



# From the Education Editor's Perspective ...

As one member of the editorial team for the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*, it gives me great pleasure to write this article with the Education section in mind. The very structure of the journal, focusing as it does on research, education, and practice, covers the cornerstones of the health care professional milieu and allows for scholarly publication in each of the related journal sections. As the Education section editor, I am hopeful that individuals involved in the education of massage therapists, and in other disciplines with overlapping interests, will find in the IJTMB a vehicle through which to disseminate their work.

As indicated in the editorial from the executive editor, the Education section has a broad focus, covering both academic and clinical settings. This breadth is most appropriate, given that massage therapists must, through the education process, develop the knowledge, cognitive skills, practical skills, attitudes, and values necessary for the profession as a whole to fulfill its humanistic mission. It is only through sound academic and clinical preparation that this goal can be achieved. If one considers that the clinical practice patterns and outcomes of the future are products of today's educational programs and initiatives (Tamblyn RM. The impact of medical education on clinical practice and outcomes. Data presented at the Dr. Robert Stone Lecture; Toronto General Hospital, Toronto, Ontario; May 1996), then the importance of a reflective, scholarly, research- and evidence-informed approach to the education process and environment becomes clear.

Within the foregoing context, all aspects of what has been termed the "formal curriculum"<sup>(1)</sup> demand scholarly attention. Topics within this category include curriculum design (focusing, for example, on the effects that various approaches have on student performance and other relevant variables such as engagement with the literature, motivation and anxiety), evaluation strategies (focusing, for example, on reports of new approaches, reliability and validity testing, and prior learning assessment), distance learning initiatives, and the effects of instructional technology. Additionally, such topics as inter-professional education<sup>(2,3)</sup>, client- and patient-centered care<sup>(4)</sup>, the use of simulation in classroom and clinical learning and in evaluation<sup>(5)</sup>, the importance of educating research-literate practitioners<sup>(6)</sup>, the assessment and education of internationally trained therapists, and student motivation are all of great relevance and interest to educators, and certainly fall within the scope of the Education section.

Beyond the formal curriculum, topics related to informal and hidden curricular elements<sup>(1)</sup> are also of interest. These aspects of curricula speak not only to key influences on student education such as faculty interaction and institutional values and priorities, but also to the related subject of professional socialization—that is, the process through which students come to adopt the behaviors and values that are the norm for health care professionals<sup>(7)</sup>.

The above topics by no means represent an exhaustive list, but hopefully they do capture the incredible scope of educational research and scholarly endeavor. Over time, I hope that the Education section of the IJTMB will reflect that scope, and I look forward to seeing the work of the education community disseminated through the Journal to the benefit of all.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares that there are no competing interests.

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