
EDITORIAL

Editorial

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The aim of this editorial is twofold. First, as an Editor of a journal in its early days, I am eager to encourage high-quality submissions that increase insight into the fascinating dynamics of practice education. The corollary of aiming high is to recognize the need to convince authors that the journal is the most effective place to situate their research papers so that they get noticed in the interprofessional health and social care community. The journal has to be proactive, and accept its role in maximising impact on policy and/or practice through knowledge sharing. Second, the Editorial reflects an enduring aspiration of mine to demystify research and its associated activities, such as dissemination, so that it does not feel like an elite occupation but one that is achievable for many, given appropriate support and guidance.

In hosting the journal and providing its infrastructure, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) is investing significantly in making it work and with buy-in from the practice-based learning community I am confident that it will go from strength to strength. Several factors can contribute to attracting authors and thereby contributing to the quality and sustainability of the journal; these include the quality of the editorial and advisory boards, the extent of its networks and its digital nature.

The make-up of the editorial and advisory board is critical for building the profile of any journal. Potential authors might question whether board members are recognised thinkers in the professions or specific subject areas of interest? Can they be confident that submissions will be assessed by people who know the field and can give constructive and informative feedback? These are important questions of which we are aware and keen to address. To this effect the list of editorial and advisory board members is expanding, not only to include a wider range of professions, but also internationally. The journal's reach in terms of its networks is also crucial. Whilst the National Association of Educators in Practice (NAEP) draws on colleagues across the UK, if you visit our Endorsing Associations page you will see that we are delighted to have established links with the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE) and the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education (ENPHE). Both of these organizations have endorsed the journal and we look forward to the possibility of building on these relationships in the future.

Several technical aspects of publishing in an online journal make it attractive to authors. Browsing the first issue of the journal some readers will have wondered why the alphanumeric string appearing after the letters 'DOI' are included as part of the reference provided for each paper. For example, the citation for Jill Thistlethwaite's article in the first issue includes the DOI: 10.11120/pblh.2013.00003. Paste the link [http://dx.doi.org/\[DOI\]](http://dx.doi.org/[DOI]) into a web browser and magically the article appears. In an open access article entitled 'The What and Whys of DOIs', DeRisi *et al.* (2003) explain that the 'digital object identifier' is a label that 'provides a unique, persistent, and actionable identifier for the digital object with which it is associated'. The American Psychological Association describes the DOI as a 'social security number for a document online.' Commonly assigned to electronic articles,

the DOI means that each article is more easily traced by potential readers because if an object is moved, its URL will change, but its DOI remains the same. Articles can be found quickly and easily without worrying about old or broken links. Nothing is more frustrating than searching for the seminal paper that one knows is crucial to an area of research only to find that it has disappeared; the DOI is a means of overcoming this problem and confers a definite advantage to publishing in an online journal.

The International DOI Foundation (IDF), which governs the DOI system, has a large number of registrants, and over 84 million DOIs have been issued to date. The HEA is one such registrant and this is how papers in the journal have their own unique DOIs. By providing DOIs in papers published in the journal, authors can be mutually supportive in increasing access opportunities for one another. This is achieved by using the CrossRef service, which provides a database of references and their associated DOI to provide linking information that is presented in the journal, usually in the article reference list. The ease of immediate access over having to conduct a search, order a copy of a paper or visit a library makes this an appealing shortcut. The message is that if your reference list has complete and correct information then CrossRef will provide a link to the cited work. If the paper being cited has a DOI then make sure to include it; by doing so you are adding value to your paper by helping readers access the reference in future. Your paper in the journal will be deposited in the CrossRef database and any future citation of your work will also make your work accessible.

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Reference

DeRisi, S., Kennison, R. and Twyman, N. (2003) Editorial: The What and Whys of DOIs. *PLoS Biology* **1** (2): e57. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.0000057.