



**John Hickner, MD, MSc**  
Editor-in-Chief

# 40 years of helping family physicians refine their care

**T**he *Journal of Family Practice* and I have grown up together. JFP turns 40 this year, and I complete my 40th year as a physician next year. JFP was the brainchild of family physician John Geyman, MD, who established the journal in response to the need for original family medicine research.

Reviewing the articles published in the first issue, I find many of the topics are just as important today as they were 40 years ago: “The family as our patient,” “The future of family practice in our medical schools,” and “An integrated system for the recording and retrieval of medical data in a primary care setting.”

Preserved in JFP’s archives are the seminal works of many academic family medicine pioneers, including Maurice Woods, Jack Froom, Hiram Curry, Gayle Stephens, and Eugene Farley, and many studies of the Ambulatory Sentinel Practice Network, the forerunner of the American Academy of Family Physicians’ National Research Network. One of the most important landmark studies for family medicine, the Virginia Study, was published in JFP in 1976.<sup>1,2</sup> It summarized more than half a million medical problems

seen by family physicians caring for 88,000 patients in Virginia over 2 years.<sup>1,2</sup> It remains the largest US database of family medicine encounters reported by family physicians.

JFP continues to publish original research, along with summaries of the scientific literature and evidence-based answers to common clinical questions. The National Library of Medicine has cataloged the journal’s rich history that, as of March 2014, includes more than 8300 articles.

One of the biggest leaps in JFP’s evolution has been the increased diversity of offerings on

the journal’s Web site, [jfonline.com](http://jfonline.com). The Web site includes a multimedia library of audiocasts and how-to videos, online-exclusive articles, quizzes, sponsored continuing medical education (and non-CME) content, career opportunity listings, and of course, an archive of the journal’s articles.

JFP remains a top, evidence-based family medicine journal that benefits from the expertise and insights of its editorial board, extensive cadre of peer reviewers, and authors from across the country—and around the world. We remain committed to meeting the needs of you, the busy family physician. And this month, in recognition of our 40th anniversary, we present the winners of our writing contest. (See “The patient who changed the way I practice family medicine,” on page 252.)

We hope you enjoy this anniversary issue of JFP and we look forward to serving you in the years to come.

1. Marsland DW, Wood M, Mayo F. Content of family practice. Part I. Rank order of diagnoses by frequency. Part II. Diagnoses by disease category and age/sex distribution. *J Fam Pract.* 1976;3:37-68.

2. Marsland DW, Wood M, Mayo F. A data bank for patient care, curriculum, and research in family practice: 526,196 patient problems. *J Fam Pract.* 1976;3:25-28.

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