

Changes and challenges



Debbie Hicks

It is a pleasure to announce that I am taking over the role of Editor of the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing*. Maggie Watkinson has been the Editor for the last 10 years and performed the role admirably and, therefore, will be a hard act to follow. However, as anyone familiar with me knows, I'm never one to miss a challenge – so here goes!

I have been a DSN since 1990. I developed the Diabetes Nursing Service in Hull from a lone practitioner to a team of eight DSNs led by myself. Eighteen months ago I moved down south to take up the post of Nurse Consultant – Diabetes with Enfield PCT in north London with the remit of developing a high-quality diabetes service that encompassed the NHS modernisation agenda.

My other qualifications include holding the position of Chair of the Diabetes Nursing Strategy Group. This group developed and published *An Integrated Career & Competency Framework for Diabetes Nursing* which is still used today (Diabetes Nursing Strategy Group, 2005). Additionally, I am a founder member and committee member of the UK Association of DSNs.

For the last 5 years I have been the face of this journal's Noticeboard. Since taking over the role of Editor I have relinquished my involvement in this section into the capable hands of Maureen Wallymahmed, Nurse Consultant from Aintree.

I joined the editorial board of the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* when it was launched 11 years ago. This was a whole new experience for me and gave me the opportunity to try writing for publication. When the journal was first published in 1997 it was a first for me too as it contained the first article I had written. It gave me an enormous buzz to see words I had written in print! I, like many before me, had never felt that others would be interested in what I had to say. I believe readers of the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* value the opportunity to find out about good practice which is happening around the UK. Over 40 publications later, I'm still finding things to write about and I hope people are still finding the articles useful. The next buzz comes from seeing one of your articles referenced by another author!

The success of the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing*

is due to the high-quality, well-written articles by healthcare professionals – predominantly nurses – working in both the acute and community settings on topics that cover a wide subject base, including research, service redesign, care delivery and education. However, the journal needs to recognise, and cater for, the needs of the growing number of nurses managing diabetes in primary care. Perhaps our changing environment dictates that we should now be referring to specialists and generalists rather than primary and secondary care healthcare professionals. The journal will continue to contribute to this debate.

The *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* commissions articles from healthcare professionals on a variety of topical subjects, so if any reader thinks a subject of interest has been overlooked please do not hesitate to let us know your ideas (email: Louise@sbcommunicationsgroup.com).

One of the major strengths of the journal is that it gives new authors a platform to publish. The journal has a wide readership among healthcare professionals working with people with diabetes including nurses, dietitians and podiatrists. Readers of the journal are a rich source of innovative practice just waiting to be shared.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage new authors to have a go at writing an article. For example, it can be a description of a new service that has been developed or an interesting case study. Guidelines are available for any potential author from the team at SB Communications (email: Louise@sbcommunicationsgroup.com). The editorial team are experienced in the production of finished articles and are more than happy to work with new authors to mould a raw idea into a finished article suitable for publication.

I look forward to my new role as Editor and see this as a huge opportunity to encourage discussion and debate about issues currently facing nurses working in diabetes care. ■

Debbie Hicks is a Nurse Consultant – Diabetes at Enfield PCT.

Diabetes Nursing Strategy Group (2005) *An Integrated Career & Competency Framework for Diabetes Nursing*. SB Communications Group, London