Welcoming the Voices of Lived Experience
As our journal has been working diligently to develop strategies to address racism in our content and processes, I have been listening to and learning from partners and collaborators with lived experience of mental illness. Progressive voices in our field have been encouraging meaningful lived experience involvement for a very long time (e.g., as noted in the 2003 report of the President’s New Freedom Commission), but these voices have not achieved meaningful change. This is unacceptable. Journals such as Psychiatric Services and their editors, including me, must be held accountable. At Psychiatric Services, we have created a new column on Lived Experience Inclusion and Leadership, edited by Nev Jones, Ph.D., and Keris Myrick, M.B.A., M.S. The column’s name intentionally goes beyond inclusion to leadership. Further, Jones and colleagues emphasize the need for “greater inclusion of individuals ... with the most (potentially) disabling and stigmatized diagnoses” (1). This past year, I have been making a concerted effort to include an individual with lived experience during peer review. This is a start, but it is far from enough. We have to organize such that we implement strategies to promote participation and skills in reviewing manuscripts and ensuring that every article is reviewed with a lived experience lens. We must consider creative ways to promote the engagement of individuals with lived experience to submit manuscripts—whether they be research papers, columns, or essays such as Open Forum. The first step will be to create a working group/advisory to guide this process. We have a running start, but need to be more strategic and intentional. I welcome suggestions and ideas.

—Lisa B. Dixon, M.D., M.P.H.
Editor, Psychiatric Services

December 7, 2021

1. Lived Experience, Research Leadership, and the Transformation of Mental Health Services: Building a Researcher Pipeline Nev Jones, Ph.D., Kendall Atterbury, Ph.D., Louise Byrne, Ph.D., Michelle Carras, Ph.D., Marie Brown, Ph.D., Peter Phalen, Ph.D. Psychiatr Serv 2021; 72:591–593

A Statement on Racism
Over the past month, I have become painfully aware of the failure of academic psychiatry and its journals to address both systemic racism and the role of racism in determining access to health care and specifically to timely, high-quality health care. Psychiatric Services is no exception. We must do better, and I am committed to correcting this deficiency in an informed, sustainable, and inclusive manner. Accordingly, readers will soon see new members of our editorial board as well as additional column editors who identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC). An advisory group led by Drs. Altha Stewart and Jessica Isom will provide guidance on addressing structural racism as it relates to the submission of journal articles and the review process. Over the next year, readers and contributors will see new calls for papers and responsive changes to our information for contributors. We will also review processes and practices to reveal opportunities for reform. Readers and contributors will see new efforts to mentor and support authors who identify as BIPOC. This is only the beginning. I welcome suggestions and ideas.

—Lisa B. Dixon, M.D., M.P.H.
Editor, Psychiatric Services

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