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Transforming our Healthcare

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

Transforming our Healthcare

At McMaster and other universities around the country, there is a continuous and concerted effort in the health sciences to develop innovative policy and medical interventions that could change the way healthcare is structured and delivered. Through research and other pursuits, scientists, health professionals and policy-makers are always working to transform healthcare, and as students, we can play an important role in this process—both now and in the future.

We can begin to make a difference by engaging in active discussion. For example, events held by the McMaster Health Forum Student Subcommittee promote focused dialogue on specific issues in the health sciences. To extend this dialogue further, *The Meducator* is introducing a new regular column called *ForumSpace*. This column will be written by members of the Subcommittee and will provide a distinctly student perspective on a particular topic of interest. In our inaugural column this issue, Adrian Tsang discusses the coming transformations in Canadian health policy. As Adrian writes, the First Minister's Accord on health will be expiring in three years, providing an opportunity for substantial changes in our healthcare system. As young people, we have an important stake in what changes unfold and it is important that our voices are heard.

But health policy is not the only way students can help to transform our healthcare. For example, in a *Research Insight article*, Ritesh Daya discusses his work on developing new treatments for schizophrenia. By focusing on drugs that target the allosteric sites of receptors, Ritesh describes how we may be able to tackle the devastating illness in a safer, more effective manner.

Ritesh's article is followed by a piece by a *Critical Review* by Shelly Chopra. The article analyzes the possibility of using microparticles as biomarkers for thrombosis. As technology advances, our understanding of these microscopic vesicles is improving, and it may soon be time to use them in a clinical context. Also in this issue is an article by Khizer Amin which examines concussions in the context of ice hockey. Khizer provides an important medical perspective to an issue that has evolved from an afterthought to front page news.

While university provides a great environment for us to encourage change, it is important that we maintain our penchant for advocacy even after we leave. Soon after graduating from McMaster's MD program, Dr. Richard Heinzl co-founded Doctors without Borders Canada in 1988, and has since dedicated much of his life to promoting healthcare in developing nations. *The Meducator*'s Kimia Sorouri took the time to interview Dr. Heinzl for this issue when he visited McMaster last month.

I would like to welcome all the new staff of *The Meducator*. Energized with their new ideas, we continue to work towards our vision of providing a platform for students to share their ideas and work in the health sciences. After twenty issues, The Meducator has also seen its share of transformations - we hope you enjoy this edition.

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