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## Just a simple country doctor

**W**henever someone asks me what I do, I happily reply, “I’m just a simple country doctor.” That is, in part, why I am honored to be granted the opportunity to serve as editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Family Practice (JFP)*. As our late colleague Dr. John Hickner noted in his first *JFP* editorial, he and the 2 editors-in-chief before him (Drs. Jeff Susman and Mark Ebell) were also of the small-town family doc tradition.<sup>1</sup>

My small-town roots trace back to rural South Carolina. I am a first-generation college student and attended medical school on a Navy Health Professions Scholarship. After completing my residency training, I had the privilege of serving for 5 years in the Navy (2 of those years were overseas), where I practiced and taught full-scope

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family medicine. I saw patients of all ages, attended deliveries, and provided inpatient hospital care, as well as performed a full range of procedures and tests, including colposcopies, skin procedures, vasectomies, flexible sigmoidoscopies, and exercise treadmill testing.

Following military service and completion of a 2-year fellowship and Master of Public Health degree (while working nights at a rural emergency department), I began work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I had the good fortune of spending the next

11 years as a faculty member there, where I advanced my research and teaching career. In 2017, I was named the Chair of Family Medicine and Community Health at Duke University School of Medicine, where I continue to have an active outpatient practice.

My experiences have shaped my belief that it is critical that family medicine maintain its presence (and advance its prominence) both in our communities and at our large academic medicine centers, championing service to rural areas, promoting health equity, and advocating for the importance of high-quality primary care delivery and training. No matter where we are, our work is valuable, and we make a difference.

Like my predecessors, I have a love of evidence-based medicine. I also have a love of writing, which I can trace back to my days as an intern. I am excited to be able to apply what I have learned over the years to help maintain the rigor, practicality, and relevance of *JFP* while simultaneously helping to nurture new authors and peer reviewers.

My goal as this journal’s editor-in-chief will be to continue its high academic standing while maintaining its utility for busy clinicians. The provision of evidence-based clinical review articles that are succinct and practical, along with departments (eg, Photo Rounds, Behavioral Health Consult, Practice Alert, PURLs), will remain the journal’s major focus. Within this framework, I also want to share the best evidence and ideas on other aspects of practicing medicine, such as quality improvement, population health, and health equity. I’ll be looking to increase recruitment and mentorship of authors from diverse backgrounds, including those historically underrepresented in medicine.

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I look forward to working with the editorial board, associate and assistant editors, and staff of *JFP* to serve the diverse interests and needs of our readers. To that end, we'll be looking for your guidance. How else can *JFP* help you in your day-to-day practice? Please let us know your ideas. Drop us a line at [jfp.eic@mdedge.com](mailto:jfp.eic@mdedge.com).

Finally, please join me in thanking Drs. Henry Barry and Kate Rowland for all of their work this past year in keeping *JFP* going strong!

**JFP**

Reference

1. Hickner J. Meet JFP's new editor-in-chief. *J Fam Pract.* 2012;61:581.

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