A Note from the Editor and the Publisher

THE *QUARTERLY* WAS INITIATED IN 1923 TO ENABLE the Fund's scientific advisers, then, as now, called the Technical Board, to report about projects sponsored by the Fund. As the *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly Bulletin*, it gradually expanded its mission and its audience, publishing research papers that were mainly, though not entirely, the results of projects sponsored by the Fund. By the 1960s, the *Quarterly* had become primarily an outlet for peer-reviewed research papers.

The *Milbank Quarterly* has earned a reputation as a source of rigorous analysis of issues in health policy. As it enters its eighth decade, the *Quarterly* will maintain its role as an independent peer-reviewed journal of health policy. It will, however, as it has done for much of its history, also inform readers about the activities of the Fund and publish, as appropriate, scholarly work resulting from those activities.

The current major program of the Fund is the Milbank Health Policy Reviews. The purpose of this program is to inform influential senior public and private decision makers about data and ways of thinking that can improve policy in two broad areas: (1) preventing illness, especially chronic illness, and disability; and (2) allocating resources for health care.

A health policy review is a cooperative effort by people in private and public life whom the Fund invites to: evaluate and synthesize information about an important issue in health affairs; determine the implications of that information for policy; inform others, especially decision makers, about alternative choices and their consequences; and stimulate research that offers practical responses to important questions about policy.

The Fund uses three criteria to choose particular health policy reviews within the broad themes of prevention and allocation. Policy reviews should promise to: (1) translate into policy knowledge about the determinants of illness and health in populations; (2) assess the appropriate roles of public, private, and voluntary institutions and of the professions; and (3) make policies and services more sensitive to the perceptions of care recipients and their families.

The *Quarterly* has an important role in the health policy reviews. It will periodically report on reviews in progress and publish some of the peer-reviewed papers that result from them. The article by Brian Abel-Smith, entitled "Cost Containment and New Priorities in the European Community," which appeared in the previous issue of the *Quarterly*, is an example of such a paper. A list of the policy reviews that are in progress, and current projects within them, appears at the end of this issue. We will update the list at regular intervals.

The Fund welcomes inquiries and suggestions about the health policy reviews from readers of the *Quarterly*. Suggestions could include ideas for new policy reviews or for projects within existing reviews. All such suggestions should be made in brief letters to Kathleen S. Andersen, senior program officer of the Fund.

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