
Editorial

Whither reality?

As we prepare for our first virtual conference, we probably face it with some trepidation and some anticipation. As a consequence of COVID-19, many of us have become denizens of the virtual world, jumping from videoconferences to webinars to Zoom family catch-ups. Some of these changes have been productive—allowing people to meet quickly and easily, or undergo a medical consultation without the need to travel—and will no doubt remain. However, the human element remains and we all benefit from developing our relationships and networks when we can meet in person. This year, that option hasn't been possible, but we can still listen to an excellent range of diverse speakers—both local and international—discuss their papers and be involved in panel deliberations. This is also likely to be a feature of future hybrid conferences, where speakers present from afar and those who can't attend in person can listen in. Hopefully, the personal element will return and we can enjoy the presentations in real life and the social interactions that surround them. Let's hope that 2021 allow us to build on this virtual foundation with some real face-to-face time.

This issue is traditionally devoted to the AMMA Conference abstracts in the lead up to the meeting. This will again be a feature; however, we are fortunate to have an increasing number of excellent articles available as well. The role of emergency medicine in the Australian Defence Force, the benefits of peer support staff for veterans, and the role of polypharmacy in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are all addressed in this issue. The links between killing in combat and PTSD are also examined. Finally, Viking warfare and medicine, and the military history of tourniquets are both explored.

The Journal continues to welcome articles on a range of military and veterans' health topics and I would encourage everyone to consider submitting their papers. As people prepare their presentations for the Conference, I would ask people to consider the next step of turning that well-researched presentation into a journal article. A great deal of excellent research, applied science, reviews, case studies and historical papers never see the light of day and we always appreciate the contributions that flow from the conference. I look forward to seeing you all virtually at the end of November 2020.

Dr Andy Robertson, CSC, PSM
Commodore, RAN
Editor-in-Chief