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A wide-ranging Journal

This edition contains a wide variety of articles on aspects of military medicine, reflecting the wide range of experience and opinions of Defence Health Service members. One issue involves the dilemmas of providing humanitarian assistance in wartime. As Gross has observed: "military necessity plays havoc with patients' rights [such as] the right to medical care, informed consent, confidentiality, the right to life and the right to die".¹ Paix argues that medical care in wartime should include more realistic initial assessments of people from the local population, including their potential for rapid recovery and return to independent life. We would like to publish responses from readers who have deployed recently.

In other articles, Rayner discusses the aims of early psychological intervention following trauma; Stedman explains the Employer Support Payment Scheme and the Civil Practice Support Allowance — schemes that greatly assist with the financial hardships of deployment; Short describes the recent restructure of the Royal Australian Air Force Reserve; and in the Warrant Officer's column, Grey outlines the reasons for recommending vaccinations against Japanese encephalitis virus.

Cleland, from the Victorian Adult Burns Service at the Alfred Hospital, has comprehensively reviewed recent developments in burns management. Baker et al review the merits of rapid diagnostic tests for malaria, and Smart et al describe the new C-17 Globemaster aircraft recently acquired by the RAAF for military transportation, including aeromedical evacuation. Some impressive photographs of this versatile aircraft appear on the back cover. McGinty describes the inspiring humanitarian assistance mission following the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, and we have a case report by Ayling et al featuring a pain management solution for a battle casualty in Afghanistan. Finally, Dowsett gives an account of the Royal Australian Navy's first hospital ship.

Reflecting on the last five editions by this Editor, it seems that the Journal's circulation has increased and there is greater "ownership" by non-commissioned health professionals. The contribution of such men and women to the DHS should not be underestimated. The content of the Journal has changed to reflect the result of the readership survey, and a strong link has been established between the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health (CMVH) and the Journal's Editorial Board, with agreement that CMVH will provide regular contributions and publicity for postgraduate courses organised by the Centre. There has been a pleasing increase in the number of authors who are submitting papers spontaneously. We strongly encourage such activity. The number of peer reviewers continues to rise and the Editorial Board is grateful to all of those experts who give their time to this important function. Group Captain Peter Wilkins will edit the October 2007 edition.

Finally, we honour the soldiers killed in the helicopter crash on HMAS *Kanimbla* off Fiji. It reminds us that serving the nation is an inherently risky business.

Commander Mike O'Connor

Editor, *ADF Health*



1. Gross M. Bioethics and armed conflict. Moral dilemmas of medicine and war. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006. □