



LETTER

## Out with the old...

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In every endeavour in life, and in life itself I suppose, there comes a time to say goodbye. Regarding my tenure as Editor of *Health Economics, Policy and Law* (HEPL), that time has come. In fact, I think I somewhat overshot it.

Jan-Kees Helderma, a key member of the HEPL (and EHPG) community, notes in his article in this issue that HEPL was launched in 2006. That is true, but Elias Mossialos and I (initially with Ray Robinson) began preparing an application to establish a new journal in health policy in 2003. Our intention was to create a sort of sister journal to the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* – a little more international than the latter, and a bit more ‘economic’. Therefore, my involvement in establishing and editing HEPL has lasted for more than 20 years. On receiving our application, Patrick McCartan, who was then in charge of commissioning new social science journals at Cambridge University Press, consulted Albert Weale as to whether we were worth the risk. We were not party to their discussions, but Patrick later told me that Albert (who had taught me years earlier as an undergraduate) put us in a very positive light. Without Albert, and without Patrick, HEPL would not have happened.

And it would not have happened either, of course, without Elias. He did much to drive the origins and development of the journal with his seemingly inexhaustible supply of ideas, and with his standing within the international health policy community. It goes without saying that I was much less known. Perhaps I was not known at all, but I like to think that my editorial role has allowed me to forge several genuine friendships in health policy (in addition to finding many more people who might be classified as friendly acquaintances), although I don’t doubt that my editorial decisions have also occasionally caused my ears to burn.

There are too many people to thank by name, but I would like to single out a few. Hannah Patrick and David Mainwaring, who have at various times overseen HEPL from their CUP offices, have been a continuing source of support. The Managing Editors of HEPL – over the years, Anna Maresso, Azusa Sato and Ketevan Rtseladze – have served as the engines of the ‘machine’, and the CUP Production Staff ensured both that each issue was released on time and was of good quality. I would also like to collectively thank all of those who have served as Editorial Board Members of HEPL, as well as the authors, the reviewers and those who have generally supported the journal. Of course, I cannot deny that there have also been detractors at almost every stage, but then there always is.

From my own experience, starting and editing a journal is much like trying to push a gigantic wooden wheel down the road. It’s hard work at first, but after a while, it rolls along largely under its own momentum. But now, as I noted above, it’s time for me to let go of the wheel, to get out of its way, and let others do the pushing. It’s out with the old, and in with the new editorial team, with whom HEPL is in good hands.

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