Highlights of this edition

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Jeff Garner

As we move into the second year of our partnership with *BMJ*, I am happy to report that things are going well and we are now within reach of our first Impact Factor that should appear in June this year. June will also see the commemoration of the beginning of World War I and this journal in common with other organisations will be honouring this event. A special commemorative edition examining the healthcare that this journal reported in World War I with modern commentaries highlighting how things have changed (or not!) will be a fitting tribute. The campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have witnessed extraordinary advances in medical care on operations and this has been underpinned by a burgeoning research programme both at home under the auspices of the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and on deployment too, so it is appropriate that this year will also see a special edition which focuses on how research has been translated into practice. This edition showcases the breadth of military medicine once again.

CPER

How we manage captured personnel is a highly visible measure of our standards as a

fighting force and all who deploy are fully aware of the necessity to get this aspect of care right. The article by three senior medical commanders presents a thoughtful appraisal of the issues involved and highlights areas where extra care might need to be taken to ensure our highest possible standards of care are maintained.

MENTAL HEALTH

Aguirre and colleagues present two articles derived from the pilot study of an enhanced mental health screening process at discharge medicals. This remains a controversial area but the outcomes are clear—mental health remains high on the agenda throughout the Defence Medical Services and few cases arise that have not been previously suspected; the level of alcohol use throughout the Armed Forces remains of concern and continues to be addressed.

A PAIN IN THE...

Two articles and an editorial in this edition turn the spotlight on the important role that pain and its management play in the best care of our casualties and how this can contribute to ensuring the best outcomes, even if this is eventually medical discharge.

DOCTRINE

This journal is not the forum to publish doctrine, but as the end users of that

doctrine it is appropriate that we are cognisant of it and wherever possible have the opportunity to shape it. I hope the readers take this chance and debate the proposed doctrine published here and use this journal as a forum for that discussion.

...AND FINALLY

The Footnote and Endpiece from Professor Savona-Ventura is important as it is the first article which we have published in both long and short formats. The readership of the journal has consistently wanted to retain historical interest articles, but in the current situation where we have a very comfortable surfeit of original research articles requiring publication, it is difficult to prioritise history over research. Our solution is to publish historical articles in a short two-page version in print and make available a longer, fully formatted version online. I hope the readers appreciate this innovation. In addition, the article is a fascinating account of medicine in war half a millennia ago.

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