

## EDITORIAL

# Editors' welcome

Joyce Guo, William Ju

## Introduction

Tēnā koutou katoa and welcome to Issue 36 of Te Hautaka o ngā Akongā Rongoā, the New Zealand Medical Student Journal (NZMSJ). The theme of this issue is "Advocacy in Health," which is crucial in the betterment of the healthcare system for both patients and health professionals. It is our privilege to share with our readers a wide range of insightful and high-quality articles by health care professional students, clinicians, and academics from Aotearoa.

Advocacy plays a core role in the realm of healthcare, serving as a powerful catalyst for positive change and improved outcomes on both individual and systemic levels. Healthcare advocacy for the individual involves standing up for the rights, needs, and well-being of patients, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns addressed. On a broader scale, advocacy in healthcare contributes to the refinement of healthcare policies, regulations, and services. As providers working on the front lines, health professionals often better identify areas of necessary improvement than policy-makers. Advocacy campaigns and initiatives can shed light on systemic issues, drive policy changes, and influence healthcare regulations that ultimately shape the healthcare experience for everyone.

We believe that by holding stakeholders accountable and pushing for transparency, advocacy serves as a counterbalance to potential shortcomings in the healthcare sector. Overall, the significance of advocacy in healthcare extends beyond individual cases, contributing to a more inclusive, patient-centric, and effective healthcare system for entire communities and populations.

## A brief overview of articles within this issue

This issue showcases fantastic editorials from two groups of advocates who have used their voices to make changes at systemic levels. Dr Dawson Muir and Dr Margy Pohl jointly identify and discuss barriers to gender equality in the Orthopaedic field in the editorial "Is it broken?". Dr Muir is the chair of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association education committee and Dr Pohl is the founder and past chair of Ladies in Orthopaedics New Zealand (LIONZ). The editorial demonstrates advocating efforts of the orthopaedic community which are leading to tangible changes in the training selection system, thereby impacting on generations of doctors and patients to come. In "Prescribing a Healthy Planet: The Vital Link Between Climate, Healthcare, and Empowering Medical Students for Change in Aotearoa" Dr Dermot Coffey, Summer Wright, and Angad S. Chauhan discuss the advocacy goals of the Ora Taiao organisation. The editorial also expands on ways health professionals can take action at individual and systemic levels for tackling climate change, giving readers a pragmatic approach to change.

Issue 36 also includes many excellent academic articles covering a broad spectrum of thought-provoking topics. We are pleased to share a selection of the 2022 Bachelor of Medical Sciences with Hon-

ours abstracts from the University of Auckland, featuring the work of numerous early researchers. Dr Zhaolun Feng and Dr Samarina Musaad present an intriguing report on a case of scurvy in New Zealand, highlighting the need to consider risk factors in these rarer conditions. Angad Chauhan has written an inspiring academic essay highlighting the health equity factors playing into traumatic brain injuries in New Zealand adolescent populations. Albert Andrew discusses in an essay the implementation of a lottery system for medical school admissions in New Zealand.

This issue also presents the winning case study of the 2022 David Scott Prize in Diabetes and Metabolic Medicine at the University of Auckland by Thomas Swinburn.

We also welcome one of the winning essays of the 2022 Wilson-Allison Memorial Prize in Dermatology by Velia Men.

We are delighted to be continuing our features article series in this issue. Our academic pearl section has been written by Dr Rajan Ramji and Associate Professor Andy Wearn, and describes the barriers faced by medical students with dyslexia and the techniques and services available to aid them. We are once again proud to publish our brilliant "Statistics Primer" feature, written by Professor Robin Turner, Associate Professor Claire Cameron, and Dr Ari Samaranayaka which offers early researchers a handy guide to approaching collaboration with biostatisticians. We are excited to share these articles with our readers.

## Acknowledgements and concluding remarks

The Editorial Board is incredibly grateful to the Universities of Auckland and Otago for their ongoing academic and financial support of the NZMSJ. We would like to further extend our gratitude to the Medical Assurance Society, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand, and DermNet for their generous funding of the NZMSJ. Our sincere thanks to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) for their continuing sponsorship of our annual RANZCOG Blog Post Award for the best student-authored blog post published on our NZMSJ Blog each year. We would also like to thank Professor Frank Frizelle for his generous financial support of the Verrall Award, which will be awarded to the best academic article published in the NZMSJ this year. Our 2022 Verrall Award winner was Dr Andrew Heaps, who described the upstream social determinants of asthma in New Zealand in a public health essay in issue 35. As always, we would like to acknowledge our New Zealand Medical Students' Association colleagues for their ongoing support and our Advisory Board members who continue to support the NZMSJ and share their immense wisdom and experience. Finally, on behalf of the authors, we would like to thank the Editorial and Commercial boards, the expert reviewers, and the student peer reviewers for their tireless commitment to getting this issue to publication.

We hope NZMSJ readers will enjoy the array of thought-provoking

articles included in Issue 36. We would like to congratulate all the authors who have contributed to this issue and encourage our readers to submit their work to the NZMSJ in the future.