

Letter from the Editor

Dear IJFAE readers,

Welcome to this new issue of the IJFAE which opens with, amongst other things, a paper which reviews first aid guidelines relating to environmental conditions. In the wake of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) where world leaders debated the challenges facing populations from climate change, this paper is a stark reminder of the importance of preparedness – the first domain of the [Chain of Survival Behaviors](#). The humanitarian cost of climate change is already evident with the poorest and most vulnerable populations facing the greatest impact. That's why we need to be advocates for preparing populations to be resilient to emergencies caused by more extreme temperatures, more flooding, and more drought, whilst facing the ever-increasing pressures on healthcare services.

In his introduction to the last issue, our Editor-in-Chief, Jeffrey Pellegrino, suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic gave us new opportunities to see first aid education through the eyes of those who need it most, and the challenge to get it to them. It is this humanitarian principle that drove the creation of this journal in the first place – that and a determination that such a principle should be evidence-driven, not merely logical. So, it is with great delight, satisfaction and relief to find a systematic review published earlier this year in the WHO Bulletin on [Emergency care by lay responders in underserved populations](#) led by IJFAE contributor Dr Aaron Orkin. Using studies from across the world on both familiar and less traditional 'first aid' topics, the authors found empirical evidence, albeit limited, that demonstrates that first aid education has individual and community health benefits, enhances community capacity to manage health emergencies, and may also reduce morbidity and mortality. The authors conclude that the most successful education initiatives are those which are tailored to the learner and their context.

So how can we raise our voice on the role of first aid education as a public health solution, which is apolitical and evidence-based? Global public health declarations from the last 35 years show how healthcare – both preventative and reactive – should utilise cultural and structural frameworks to build resilience and reach the most vulnerable people. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted health as a pivotal political and social issue, emphasising our dependence on medical professionals whilst also underlining the importance of individual response and responsibility, neighbourly care and voluntary service. Can we apply what we've learnt to the first aid emergencies caused by rising temperatures, floods and hurricanes? For many of our readers, there will be no choice.

As we bring you insights and reflections on first aid education through this issue's articles, we encourage you to consider writing about the policies and practices which afford first aid recognition as part of community

health in your country. We welcome your ideas and your research to move our vocation forward. Thank you for all you do to support the first aid revolution.

In service,

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References

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