

Where next with *Triple Helix*?



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No organisation can exist without considering changes to its structures and ways of working. Central to any organisation is communication with its members.

CMF has had multiple ways of doing this over the years, including its various journals. *Triple Helix* was originally going to be called *Rx*, but the *Sunday Telegraph* beat us to it, using that as the title of the medical supplement of their Sunday Magazine. *Triple Helix* has now been the journal for CMF for over 20 years. Its format was last updated more than 15 years ago.¹

The range of content in *Triple Helix* has changed over time, driven by interests and contributions of the membership, as well as editorial policy. We have published letters from readers and obituaries; there was an *International Page* edited by Vicky Lavy, who was then Head of International Ministries (now CMF Global). Several of these features are no more, although *Eutychus* and the *Juniors' Forum* have remained regulars. The number of articles submitted fluctuates, but we could always do with more!

With a new Editor in post and a change in the editorial team, it would seem an opportune moment to look again at all things *Triple Helix*. This year we have temporarily reduced the number of published editions from three to two a year and sadly goodbye to our copy editor, Oluwatosin. These were financial decisions taken in the face of a shortfall of income to reduce CMF's running costs (the overall cost of a *Triple Helix* print run being in the £10,000 ballpark).

How does *Triple Helix* come together?

While the editorial committee reviews all submitted articles, we would be pushing it a little to suggest that *Triple Helix* is a peer-reviewed journal. The editorial committee needs new members. We are looking for some dedicated people who would be willing to devote a few hours three times a year to read submissions and feedback, ie peer review them. There is a meeting in preparation for each edition, attendance at which would be preferable but not an absolute. Is this a role for you?

We do not plan themes, but with submitted work, we frequently find a theme has emerged, such as suffering in the previous edition, and ageing in this one.

Where should we be going with *Triple Helix*?

This is something we would like to ask you. Are there issues we are not discussing in our articles? If so, what topics do you think we should cover? Could you write an article as well as suggesting one?

Articles are generally a standard length. Rather than being rigid about article length, I would like to increase the number of categories, and should we have some slightly longer and some shorter articles? Should we seek to run a theme each time, which takes up part or all of the journal? Should we have a section as a round-up from other Christian journals?

Some articles, particularly those dealing with controversial topics, should generate a lot of debate. We are investigating the possibility of a rapid response area on the website. Some of these responses could then be published in a letters section of the printed journal.

If your leaning is more towards devotional and reflective pieces, maybe you could consider writing a *Final Thought* (inside the back cover). Do you find having a reflective or devotional piece in each edition is helpful? Would you like to see more of this kind of writing (or less)?

We send *Triple Helix* overseas to be distributed among members serving outside the UK and to other Christian medical associations around the world. We would love to hear from those readers and get articles from our international colleagues. Would this be of interest to you, or would you like to contribute an article to such a section in the journal?

Triple Helix could be a way of introducing people to CMF. Do you share your copy with your local vicar/minister, ward staff, or colleagues? How many people read your copy? Do you use *Triple Helix* as a way into a discussion with colleagues, as a mission tool (the NHS loves tools)?

We would love to know who we are reaching through the journal. Could some of these secondary readers become members of CMF (medical or nursing)?

We will be surveying our readers more thoroughly in the coming months to see how we might develop *Triple Helix* in the coming years, but we would love to hear your thoughts in the meantime.

Please email me on david.smithard@cmf.org.uk with your suggestions and comments.

David Smithard is editor of *Triple Helix*

references

1. Ferguson A. 20 Years of *Triple Helix*. *Triple Helix*. Autumn 2017. cmf.li/2JZVq4k (accessed 6 March 2020)