

EDITORIAL

Key concepts in clinical epidemiology

The Journal of Clinical Epidemiology aims at promoting the quality of clinical and patient-oriented health care research through the advancement and application of innovative methods of:

- conducting and presenting primary research;
- synthesizing research results;
- disseminating results;
- and translating results into optimal clinical practice;

with special attention to the training of new generations of scientists and clinical practice leaders.

Ever since its establishment in 1988, JCE has treaded a delicate balance between its twin goals of “patient orientation” and “innovative research methodology”. Clinical epidemiology after all, is the use of epidemiologic techniques and methods to improve clinical practice [1]. Too much focus on epidemiologic methods would tilt the balance more to pure epidemiological research, which may be less relevant for clinical practitioners.

To strengthen its ties to clinical practice, in this month’s issue, the Journal of Clinical Epidemiology launches a new series entitled ‘Key Concepts in Clinical Epidemiology’. The series will include short articles—two-pagers—that provide concise simplified overviews of relevant, complicated,

or novel methodological topics considered key concepts for scientifically substantiated practice.

The series was initially proposed by Dr. Antonio Dans and Dr. Leonila Dans, two of the journal’s associate editors, to entice clinicians as readers, and bridge a widening gap between clinical practice and the voluminous, complex and evolving science of clinical epidemiology. The original series title proposed was “Painless Clinical Epidemiology”, later changed to “Key Concepts in Clinical Epidemiology” to avoid the allusion to the field of anesthesiology.

The ‘Key Concepts in Clinical Epidemiology’ series will include peer-reviewed monthly articles. Each article will explain a specific key concept, including a nontechnical explanation and discussion of practical applications and limitations. Important references will be included for readers to gather more in-depth information.

Written by junior as well as established clinical epidemiologists and leaders within their field of expertise, this peer-reviewed series aim to become an important and useful resource for clinicians, scientists and educators alike.

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References

- [1] Burnand B, Gutzwiller F, Paccaud F. Clinical epidemiology: definitions, uses and reasons for development in Switzerland Schweiz. *Med Wochenschr* 1988;118(22):849–55.