



Dispatches from the editor: highlights of the September 2018 issue

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Welcome to the September issue of the *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, containing 18 original submissions covering the breadth and depth of current military medicine.^{1–18} Transfusion support is a critical component of modern combat casualty care, and we lead this issue with an article that focuses on the potential utility of blood salvage technology and autotransfusion after combat injury.¹ Lewis *et al*⁴ have published their review of the use of opioid analgesia in Afghanistan, finding it had been used in 5801 casualties with a very low complication rate of 0.24%. The article by Carter and Gay⁵ highlights the continued importance of focused assessment with sonography in trauma in aiding decision-making in the austere environment where access to CT may still be limited.

We have three articles from the Academic Department of Military Mental Health based at King's College London.^{10 14 16} Harden and Murphy¹⁰ identify the risk factors of suicidal ideation in a population of UK military veterans seeking support for mental health difficulties. Thandi *et al*¹⁴ review the caregiver burden in spouses and partners providing informal care to wounded, injured or sick military personnel. Gribble *et al*¹⁶ review the hazardous alcohol consumption among spouses or partners of military service personnel. These papers are complimented by Godier and Fossey's¹³ review of sexual violence and harassment in the UK Armed Forces.

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Wilkins *et al*¹⁵ have reviewed the most medically significant species of venomous snake present in Africa and Europe, before suggesting an evidence-based approach to snakebite prevention and management, and these are likely to be incorporated into the UK's Clinical Guidelines for Operations. The journal continues to publish footnotes and endpieces, reflecting our commitment to supporting pertinent articles that contribute to the history of military medicine as a whole.¹⁸ We finish with a letter to the editor coauthored with the Surgeon General, and I am grateful to General Bricknell for his continuing support of the journal.¹⁷

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