



Fresh Focus for Troubled Times

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The world became a small place as the virus that causes COVID-19 swept across the planet in 2020, leading to hardships for so many of us in so many ways. It appears we will be dealing with the virus and its myriad consequences for a long time to come.

While attention has appropriately been directed toward our medical colleagues who have faced the immediate impact, those of us in community mental health have had our own challenges. My work as chief medical officer at a community mental health center has been devoted almost entirely to our response to COVID. The complexities of protecting our clients and staff, discerning which of our services are essential, transforming many of our services to phone and video over a matter of days, and addressing the effects on business operations, have been overwhelming.

As we now turn to what appears to be the equally complex challenge of business resumption, many of us are aware that this crisis—one that includes not only the risk and consequences of serious illness and death but also fear, social isolation, and financial hardship—will affect peoples' mental wellbeing. We ponder how we can best address the needs of our community.

The work of the journal goes on and notifications of submissions continue to arrive in my inbox. I once again thank those reviewers who accept my requests for their help, despite the added demands of this crisis. At the same time, we are already receiving submissions regarding the community mental health aspects of COVID and we are doing our best to review them in a timely manner.

Fortuitously, this issue introduces a new format. "Fresh Focus" will enhance our ability to respond to the array of submission we are receiving regarding COVID. This was conceived as a mechanism to allow the journal to accept submissions in formats other than research articles and brief

reports and to explore content areas of relevance to our readers. It turns out that this flexibility is well suited to the questions arising for us in the COVID era.

It is therefore appropriate that in this issue, our first Fresh Focus article is on the current crisis. "COVID-19 Epidemic Peer Support and Crisis Intervention Via Social Media," authored by Cheng and colleagues, describes an innovative response developed by an international group of mental health clinicians to respond quickly to the psychological needs of the Wuhan first responders.

Our Fresh Focus section includes the following section topics:

- Pharmacology in the Community
- Peer-based participatory research
- Applied conceptual concerns
- Quality improvement/quality assurance
- Social justice

Each of the topic areas can accept articles in any of the following formats, which are described in more detail on our website:

- Book review
- Case presentation with discussion
- Point/counter point
- Review article
- Innovative practice

If you have an idea for an article, please feel free to contact me prior to submitting. We continue to seek papers suitable for our research and brief report sections but we hope that with this expanded format we can enrich our content to improve on our ability to publish papers that are pertinent to the practice of community psychiatry and related disciplines.

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