



Amit Kulkarni

RCSLT head of research and outcomes
Amit Kulkarni welcomes the new editors-in-chief of the *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*

Dr Joanne Cleland, senior lecturer, The University of Strathclyde



I published my first ever journal paper in the *IJLCD* in 2002, so I am delighted to now be joining the editorial team. I am a senior lecturer at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow where I teach undergraduates and research students. My own research focuses on technical solutions for the diagnosis and treatment of developmental speech sound disorders. I enjoy working with NHS colleagues in intervention studies and with engineering colleagues on improving technology.

As the *IJLCD* moves towards open access, RCSLT members can look forward to content being available to a much wider audience of SLTs across the world, and I hope this will increase the international flavour of the *IJLCD* even further. I hope to encourage RCSLT members to submit their clinical research to the journal and act as peer-reviewers. This in turn will help us to ensure that the papers we publish are both high-quality and clinically useful.

I am interested in ways in which we can make the content of the *IJLCD* more accessible to RCSLT members so that translating research into practice is supported. I hope to do this by capitalising on the relationship between the journal and the RCSLT membership and by using the different types of technology that are now available to most SLTs. For example, using social media effectively to communicate key messages from the papers that the *IJLCD* publishes. It's clear that the landscape of academic publishing is changing rapidly—this is therefore a very



Driving force

The *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders (IJLCD)* is a must-read for all of us in the profession who are interested in evidence-based practice (EBP) (Sackett, 2000). Established in 1966, the *IJLCD*—the official journal of the RCSLT—has been a driving force in the move towards EBP in speech and language therapy in the UK, publishing clinically-relevant research that supports clinicians to keep abreast of the latest developments in research across the world.

The journal's outgoing editors-in-chief (EiCs), Dr Steven Bloch and Dr Cristina McKean, have done a fantastic job leading the *IJLCD* over the past few years. They have ensured the *IJLCD*'s editorial team, the RCSLT and Wiley—the journal's publisher—have worked closely together to develop the reach and impact of the *IJLCD*. They have implemented a number

of successful initiatives to promote research awareness within the profession, from the *IJLCD* lectures to special editions, the *IJLCD* student prize and more. It has been a real pleasure working with them, but it is with great excitement that we announce Dr Joanne Cleland, Dr Paul Conroy and Dr Lindsay Pennington as the new EiCs of the journal, who take over this month.

The new team bring a wealth of clinical and research expertise, along with a great many ideas for driving the *IJLCD* further forward in a time of great change in academic publishing. Here, the new team introduce themselves and share their plans. We very much look forward to working with them, to continue to support clinicians across the world to access the latest, high-quality evidence relevant to speech and language therapy.

challenging but exciting time to be joining the team.

Email: joanne.cleland@strath.ac.uk

Dr Paul Conroy, senior clinical lecturer, The University of Manchester



I'm really pleased to be taking up the role of EiC of the *IJLCD* alongside Lindsay and Joanne. I am a senior clinical lecturer in speech and language therapy at The University of Manchester, specialising in acquired communication disorders. I've been an associate editor of the *IJLCD* since 2015, a role I've always found to be a rewarding experience, providing me with

Research and Outcomes Forum



ILLUSTRATION BY Freya Lowy Clark

“The IJLCD is a must-read for all in the profession who are interested in EBP”

the opportunity to be directly involved in the editorial process for applied research. It is very satisfying to see innovative lines of research progress from initial submission, through peer review and finally published study, which can influence clinical practice and future research. A huge factor in the smooth running of the journal

has been the fantastic support and guidance from the outgoing EiCs, Steven Bloch and Cristina McKean. Alongside associate editors Dr Natalie Munro from The University of Sydney, and Dr Silke Fricke from The University of Sheffield, Steven and Cristina have created a strong culture of teamwork, transparency and response

to change. They will be greatly missed!

Our goals in moving forward will be to build on this strong foundation, and ensure the *IJLCD* continues to be a source of high-quality, clinically relevant and diverse research. Our recent experience of social distancing and working from home highlights the potential (and possible limitations) of technology in our lives. As well as the increase in SLTs accessing literature online, there is also the move towards open access, where science is becoming more freely available worldwide. This change will begin to accelerate soon and the *IJLCD* editorial team will work closely with the RCSLT and our publishers to manage any challenges. More involvement of clinicians in submitting high-quality research and in the peer review process (reading and offering feedback on early drafts of manuscripts) should be a key goal in the future. It will be important to ensure the *IJLCD* is central to ongoing learning and continuing professional development for SLTs in the UK and beyond.

Email: paul.conroy@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Lindsay Pennington,
senior lecturer,
Newcastle University



I'm delighted to be taking up the role of EiC alongside my colleagues, Paul and Joanne. As a team, we are

planning some exciting developments and hope that, over the next few years, the *IJLCD* will continue to grow.

My own research focuses on childhood neurodisability and I am acutely aware that, as SLTs, we work in multidisciplinary teams (MDT) and create evidence not just for our own profession,

but also to influence the practice of psychologists, educators, other allied health professionals, physicians and psychiatrists, to name but a few. Similarly, we are influenced by the theories and practice of other groups. As EiCs, we will be strongly encouraging 'team science' with the publication of papers by multi- and inter-disciplinary teams that have direct messages for SLTs. The COVID-19 pandemic is necessitating a hitherto unseen pace of change in the way we approach clinical practice and the education of SLTs. The *IJLCD* will be a vehicle to share these changes, inform our colleagues and drive innovation. We will be looking at different types of papers that could promote immediate influences on clinical practice. We hope that as members of the RCSLT and readers of the journal, you will get involved, submitting and reviewing papers, and also commenting on them and their application in your clinical practice. As Joanne says, social media has an important part to play in spreading our message and we benefit from discussion of *IJLCD* papers through different media.

A final but important point for us as EiCs, is Plan S (see: www.coalition-s.org) and the move to open access for all academic journals. We will be in touch about how we can use this international change to our advantage and develop the journal and its relevance to RCSLT members and wider readership over the coming months.

Email: lindsay.pennington@newcastle.ac.uk



Resources & references

Sackett, D. L., Straus, S. E., Richardson, W. S., Rosenberg, W., & Haynes, R. B. (2000). *Evidence-based medicine: How to practice and teach EBM*. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone.