

Practicality

by Bernard Groulx, MD, FRCPC

I have been lucky to be involved with *The Canadian Alzheimer Disease Review* since its very beginning, both as a writer and as a member of the Editorial Board. Numerous physicians and other clinicians, from all over Canada, have expressed their appreciation of this journal to me. One of the most frequent comments I hear is, “We like the fact that the articles are so practical.”

For those of you who appreciate the practicality of the *Review*, this issue will not disappoint you.

The article “Weight Loss in Alzheimer’s Disease” (page 4), by Drs. Freter and Rockwood, addresses a problem that concerns not only patients, but their clinicians and families. The article provides a comprehensive view of various factors that predispose to weight loss in older adults, without overlooking the difficult and current realities concerning the shortage of and overburden of professional and familial caregivers. The following extract from the article, though simple, bursts with meaning in this regard: “The proportion of food consumed by nursing-home residents may be influenced by the quality of the interaction between the resident with AD and the person assigned to assist them with feeding.” Furthermore, the authors’ reflections on interventions, such as tube-feeding, are particularly welcome.

The article by Linda Lee and Lorraine Dawe on individualized home-based interventions (page 8) was a pure joy for me to read, as I am sure it will be for you. Every time I have a chance, at a conference or a lecture, to explain why Geriatrics is the greatest field of medical care, I always say that it is not because we use our expertise and experience (like everyone else, I suppose), but because we have the opportunity to use a remarkable amount of imagination and creativity. This article highlights and clarifies the unique and intuitive relationships between caregivers and health professionals in the home-based interac-

tions the authors propose. The stress-management tips alone would be worth the price of this journal, if it had a cost.

Nothing, of course, can be more practical than an article entitled, “Practical Management of Delirium.” This superb and comprehensive article, by Dr. Darryl Rolfson (page 12), addresses the serious problem of under-recognition of delirium by nurses and physicians, and examines the potential of this under-recognition for tragic consequences. A simple but complete review of predisposing factors, elements of recognition and specific as well as supportive management of delirium make this article particularly useful and enjoyable.

Last but not least, is there a more “practical” teacher than Dr. Serge Gauthier? As a world-renowned expert in the field of dementia, Dr. Gauthier has a remarkable capacity to simplify and successfully explain knowledge and concepts that are actually quite complex. Anyone who has been fortunate enough to attend one of Dr. Gauthier’s conferences and/or anyone who has read any of the numerous articles he has produced for the *Review* will already know this. Dr. Gauthier’s article in this issue, entitled, “Screening for Dementia: How and Why?” (page 18), is another gem. With a demographic explosion in the geriatric population, improvement in our capacity to screen for dementia, or even for prodromes like mild cognitive impairment (MCI), is essential in order to provide early and timely treatment and prevent progression.

There is an expression that says, “practice makes perfect.” I think we can say the same about practicality.

Bernard Groulx, MD, FRCPC

Chief Psychiatrist, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue Hospital
Montreal, Quebec