

## Editor's Page

### Spinal Cord Editor's Page February 2007



Dear *Spinal Cord* Reader,

This issue includes several topical studies on issues of importance to spinal cord medicine and research.

Quality of life issues are very important, not only for patients, but also for all carers, health authorities and the general public. A study by Whalley Hammell describes the use of qualitative research to provide a greater depth of insight into the factors that contribute to, and detract from, quality of life after spinal cord injury. It also provides a deeper understanding of the experience of the quality of life following spinal cord injury than is achievable by quantitative methods. Future qualitative research is required to identify how rehabilitation services might best address these issues.

Two animal studies are included in this issue. A study by Czarkowski-Bauch and colleagues evaluates whether locomotor exercise leads to neurochemical remodelling of the spinal cord, and if such an effect manifests itself in different ways in the rostral and caudal lumbar segments of the spinal cord. This is followed by a study by Kim and co-workers that evaluates whether thalidomide treatment before ischemic insult reduces early phase ischemia/reperfusion injury of the spinal cord in rabbits.

Blight evaluates in a placebo-controlled clinical study two doses of fampridine (4-amino pyridine) in humans with incomplete motor spinal cord lesion. His investigations show the clinical effects of this specific blocker of voltage-dependent neuronal potassium channels in demyelinated axons.

The use of phosphodiesterase inhibitors in the treatment of erectile dysfunction in spinal cord injured patients is studied in a larger sample size by Previnaire and colleagues.

Two case reports are included in the issue. Chang evaluates activated microglia/macrophages in a small sample of human spinal cord injury patients up to 60 days post injury, raising an intriguing question on potential relations between these activated microglia/macrophages, and the experimental injection of exogenously activated macrophages to promote spinal cord repair. Lee *et al* describe an oncocytoma causing paraplegia.

A Letter to the Editor from Patki *et al* about fertility after spinal cord injury comments on a systematic review published in the December 2005 issue of *Spinal Cord* by DeForge *et al* (*Spinal Cord* 2005 **43**: 693–703).

Happy reading!

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