

| EDITORIAL

Since its inception in 1998, I have been involved with the *Africa Journal of Nursing and Midwifery (AJNM)*, by being an editorial board member and a professional editor. I am proud to say that I wrote the motivation for academic accreditation, leading to the AJNM's accreditation since 1 January 2008.

We thank Professor SM Mogotlane, the previous editor of the AJNM, who retired at the end of 2008, for her contributions to the AJNM. It is with some trepidation that I became the AJNM's executive editor since 1 January 2009.

At the first editorial board meeting of 2009, it was decided that the AJNM should strive to publish nine worthwhile articles per issue, and continue to publish two issues per year. Some past issues contained only five articles. Publishing nine articles involves many hours of reviewing and editing, and requires strict adherence to the author guidelines of not exceeding 5000 words and of adhering to the guidelines for references, headings and page layout (please refer to the back cover page). Authors can facilitate reviewers' and editors' tasks, and enhance their chances of getting successfully published, by studying articles published in the AJNM. Articles that have been edited by professional editors do have better chances of getting published sooner than those that require many hours of editing.

The editorial board members also agreed that reports (of approximately 1 000 words) of conferences attended could be included, if space permits, to inform nurses and midwives about the major trends of specific conferences. I have included the first report in this issue, about the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) conference hosted in Cardiff, Wales during March 2009.

The biggest challenge remains finding the hours required from an editor of an academically accredited journal, in addition to all the other academic work. However, reviewers and authors face similar challenges of finding time to write articles and reviews about articles. Although authors have to pay page fees (of R100.00) per printed page, they do get some recognition once their articles are published, and even some financial rewards if they are attached to universities. On the contrary the editors and reviewers earn no academic or financial reward for their inputs. Any journal's continued publication depends on authors, reviewers, editors and the publisher. Managing collaboration among

these four groups of contributors to ensure that every issue of the AJNM gets published on time with nine worthwhile articles, is my immediate challenge.

Finally, a journal can only exist if it has subscribers, and the AJNM urgently needs more subscribers to ensure its continued publication. If every subscriber would get one more subscriber, then the subscriptions will increase by 100%. Thus every author/co-author of an article and every subscriber to the AJNM is hereby challenged to help increase the number of subscribers, and to contribute to the AJNM's continued existence.

I look forward to receiving many worthwhile, well written, edited articles in future. I trust that I will succeed in collaborating with all interested persons and institutions to be an executive editor of the AJNM who will lead the AJNM from strength to strength, with the authors', reviewers', editors' and publisher's sustained co-operation.

Professor Valerie J Ehlers

Executive Editor