.

References

1. Institute of Medicine. *Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2004.

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To submit manuscripts to the *Cancer, Culture and Literacy* feature, contact the journal at ccjournal@moffitt.usf.edu.