

SelfCare – THEMES FOR 2014

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In 2014 *SelfCare* will begin a fourth year of publication. Since its foundation the journal has covered a broad range of issues – reflecting the enormous scope of subjects for which the concept of self-care has relevance. As with all journals, we can never predict with certainty what we will publish in the future, since this relies in part on the submissions we receive and how these fare with our reviewers. However your editors have identified a number of themes which we will cover in 2014 with invited articles and opinion papers. By briefly introducing some of these here, we hope to encourage submissions on the same themes, creating the potential for in-depth coverage of a subject. We also welcome suggestions for themes – especially from those with specialist knowledge of, or a passion for, a particular aspect of self-care. Themes identified so far include:

- **Behavioural aspects of self-care.** The willingness and ability to practise self-care is profoundly influenced by an individual's knowledge, personality and beliefs as well as by the health delivery systems and professionals with which they interact. What determines behaviour is complex and we aim to explore what is known and suggest areas for future research.
- **Technology and self-care.** There has been an exponential growth in tools available to consumers to measure and monitor their health and to encourage healthy lifestyle choices. Are we witnessing the beginnings of a technology-driven self-care revolution? We plan to publish reviews of the developing technologies and what these might mean for the future.
- **Regulation of self-care.** The pace of change in providing access to medicines for self-management of disease has slowed in recent years on both sides of the Atlantic. Is this appropriate? Or does it reflect regulatory systems that are failing to recognise the potential for self-care to contribute to public health? We will continue to publish articles and reports from meetings where regulators and industry debate these issues.
- **Self-care in developed and developing economies.** The relevance of self-care to health is global, but the particular strategies needed may be dependent on local culture, practices and infrastructure. In 2014 we will invite contributions from those with different perspectives from around the world.

In parallel with developing these themes, we plan to encourage more interaction with the community of professionals involved in self-care. No one group of healthcare professionals 'owns' self-care, and this can be both a strength and a weakness. It can be destructive and confusing when healthcare professionals disagree on elements of self-care, but conversely it can be very powerful when disparate groups come together and agree common messages. *SelfCare* plans to introduce a forum for professionals to express views on what they read in the journal and more generally on the evolving self-care environment. In turn we expect this to identify themes and topics which the journal will explore in published content.

Arguably, self-care has never been more relevant for global health. We hope these developments will continue to position *SelfCare* as the home of evidence and opinion on self-care in all its guises.

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