

From the Editor

We have dedicated this month's issue to ethics and I am pleased to have some of the top people in the field discussing issues relevant to emergency medicine. Ethics can be a part of practice if we give it thought, but often we don't. Even simple issues such as tying down children for suturing and not telling patients about their illness as per the request of the family are profound ethical questions. IJEM supports the creation of ethics panels consisting of clergy, interested physicians, lawmakers and laymen-including patients themselves. We also encourage ethics awareness among the diverse populations that we serve, which includes people of religious, Russian, Ethiopian, and Arab extraction, not to mention awareness of the needs of foreign workers and their diverse religious and cultural needs. IJEM also recognizes that bigotry and discrimination can invade the halls of science and with this in mind, the World Association of Medical Editors has requested we print the following, which will become part of IJEM's official policy:

The following position statement was distributed by the World Association of Medical Editors. As a member of the world community - IJEM endorses this statement and pledges BLN to abide by its contents

Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions

Posted March 23, 2004

Decisions to edit and publish manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals should be based on characteristics of the manuscripts themselves and how they relate to the journal's purposes and readers. Among these characteristics are importance of the topic, originality, scientific strength, clarity and completeness of written expression and potential interest to readers. Editors should also take into account whether studies are ethical and whether their publication might cause harm to readers or to the public interest. Editorial decisions should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript, including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors. Decisions to edit and publish should not be determined by the policies of governments or other agencies outside of the journal itself. Editors should defend this principle, as they do other principles of sound editorial practice, and enlist their colleagues' support in this effort if necessary.

We hope you find the issue stimulating

Sincerely Yours,

Joseph B. Leibman, MD

Editor in Chief