



EDITORIAL

A point made in the article in this issue written by Iranian colleagues has wider implications. The article describes patients' rights and takes as its basis the newly established Patients' Bill of Rights. The authors say that 'this bill is an amalgamation of western versions of such bills and is not mainly based on the Iranian socio-cultural context. Neither patients nor health care providers were involved in compiling this bill'. How often have laws, policies, guidelines etc. been imposed on others without consulting them, with the people who have to implement them being expected to understand them and work within their parameters? Nursing is no exception. Yet, increasing numbers of businesses and industries have accepted that their staff will be better motivated, and therefore more productive, if they can be involved in making and shaping the rules and regulations by which they live and work. It seems incredible, therefore, that governments have not yet grasped that working *with* people rather than without them would be advantageous.

In order to promote this idea within health care generally, nurses do need to make their voice heard much more loudly and positively. Nurses still often defend themselves by saying that they have enough work to do without becoming involved in politics, but every act of care is also a political act. Care has a social impact, it is measured and counted quantitatively, and it affects not just the person concerned but that person's family and loved ones, who will judge a nurse or a care organization by the care given. Society is served and influenced by the very smallest as well as the very large gestures made between people. Nursing is nothing if it is not about this 'careful' attention to every person within it. All the articles in this issue bear testimony to this ideal.

Huey-Ming Tzeng and Chang-Yi Yin address the worrying topic of avian flu. How are nurses to prepare themselves and others for a possible pandemic? *Nursing Ethics* is not always able to respond quickly to items that make the news, but it is good that nurses are willing to grapple with global political and social issues proactively and comment on them.

What makes for 'good work' is described by Joan Miller. This is part of a wider study of various professions and the findings indicate that reflection on the significance of values and virtue in sustaining good work is important.

Soodabeh Joolae and her colleagues give an insight into nursing practice in Iran and how nurses and patients cope with patients' rights legislation. She gives some indications of what might be needed to address the many problems with that legislation.

Ann Catrine Eldh and her co-authors studied the conditions that do or do not enhance patients' involvement in their care. Patients have unique knowledge of their conditions and situations that are too often overlooked.

An interesting insight into an area where nurses are employed in industry as occupational health workers is presented by Anne Heikkinen and colleagues, creating a bridge in the discussion of the wider role of nursing in society.

Ellen Verpeet and her colleagues contribute one more article in the series produced by the group that studied European codes of ethics for nurses. Belgian nurses do not have a code: do they need one or not?

Tineke Abma and Guy Widdershoven turn to philosophy for understanding some aspects of psychiatry and how to improve it.

Finally, a summary of research carried out in Turkey on medical ethics education as perceived by physicians is a new feature. Other readers may also wish to send in research summaries.

Making nurses' voice heard and understood directly and indirectly, for the profession and for the wider public, is part of the mission of any publication – this journal being one such vehicle for the articles sent to it. The voice becomes more difficult to ignore when it is authoritative, as the articles here testify.

Verena Tschudin

Readers will have noted the different logo on this issue: Arnold sold their journals to SAGE Publications at the beginning of June. While this was unexpected, it is also welcome. SAGE are renowned for their journal production. For the time being no significant visible changes will take place, and no changes in editorial arrangements and policy are envisaged. The editorial team producing *Nursing Ethics* continues as before. Editor.