In this number

Fifty completed years of publishing: variations in health, socioeconomic circumstances, and behaviour in many countries

In this our 51st year of publication we propose to continue reviewing notable articles from our archives. Shaun Murphy and George Davey Smith from Bristol, UK, in this number review the historical content of the *JECH* (which began as the *British Journal of Social Medicine*) in some detail, in terms of contributors and topics. In the subsequent numbers of volume 51 we will reprint five more historical articles with commentaries.

In this number, papers from eight countries cover a wide range of applied epidemiology – from breast cancer in Australia to cancer survival in Italy. Aspects of socio-economic status appear in most articles. Whether countries are more or less developed economically, health is clearly intertwined with social and economic circumstances at all ages. Are you not yet convinced by the Bristol view that applied epidemiology is, or should be, 'social medicine'?

Promoting increasing standards in published articles

This year the *JECH* wishes to continue and expand its emphasis on quality as the outcome of peer review. The

corresponding author of each paper submitted to the Journal will be asked to do the following:

- Complete the first part of the form which our referees use, describing their own paper in terms of originality, relevance, rigour of methods etc;
- Provide a minimum of three and a maximum of five key points (the 'so what?' for their paper) to be printed in a box inside their paper when published. These key points can be epidemiological, clinical, public health, health promotion etc;
- Confirm the authorship status of all the names attached to the paper, in line with the guidelines in the *BMJ*;
- Include a statement for publication about the source of funding for the work reported, and whether there are any financial or other conflicts of interest for any author;
- Include the names of four possible referees for their paper, including an approximate guide to the age group of each referee (those aged less than 40 are especially welcomed);
- Include an e mail address for correspondence.

STUART DONNAN
Editor

Invitation for papers on Aging for global journal collaboration in October 1997

A Delphi consultation among editors of medical journals around the world has recently been conducted by a small group co-ordinated by George D Lundberg of *JAMA*. Under consideration was a possible theme for a 'global theme issue' in late 1997.

As a result of the consultation, the general topic of *aging* has been voted as most appropriate by over 100 journal editors. The next stage is the gathering of papers for all the participating journals, which include the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

We will be commissioning leading articles and review articles, and also wish now to invite authors to submit papers as soon as possible for publication in October 1997. *JAMA* will have the issue of October 22, 1997 dedicated to aging. As a bi-monthly journal, *JECH* has a rather

different set of deadlines from weekly journals such as *JAMA* and the *BMJ*, most importantly in relation to our printing and production schedules. The finalised papers will be needed by the typesetters and printers by early July – this process is regulated by *BMJ* Publishing and is not open to influence by our editorial team. Thus, although we are continuing to speed up our editorial and refereeing processes, it will be difficult for us to publish accepted papers in the dedicated issue if we receive manuscripts later than early May 1997.

Please let us have your manuscripts on topics related to aging as soon as possible. We guarantee to publish them quickly (ie October 1997) if they navigate the peer review process successfully.

STUART DONNAN
Editor