

The BMJ launches patient partnership strategy

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In an editorial, *The BMJ*'s Editor-in-Chief, Fiona Godlee and Patient Partnership Editor, Tessa Richards, explain that, over the past six months, an international panel of patient advisors the journal has set up "have stimulated, provoked, steered, and supported us to make landmark changes to our editorial processes."

These include asking authors of all educational articles to invite input from patients at an [early stage](#) in writing their papers and to document their input as contributors or co authors.

The BMJ is also calling for submission of robust research and analysis papers "which advance the science, art, implementation and assessment of impact of patient partnership, shared [decision making](#), and patient centred care."

Patients are already helping to review [research papers](#) and education articles, and the journal is getting the patient's voice in the journal more often.

With new expert patients appointed to the editorial board, and a new patient editor who will work with the journal's advisory panel, the journal plans to have patients participating in its internal decision making committees and in the meetings it convenes.

"People with experience of illness and using health services have much to teach us," writes Dr Richards. "We want partnership to be integral to

how we work and think; as well as what we advocate for."

We are also seeking to get the "authentic" voice of [patients](#) heard; not just the articulate minority," she adds. "So while we will continue to publish individual perspectives, we are extending our links with patient networks, advocacy groups, and other organisations pursuing patient and public involvement initiatives "to help tap into collective views."

The strategy will also include support for patient control or co-ownership of [personal health records](#) and the "Patients included" initiative. Patients' right to access good quality, affordable healthcare will be another focus.

"Patient [partnership](#) is easier to talk about than to realise," says Dr Richards. "It demands mutual respect, and understanding of the patient's perspective. Our strategy is being implemented incrementally and will evolve as we evaluate its impact. But we are excited by its potential and hope readers will be too."

More information: Editorial:

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