

The *International Journal of Emergency Medicine*: a new journal for a new era

Wyatt W. Decker · Latha G. Stead

Received: 17 February 2008 / Accepted: 18 February 2008 / Published online: 14 March 2008
© Springer-Verlag London Ltd 2008

The past decade has witnessed the emergence and substantial growth of the specialty of emergency medicine as a truly international medical discipline that refuses to be restrained by barriers of language, culture or geography. While the formal recognition of the specialty of emergency medicine is relatively young in most countries and nonexistent in some, the provision of emergency care is as ancient as the art of medicine itself.

Descriptions of emergency care are documented in the Ebers Papyrus of ancient Egypt (2600 BC) [1], in the ancient teachings of traditional Chinese [2] and Ayurvedic [3] medicine and in the earliest writings of western medical care [4].

The growth of emergency medicine globally has been spurred by a number of factors, including population growth, urbanization, globalization and increasing expectations of patients around the world who are aware of what can be done to provide for emergency care [5]. The international growth of emergency medicine has resulted in an expanding presence of emergency medicine and related topics in scientific journals. In addition, the US has recently seen substantial growth in the number of international emergency medicine fellowship programs [6], and the international section and interest groups of emergency medicine societies are typically among the largest and most

active in these organizations. A recent review of international emergency medicine from 2006 noted that one of the greatest obstacles to continue the growth of international emergency medicine remains the lack of high-quality, consolidated, and easily accessible evidence-based literature in this field [7]. This review of the literature from 2006 identified 25 international emergency medicine research articles. These articles include broad categories that cover the areas of evaluating EMS and trauma care services in both developed and developing countries, the global spread of emergency medicine and ways to improve emergency care for special populations within a developing country. A large proportion of international emergency medicine studies examines the methods for evaluating morbidity and mortality and improving the delivery of humanitarian aid during disasters and conflicts.

The field of international emergency medicine has several major components that have been identified. These include (1) relief and disaster medicine, (2) prehospital care systems and infrastructure, (3) health-care policy at the national, regional and local levels, (4) clinical emergency medicine including the provision of emergency care in settings of limited resources, (5) emergency medicine research and (6) emergency medicine education. All of these domains have enjoyed development and continue to grow robustly.

W. W. Decker · L. G. Stead (✉)
Department of Emergency Medicine,
Mayo Clinic College of Medicine,
200 First Street SW,
Rochester, MN 55905, USA
e-mail: Stead.latha@mayo.edu

W. W. Decker
e-mail: Decker.wyatt@mayo.edu

Goals of the *International Journal of Emergency Medicine*

The goals of the journal are threefold:

1. Advance the science of emergency care on a global level

2. Serve as a vehicle to decrease morbidity and mortality of patients who suffer from emergent conditions or catastrophic circumstances
3. Communicate and consolidate the rapid developments occurring within the broad context of international emergency medicine

IJEM features to facilitate these goals include:

1. A focus on international research. The categories in the journal that will support this include:
 - a) Original Articles: these will be studies of basic and clinical investigations relevant to emergency medicine.
 - b) Brief Research Reports: these are reports that focus on preliminary data findings demonstrating the need for further investigation.
2. International Emergency Medicine Updates: this function will be supported by the following features:
 - a) State of International Emergency Medicine: these will be descriptions of practice and administrative systems in various institutions or health-care systems worldwide. In general, these will focus on a country or large geographic region.
 - b) Innovations in Emergency Medicine: these articles will focus on unique developments in emergency medicine and their application to emergency medicine globally. While most of these papers will focus on practice innovations, submissions evaluating innovations in education, research and health-care administration are also welcome.
 - c) Special Communications: these will focus on policies, statements, position papers and communications by societies or thought leaders in international emergency medicine on a broad range of topics. It is recommended to contact the Editors-in-

Chief prior to a submission in the special communication category.

3. Emergency Medicine Practice: the journal will include case reports, clinical images, editorials and case files from the Mayo Clinic Emergency Department. Each of these categories will provide insights into practice expertise at the individual patient level.

As the field of emergency medicine continues to grow and mature, we anticipate that the *International Journal of Emergency Medicine* will serve a valuable role in consolidating the literature and dialogue on international emergency medicine topics and assist in moving the development of the specialty forward on a global level. By publishing important advances in the science, education and delivery of emergency medicine, IJEM should become a valuable tool to those committed to outstanding emergency care for patients.

References

1. Nunn JF (1996) Ancient Egyptian Medicine. University of Oklahoma Press. ISBN-10 0806128313
2. Unschuld PU (1985) Medicine in China: a history of ideas. University of California Press. ISBN 0-520-05023-1
3. Samhita C (1996) Classical treatise on ayurveda system in Indic medicine. Sri Satguru Publications. ISBN-13: 9788170304715
4. Porter R (1997) The greatest benefit to mankind: a medical history of humanity. W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN-10 0965630153
5. Anderson P, Petrino R, Halpern P et al (2006) The globalization of emergency medicine and its importance for public health. Bull World Health Organization 84:835–839
6. Bledsoe GH, Dey CC, Kabrhel C et al (2005) Current status of international emergency medicine fellowships in the United States. Prehosp Disaster Med 20:32–35
7. Levine AC, Goel A, Keay CR et al (2007) International emergency medicine: a review of the literature from 2006. Acad Emerg Med 14:1190–1193