

Changing the editorial guard

Scientific journals simply cannot be successful unless they have competent, dedicated and vigorous editors. The *South African Journal of Psychiatry* has been fortunate to have had such a person at the helm since 1997. We now bid Robin Emsley farewell as he hands over the reins to his successor.

Robin Emsley has epitomised the requirements of an excellent editor. Firstly he is highly respected in his field and is well known to his colleagues in South Africa, Africa and beyond. This is necessary because the editor has to call on colleagues for favours such as reviewing manuscripts, writing editorials or modifying manuscripts they have submitted. Even if the editor is respected as an expert in the field he or she must have powers of persuasion to bring colleagues into line to ensure quality of material and that tight deadlines are met. Apart from this interaction with authors and reviewers, Robin had an excellent working relationship with that other important part of producing a journal, the production team.

The *SAJP* has had a few hiccups during its existence, as have all journals from time to time. But Robin hands over the journal in good shape. In the recent past the journal has been invigorated by

a facelift and is now available on the Internet, while the academic content has retained its quality. Significantly, the *SAJP* is now not only the official journal of the South African Association of Psychiatrists but also of the African Association of Psychiatrists and Allied Professions, and is receiving an increasing number of submissions from outside South Africa. Together with the new editor and the production team, Robin has completed the orderly handover of the journal and they have mapped out further actions to improve the quality and reach of the journal.

Editing can sometimes be seen to be a thankless task. However, on behalf of the Society and the production team we would like to recognise Robin's sterling work and to thank him most sincerely for a task most successfully accomplished. The *SAJP* is fortunate in having a worthy successor to Robin, and we also welcome the new

editor Dr Werdie van Staden and wish him well for his period in this role (readers are referred to an interview with him on p. 4).



Robin Emsley

J P de V van Niekerk

Deputy Editor, SAMJ