

## Editorial

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# Advancing the Profession through Scholarly Expertise: Our peer reviewers



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Peer reviewer plays a fundamental role in the scientific process of any discipline. It is easy to overlook these behind-the-scenes players and the parts they play in advancing the profession. As a research publication, the *Journal of Dental Hygiene* relies on reviewers from many specialties to evaluate the various aspects of a manuscript submission. Without their critical analysis of the research question, study design, execution, and conclusions, there would be no standards as to what is reported as new information and knowledge for our profession.

Reviewers also play a pivotal role in mentoring authors through a constructive feedback process. Whether the feedback is intended to enhance the published manuscript or to provide guidance for future research endeavors in the case of less robust submissions, the process is critical to the growth of the dental hygiene discipline. Outside of academia, it may be challenging to see the significant role this process plays in clinical practice. However, advancing our scope of practice relies on the scientific evidence that specific actions, such as direct access to dental hygiene services in residential care facilities, results in improved oral health outcomes in vulnerable populations. Looking beyond clinical practice are the far-reaching applications that the published body of knowledge has on government policies, which can ultimately impact the oral health and well-being of our communities and country.

I cannot speak highly enough about the members of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene* Editorial Advisory Board and our reviewers at large. They are the backbone of the *Journal*. Members of the Editorial Advisory Board represent a diversity of perspectives within the dental hygiene profession

and provide an additional layer of expertise in providing feedback and direction for the *Journal*. Our pool of reviewers at large represents a wide range of professionals from across the country and around the world. The countless hours reviewers spend on reading manuscripts and providing author feedback must be recognized for the role they play in supporting our growth as a profession. Their expertise and dedication to the review process keeps the research published in the *Journal* intellectually honest and rigorous. We owe them our gratitude and thanks.

I would also like to recognize the critical role the American Dental Hygienists' Association plays in supporting the work of the *Journal*. Their commitment to supporting the National Dental Hygiene Research Agenda and the publication of work conducted in the key areas of professional development, client and population health has been essential to advancing all aspects of the profession. Lastly, as the Managing Editor of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene* it has been an honor and a privilege to play a small part in this process. I look forward to what the coming year will bring in building the knowledge base of our profession!

If you are interested in learning more about contributing to the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*, download the most recent version of the Author Information and Guidelines.

**Catherine K. Draper, RDH, MS** is the managing editor of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*.