

## **The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice—Its Purpose**

The primary purpose of this journal is to publish original papers pertaining to clinical investigations, case reports, review articles pertinent to the specialty of family practice, editorial comments, and book reviews. The articles published are intended to provide new and valuable information for reference by the entire medical community.

The journal also is intended to serve as an important forum for the specialty of family practice, to serve as a source of clinical information, and to serve as a medium for timely information concerning the activities of the American Board of Family Practice.

Consistent with its past history, the American Board of Family Practice (ABFP) took another innovative step when it decided to publish its own journal. To my knowledge, no other American board has independently sponsored its own journal. ABFP felt that there was a need for another quality peer-reviewed publication in our specialty. This decision was based on the observation that the number of Board-certified, residency-trained family physicians will continue to increase at a steady rate. Further, the Board sensed that an increasing number of colleagues will be actively engaged in scholarly investigations, and they will have need of peer-reviewed specialty journals in which to publish.

The most important characteristic of the journal, demanded by the Board, is that it must maintain high-quality standards. In order to achieve this, there exists an outstanding Editorial Board and an active and effective Advisory Board. In addition, the reviewers represent a very impressive cadre of some of the most highly respected clinicians in the world.

This journal, along with other similar journals, bears the responsibility to establish and maintain the quality of investigation and publication for the specialty. Journals can, by encouraging or discouraging investigators, impact heavily on the direction and quality of research

in the discipline. Accumulated investigation shapes the discipline and defines its content over time.

The journals within a medical discipline also reflect the state of the art for that discipline to other disciplines as well as to society in general. Journals reflect the value systems within the discipline represented. It is the responsibility of journals to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of the discipline and to serve as a reliable communication device among professionals.

For the discipline of family medicine, it is especially important at this time to make important contributions to medical knowledge. The discipline has long been largely dependent for new information upon investigators in other disciplines. If our discipline is to survive and manifest its destiny in society, it must make important contributions. The journals that represent the discipline must effectively communicate those contributions to its own disciples as well as to the professions and society in general.

The editorial staff of this journal is sensitive to these responsibilities and accepts them soberly. The quality of performance remains to be judged. Our intent is to encourage quality investigations and professional writing. Our criticisms of manuscripts are sincerely intended to be constructive. It is inevitable that more manuscripts will be rejected than accepted. It is also recognized that the editors are not flawless in their judgments of quality and that some criticisms of manuscripts may be misinterpreted as being personal in nature. This also is probably inevitable but must be minimized.

Finally, we feel very fortunate to be able to utilize the vast experience and time-proven excellence of the publisher. The Massachusetts Medical Society has achieved levels of quality in medical publishing that are virtually unmatched in the world. The staff members of the publisher are truly professional in every sense. We sincerely hope this is the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship.

Paul R. Young, M.D.  
Galveston, TX

# The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice

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Number 1

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# Table of Contents

---

Volume 2

January–March 1989

Number 1

---

## Editorials

### Anxiety

Paul R. Young

1

### Ou Sont les Neiges d'Antan?

Nicholas J. Pisacano

2

---

### Editors' Note

3

---

## Original Articles

### The Postpartum Papanicolaou Smear

Barry D. Weiss, Janet H. Senf,  
and Wendy Udall

4

### Factors in the Panic-Agoraphobia Transition

David A. Katerndahl

10

### Potential Benefits of a Computer ECG Interpretation System for Primary Care Physicians in a Community Hospital

Ken Grauer, Larry Kravitz, Mario Ariet,  
R. Whitney Curry, Jr., William P. Nelson,  
and Henry J.L. Marriott

17

---

## Medical Practice

### Feasibility of Sigmoidoscopic Screening for Bowel Cancer in a Primary Care Setting

David L. Hahn

25

### Obstetric Care in a Rural Family Practice

Wain Allen

30

### The Consultant Family Physician

Loren H. Amundson and H. Bruce Vogt

34

---

## Clinical Reviews

### Advances in Anxiety Management

William R. Yates and Robert B. Wesner

37

### Decubitus Ulcers

Ronald W. Perdue and Jim L. Wilson

43

---

## Brief Report

### Digitalis Toxicity

Randy Easterling and Paul E. Tietze

49

---

## Case Reports

### Pleural Effusion and Hydronephrosis in a Newborn

Sharon D. Lee

55

### The Recognition and Significance of the Vanishing Twin

Jo Jackson and Kurt Benirschke

58

---

## Editorial

### Seeing Over One's Shoulder and Out of the Corner of One's Eye

G. Gayle Stephens

64

---

## Correspondence

Outpatient Consultation

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

Consultation/Referral Patterns

Adoption

Liberal Education for Family Practice

Writing about Writing, Part II

68



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With this issue we are pleased to begin our second year of publishing The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice.

The relationship between the Board and Medical Publishing Group of the Massachusetts Medical Society originated three years ago when we were asked by Dr. Nicholas Pisacano to assist the Board in producing a new journal dedicated to publishing original clinical papers and case reports. He indicated that the Board was determined to create a new forum for articles and issues related to family practice, and in so doing, make positive impact on the direction and quality of research in the specialty.

We were immediately impressed with the idea because we felt the Board's goals closely paralleled our own expectations for each of the periodicals we publish. This meant producing a high-quality publication that would provide valuable, accurate, and timely information to family physicians so they, in turn, could deliver quality medical care to their patients.

Through the efforts of Dr. Nicholas Pisacano, Dr. Paul Young, and Dr. Gayle Stephens, The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice has already exceeded expectations. After only one year of publication the journal has been accepted by the major abstracting and indexing services. This means the quality of the editorial content meets the standards of independent parties and assures the inclusion of The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice articles in medical bibliographic literature.

We wish to congratulate the Editors and the Editorial Board on this accomplishment and on a successful first year of publication. A nice synergy has developed between our two organizations and we look forward to many more years of creative collaboration.

Ann Reinke Strong

Deputy Executive Director  
Medical Publishing Group