



# “The Times They Are A-Changin’” at *Diabetes Care*

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Every five years or so, the editorial team leading *Diabetes Care* turns over with the appointment of new leadership. This issue of volume 46 represents the first of a new editorial team, making it the tenth group to be responsible for the scientific content of the journal. Starting in 1978 with Jay Skyler as its first editor, *Diabetes Care* has gone from strength to strength with new initiatives and a steady increase in its influence. This impact has been in line with the charge given at the journal's founding by the then president of the American Diabetes Association Norbert Freinkel when he wrote, “The new journal is designed to promote better patient care by serving

the expanded needs of all health professionals committed to the care of patients with diabetes.”

For the past five years, Matthew Riddle and his erudite team have overseen the activities of the journal, bringing the latest information to the readership to enhance the provision of care to people with and at risk for this ever-growing, noncommunicable disease that continues to impact the lives of many. They have done so by bringing the foreseen, such as the progression of technology, and the unexpected, including the potential bidirectional impact of diabetes and COVID-19, to our attention. We are eternally grateful for their outstanding contributions.

In 1964 Bob Dylan, who was awarded the 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature, penned his famous song “The Times They Are A-Changin’” (1). In it he wrote:

Come gather 'round people  
Wherever you roam  
And admit that the waters  
Around you have grown  
And accept it that soon  
You'll be drenched to the bone  
If your time to you is worth savin'  
And you better start swimmin'  
Or you'll sink like a stone  
For the times they are a-changin'

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As the new stewards of *Diabetes Care*, we recognize Dylan's words to be prophetic in so many ways.

As publishing has rapidly evolved in the last decade or so, there is no question that "the times they are a-changin'." Examples are greater electronic access, preprints, the flourishing of social media activity, and, in some instances, the disappearance of print versions of journals. To remain relevant, journals like *Diabetes Care* must evolve. The new editorial team plans to promote this evolution. To mark the start of this progression, with this issue, the journal's cover has changed. Over the next few months, we will be bringing several new initiatives to the fore. First, we will be introducing podcasts that highlight important and thought-provoking articles. These podcasts will include discussions with authors regarding their work and its implications. To allow you the reader to gain further insight into their writings, we will make access to these articles free. Second, we plan to regularly solicit reviews from groups with deep knowledge in their respective fields and encourage authors to give prominence to those who are in an earlier stage of their careers. We intend to include reviews that address timely issues important to society and health care and those that will offer a spectrum of knowledge on a theme, providing insight from basic science to clinical topics. These too will be freely available and will frequently be accompanied by an interview as part of our podcast series. Third, to ensure the manuscripts we publish meet the highest standards, we

are introducing additional specific requirements that include following reporting guidelines and registering studies before they are performed. Fourth, by restructuring the editorial team and enhancing the approach to manuscript review, we aim to reduce the time from submission to decision and publication, thus aspiring to make the latest worthy and rigorous information available as rapidly as possible. With about 3,000 submissions annually and limited publication space, to aid in the timeliness of publication, we will continue to render a rapid decision on the numerous manuscripts we believe are unlikely to achieve sufficient priority following peer review.

As we look forward, concern continues to be expressed regarding the future of biomedical research as we witness fewer trainees and early career investigators choosing to stay in academia. When one examines the field of diabetes, it is clear this is a valid concern. We feel the same unease holds for medical publishing, especially when a journal does not include the involvement of a cadre of full-time personnel with scientific expertise. Such is the case for *Diabetes Care*, where there has been a paucity of editors who are early- and mid-career investigators. Thus, here too "the times they are a-changin'." In the selection of associate editors and the members of the editorial board, a conscious effort was made to select the best of the best among those who are at earlier stages of their careers. That is not to say we disregarded qualified individuals who are more advanced in their careers. But we felt if we did not modify the approach now, there

could be a paucity of the next generation interested and qualified to take *Diabetes Care* forward in the future. With this in mind, 12 of the 24 associate editors have not yet been appointed as full professors at their respective institutions. We hope the readership will feel this change is vital and timely.

The final matter for which the "times they are a-changin'" is the most threatening to health and society, which in so many ways makes it the most urgent. We are conscious of the biases and discrimination that affect many world citizens. The broadly disseminated video of the murder of George Floyd during the COVID-19 pandemic brought into full public view issues both active and simmering for decades. Racism and socioeconomic injustice are key drivers of health care inequities within and between countries. These inequities require serious and urgent attention. Thus, we plan to concentrate on the themes of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all that we do. We will do so by bringing these issues to the fore for reading, and we hope for constructive discussion so that researchers and clinicians can work to close some of the gaps that exist in care for people with diabetes. As part of this process, we will require authors to abide by the standards of reporting on race and ethnicity, and sex and gender. We are very proud to say that the new team of associate editors of *Diabetes Care* is more diverse than ever before in terms of race and gender, currently comprising 42% who do not identify as White and 67% who identify as female. The team also includes greater representation from countries

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outside of North America. The editorial board is also more diverse than before and has members from 13 countries. We will also ask our reviewers and authors to consider providing such information so we can ensure diversity of all who participate in publishing in *Diabetes Care*.

With new leadership comes new ideas; we are excited about them and do hope that our plans will either immediately or in time meet with your approval. Of course, we are also interested in your thoughts on anything else we can do so that the “times they are a-changin’” remains an ongoing mission as

we oversee *Diabetes Care* for the next term.

*Come writers and critics  
Who prophesize with your pen  
And keep your eyes wide  
The chance won't come again  
And don't speak too soon  
For the wheel's still in spin  
And there's no tellin' who  
That it's namin'  
For the loser now  
Will be later to win  
For the times they are a-changin'*

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1. Dylan B. The Times They Are A-Changin'. Sony Music Entertainment, 2018. Accessed 24 September 2022. Available from <https://www.bobdylan.com/songs/times-they-are-changin/>