




## Editorial

### Take the Publishing Plunge

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### Take the Publishing Plunge

Writing and submitting an article for publication can be intimidating to most of us. I reflect on my early nursing days as a wound specialist with writing and publication experience to share what I feel might benefit others by learning about the article development process and ultimately being published.

In conceptualizing an article, it is important to identify what aspect of clinical practice that issue is addressed through a literature search. Many ideas can be vetted, defined, and refined based on what the author finds in the published literature. In my early nursing career and writing experience, the medical team had identified a patient with fungating breast cancer, which was something none of us had seen or treated before. A young woman had presented with a large, external breast (fungating) tumor (42 cm in diameter). Once we identified the tissue type of malignancy, the quest to determine how to manage the desiccating tumor with horrific odor was our collective challenge. The literature revealed a gap in knowledge about treatment strategies, outcomes, and topical symptom management. The literature search yielded no published papers on the topic or about a similar experience. This solidified the need to develop a paper on the condition and the associated treatment strategies that our team ultimately employed to manage the complexities associated with the case.

#### Imposter Syndrome

As I developed my article manuscript, I learned about the case and medical and treatment regimens associated with our care. Still, I felt grossly incompetent to share the work, given I was a mere nurse in the trenches! I pondered the article, the case, and my writing until one of my surgeons finally asked when it would be published. He knew me well and that I was always rabid about finding a solution to a patient's problem. I asked several colleagues and that surgeon to

review and edit my work to ensure it was deemed worthy of publication. It was ready to be submitted after twelve revisions and multiple “final” versions. Once the article was received by the publisher, the clock began ticking, and my wait began. After two months, I finally received the response.

The letter acknowledged my submission and discussed how it might be improved, and should I accept those recommendations and make the corresponding edits, it would be published. When I reviewed the document, all I saw were red-lined comments. Swallowing hard (and with tears in my eyes), I began the humbling experience of revising my work. Once the changes had been made, the re-submission was sent off, and the wait continued. Three months later, I opened the journal and eagerly flipped through the papers to my article! I was so excited, gratified, and accomplished to see my work in print.

That one big step of publishing my work on a bedside intervention (novel as it was then) sparked in me a flame that compelled me to contribute to the nursing literature and set me on a career goal of publishing ideas, works, clinical practices, quality improvement, and my research projects. It was to embark on even bigger work and project development that I would have never entertained had I not submitted that first article about a challenging patient.

### **Your Opportunity**

When the opportunity to serve as an Associate Editor for the Journal of the Academy of Forensic Nursing (JAFN) came about, I was excited and honored to be asked to serve. As the Charter Associate Editors—Dr. Theresa Fay-Hillier and Dr. Paul Thomas Clements and I, under the direction and guidance of our accomplished Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Catherine Carter-Snell—discuss JAFN, our mission, and values, we committed to fostering all levels of authors and their submissions by working closely with our peer reviewers and the authors to provide consultative collaborations that mentor and support all (novice to expert) authors in producing a quality, impact-focused journal that provides innovation and inspiration to our diverse readers across the globe.

As the editorial team, we invite you to actualize your work to advance practice by sharing your ideas and submitting an article for publication in JAFN. JAFN is one way the Academy of Forensic Nursing is action-focused by living our mission and values of Education, Scholarship, and Service.