

## Welcome Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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As we begin a new year and close the books on 2020, uncertainty, disruption, and stressful conditions continue all around us. Public safety and public health services have been pushed to their extremes throughout much of the last year. The fallout from this extended effort, with all its accompanying tension and strain, will surely be studied for years to come. Yet even before this current crisis existed, emergency telecommunicators faced many challenges.

In this issue, two groups of researchers explore how the work of emergency telecommunicators impacts an individual's stress on oneself and others. One study was done in a center in Washington state (USA); it identifies specific factors influencing stress on emergency telecommunicators. A second study looks at how the burdens of this work affects family and social life. Both studies build on, and help refine, previous studies published in this journal on the psychological toll experienced by many of you who serve in this critical role. However, mental stress is not the only serious challenge facing this profession. Our third study in this issue, part 1 of several articles, is a systematic literature review that highlights the crisis in government oversight, including funding, training, job classification, and professional requirements—or lack thereof—for the emergency communications field. Changing this dire picture will likely require all of us to redouble our efforts to influence lawmakers and public safety officials to pass new measures and make the work you do a priority to them.

Finally, our research spotlight highlights an experienced and accomplished nurse educator—Gigi Marshall. In addition to her impressive list of past achievements, which include implementing and instructing on the emergency communications nurse system (ECNS)—she has set aside many hours of her time in recent years to do research, which includes authoring and co-authoring several of the most important works in the growing field of nurse telephone triage.

Given the events of the last year, predicting what happens in 2021 is no doubt a fool's errand. Yet I feel compelled to leave you with a promising message that this dark winter will soon break into an enlightened spring. As I write this in mid-December 2020, clinically-approved vaccinations are being rolled out in the United Kingdom, across North America, continental Europe, parts of Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. Initial reports show promising results. First responders and health care workers will be among the first to be vaccinated. The elderly and medically frail populations are next. If all goes according to plan, we will all see some relief soon.

Thank you for all you do to keep the rest of us safe, and may you and yours have a healthy, satisfying, and prosperous 2021. Sincerely,



Greg Scott  
Editor-in-Chief