

From the Editor

Od redakcji

The protracted duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with successive waves of the disease and “information noise” have brutally exposed the weaknesses of health systems in many countries in the world while revealing the extraordinary array of human behaviour in the face of the crisis. Among the latter are denial and a surprising ignorance of facts, as well as rebellion and aggression, attempts at protecting oneself at the expense of others, unrealistic optimism or pessimism, but also acts of solidarity, sacrifice, and empathy.

In response to the challenge of the pandemic, the current issue of the journal opens with an article commissioned by the editorial team and authored by three members of the Scientific Council, Stavroula Kalaitzi, Katarzyna Czabanowska and Suzanne Babich, entitled *Global health leadership: recalling the past to better understand the present*. The authors, who are from various countries, remind us with one voice of the positive role that international solidarity can play in confronting the current challenges, as well as the benefits of drawing lessons from humanity’s past. They stress the importance of decisions taken by world leaders responsible for health care, without forgetting the vital role of ordinary health workers.

The journal continues with articles covering other subjects. The empirical works section opens with a paper by two authors, Krzysztof Mudyń and Robert Dudek, entitled *Emotionality of people with alcohol problems. A comparison of patients starting therapy and patients after six months of therapy*. In this study, the authors focus on the dynamics of

the emotional state of patients remaining in therapy due to alcohol addiction. Data drawn from the presented study indicate that this dynamic is not linear, rather it is often associated with a temporary deterioration of mood, which the authors interpret as an indicator of regaining access to feelings suppressed so far by the patients.

The next paper, by Iwona Malinowska-Lipień, Aleksandra Bajorek and Teresa Gabryś, entitled *Physical fitness and the occurrence of frailty among older people*, presents the results of a study through which the authors assess the relationship between the physical fitness of older people and the diagnosis of what is called frailty syndrome.

Another work published in this part of the journal is penned by two authors, Paweł Kurowski and Dawid Janczarzyk, entitled *Comparison of the effect of a muscle energy technique repeated once and three times on the change of pain threshold and electrophysiological parameters of the trapezius muscle*, and evaluates the effects of two variations of a muscle energy technique (TEM) used by physiotherapists to reduce muscle tension and increase the pain threshold.

The last article in this section is entitled *Performing health services with the perspective of a lack of medical staff*, by Katarzyna Lipina and Urszula Marcinkowska. The problem it discusses is highly relevant to today, especially in view of the pandemic. This paper refers to surveys of the opinions of healthcare workers—nurses and paramedics. It demonstrates that the most frequent answer to the urgent need of improving the quality of medical care, as indicated by the nurses and paramedics, is

a quantitative increase in employment in this sector. The authors also signal that ensuring high-quality medical services requires compliance with developed healthcare standards, although the data they obtained indicate that in practice, these standards are often only partially implemented.

The next part of this issue of the journal, devoted to theory and review, features two pieces. The first one is a study by Patrycja Zurzycka, Iwona Oskędra and Katarzyna Wojtas entitled *Selected issues of caring for mentally ill persons with concomitant somatic disorders*. In this paper, the authors point out that mentally ill people experience increased incidence of somatic disorders of various aetiology. They urge comprehensive care combined with health education by all members of the therapeutic team, which is demonstrated to have a positive impact on the outcome of therapeutic procedure. The second paper in this section is by Weronika Lebowa, and is entitled *The imaginary world in the work of eminent painters (Francisco Goya, Vincent van Gogh, Edward Munch)*. The author set herself the goal

of illustrating, with the example of eminent painters, the seemingly common understanding that the illness not only does not necessarily prevent significant artistic achievements, but can be an important inspiration for them. At the same time, she stresses that the experience of artists resulting from their suffering should be an integral part of the interpretation of their works.

This issue reviews an interesting patient guide entitled *Liver transplantation without secrets*, developed by two experienced transplantologists, Piotr Milkiewicz and Maciej Wójcicki. This guide gives examples of how to talk with patients who face the prospect of a liver transplant.

This edition of *Art of Healing* closes with an excerpt entitled *Guidelines for Authors* and a list of reviewers of the works published in this year's issues.

We hope you find this issue a worthy read.

Editor-in-Chief
Marek Motyka