



8<sup>th</sup> May 2017

*Sent via email*

Dear IJOEH Editorial Board

Please allow me to introduce myself as the Managing Director of Taylor & Francis Journals.

I am writing in response to your letters to Andrew Kelly dated 11 February 2017 and to Roger Horton dated 26 April 2017 regarding the transition in the editorship of the *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health (IJOEH)* from Dr David Egilman to Dr Andrew Maier.

We note the concerns you have raised. We understand that, in response to your February letter, Dr Maier proposed setting up a meeting with the Board to discuss his plans for the journal. We still believe that this would be a helpful and positive next step. Please let us know if you would like us to arrange this meeting, which I know Dr Maier is keen to attend, as are my team.

In the meantime, I set out below the background to the transition in editorship, which I hope will help to clarify our decision-making with respect to Dr Maier's appointment and the status of submitted manuscripts, and provide you with reassurance regarding the preservation of the integrity of the journal.

As you may be aware, Hamilton Hardy Publishing, of which Dr Egilman was President, sold its ownership of the journal to the Maney publishing company in 2011. Dr Egilman remained as Editor-in-Chief of the journal, under contract to Maney as the journal owner. Subsequently, Taylor & Francis acquired the Maney business in 2015, and with it ownership of *IJOEH*. Dr Egilman's term as Editor-in-Chief was due to expire on 31 December 2016 and, following a review of the journal, we decided not to renew his agreement. It is common practice in scientific journals to rotate journal editorships regularly and *IJOEH* is no exception to this.

The responsibility for selecting and appointing an Editor-in-Chief lies with Taylor & Francis as the owner of the journal.



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When looking to appoint a new Editor-in-Chief for one of our journals, we may advertise the post. Alternatively, or in addition, we will often seek advice on potential candidates from more senior members of an Editorial Board, as well as advice from other contacts in the field.

However, consultation with the whole Editorial Board would be unusual. We would hold at least one interview with any prospective new Editor-in-Chief, before any appointment is made, to discuss the candidate's vision for the journal.

In this particular situation, we reached out to a number of people we know in the field to seek advice, including Dr Jukka Takala from the IJOEH Editorial Board via email and telephone. We were especially keen to solicit his views as a president and past president of two large associations in the area.

On the basis of advice received and our own research, we contacted Dr Maier. We reviewed his CV and held several telephone calls with him to discuss his plans for the journal and how we might position the journal to cover the multiple perspectives of this diverse area with an impartial and evidence-based approach. We felt satisfied that he had the right experience and vision for the role.

Now in post, Dr Maier is working to ensure articles submitted to the journal are peer reviewed as soon as possible and would appreciate help from the Editorial Board in expediting that. As you can see on Taylor & Francis Online, articles that were accepted under the editorship of Dr Egilman continue to be published in the form in which they were accepted.

Three articles accepted for publication under Dr Egilman's tenure have been flagged up as raising potential concerns. We are currently investigating these as a matter of urgency and expect to proceed with publication or confirm an alternative course of action with those authors shortly. As you will be aware, we have also recently withdrawn a fourth article that was inadvertently published before the review process was completed, and was subsequently decided to be unsuitable for publication.

Taylor & Francis works in partnership with Editors-in-Chief to ensure the academic success and prosperity of the journals we publish: this includes upholding our guidance on the ethics of journal publishing. Where any sensitive, ethical questions arise, our relationships with our Editors and Editorial Boards are usually sufficiently close that we would work on any such

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issues together when they first arise, for example advising on how a paper should best be handled in peer review. The exception would lie in papers where there was a clear conflict of interest for the Editor or their Board such that independent advice might be necessary.

At Taylor & Francis, the Editors we work with have full authority to receive and invite submissions, undertake peer review and make decisions on acceptance and rejection, provided they uphold the highest ethical standards. As such, Dr Maier has the responsibility for making the final decision on an article's acceptance, mindful of publisher guidance where ethical or legal considerations arise.

In common with other journals owned by Taylor & Francis, the appointment of the Editorial Board and the editorial policy for the journal is led by Dr Maier as Editor-in-Chief in conjunction with ourselves, with Taylor & Francis retaining oversight and the right of final approval.

Dr Maier's obligations as Editor-in-Chief are outlined in a formal contract between himself and Taylor & Francis, and as such his role encompasses a higher level of responsibility than that of members of the Editorial Board.

By adopting this approach, we can ensure the highest standards of peer review, free from unethical practice, including outside influence from corporate or other sources, and in line with industry-standard guidance from the Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE).

I hope the above provides additional background for you and my team look forward to addressing any further queries in a forthcoming meeting with the Editorial Board.

Yours sincerely

Ian Bannerman

Managing Director  
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