

From the Editor's Desk

David E. Beck, MD

*Chairman, Department of Colon and Rectal Surgery, Ochsner Clinic Foundation, New Orleans, LA
Professor, The University of Queensland School of Medicine, Ochsner Clinical School, New Orleans, LA
Editor-in-Chief, The Ochsner Journal*

This issue of *The Ochsner Journal* starts our year-long celebration of Ochsner's 70th anniversary. This institution has grown from a small multispecialty surgical practice to a major health system with more than 800 physicians and 13,000 employees. The Ochsner Health System is currently the largest nonprofit employer in Louisiana. Our caring healthcare team provides quality care to more than 30% of the patients in the New Orleans area and more than 1 million outpatients each year in our state-of-the-art facilities. Despite managing the most complex and sickest patients, we have reported lower than expected mortality and achieved recognition from multiple national sources. For example, our facilities were recognized in seven categories by *US News and World Report*, the only hospital with such recognition in Louisiana. We have much to be proud of but face many challenges. It is appropriate to celebrate our success on this anniversary as we strive to excel in the ever-demanding environment of healthcare.

This issue of *The Ochsner Journal* contains a diverse group of articles that should provide something of interest to our varied readership. We begin with four editorial pieces. A new quarterly column devoted to bioethics debuts in this issue. Dr Taylor provides the first Bioethics in Practice column on the subject of bioethics consultations. The second editorial discusses concerns about a commonly prescribed drug, hydrochlorothiazide. The third editorial focuses on the importance of colorectal cancer screening. The final editorial piece is a historical description of the shooting of Senator Huey P. Long and a discussion of how events might have been altered had the clinical options been different.

The next section contains a number of original research articles. Dr Kaye and colleagues from Louisiana State University present their experiences with

smoking cessation in pain patients. This article is followed by a retrospective cohort study on the impact of glycemic control on lipid levels in a diabetic population. Next is an evaluation of the efficiency impact of anesthesiology residents in the operating room.

New devices continue to become available, and their use merits critical evaluation. The anesthetic challenges associated with the insertion of a new metal self-expanding stent are described by several of our anesthesiology colleagues. Orthostatic hypotension is a common problem in hospitalized elderly patients. The prevalence and risk factors are examined in a cohort study from the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. The final research paper evaluates how bariatric surgery improved body proportion.

The next section contains four review articles. Dr Kaye and colleagues review the use and acceptance of alternative medicine among the general population and medical personnel. Evidence-based medicine is important in our practices. Drs Masvidal and Lavie review several examples of evidence that has failed to confirm observations from cohort and case-controlled studies. Many Jehovah's Witness patients do not accept blood. Surgery in these patients can produce clinical and ethical challenges. Drs Lin and colleagues review the anesthetic management of these patients. Finally, Dr Mott, chairman of the Ochsner Oncology Department, reviews mesothelioma.

Two unusual case reports complete this issue: lumbar incisional hernia after an iliac crest bone graft and a case of male urethral diverticulum following placement of an artificial urinary sphincter.

We continue to look for colleagues interested in serving as reviewers for *The Ochsner Journal*. If you are interested, please contact me or the editorial office. Submissions to the *Journal*, including editorials and letters to the editor, are encouraged.