

Leveraging the Momentum

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With great humility and gratitude, I am beyond excited to be the next Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of the *International Journal of Athletic Therapy and Training (IJATT)*. Under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Medina McKeon and Dr. Patrick McKeon, *IJATT* has emerged as one of the premier clinical journals for athletic training. In reflection of *IJATT*'s successes over the McKeons' 10-year tenure, one word kept coming to mind as I prepared to take on this new role. This word was "momentum."

After first reading the McKeons' first editorial "Taking the Reins,"¹ an editorial that described a clear and in hindsight, well-executed plan for the journal,² I initially scrambled to identify my roadmap for the future. After further reflection, it becomes apparent that *IJATT* evolved over its 28-year existence into the reputable journal that it is today by each EIC leveraging and expanding the accomplishments of the preceding editor. As one example (of many), during Dr. Gary Wilkerson's 12-year span as EIC, he expanded the types of clinical evidence that could be published within *IJATT*. From there, the McKeons utilized these building blocks and developed specific guidelines/models for both critical summaries of clinical evidence and clinical CASE presentations. Fortunately, considering the sheer mass of accomplishments over the past 10 years,² leveraging Jennifer and Patrick's momentum should come with great velocity. Poor physics jokes aside, Jennifer and Patrick left the journal in a great place, and I hope to utilize their lofty list of accomplishments to further solidify *IJATT* as the premier clinical journal for athletic training.

In alignment with the mission and scope of *IJATT*, as the new EIC, I aim to focus on the International and Athletic Therapy/Training components of *IJATT*. Both aims are interlinked; therefore, will facilitate one another.

Expanding the International in *IJATT*

From an international perspective, although the journal is uniquely tied to the professions of athletic training (the United States) and athletic therapy (Canada), the journal's contributing authors, peer reviewers, and readers often extend beyond these geographic regions. Presently, nearly every issue of *IJATT* includes at least one author group from outside the United States or Canada. Moreover, and specific to the peer-review process, the integration of the Web of Science reviewer database within *IJATT*'s manuscript platform system has enabled editorial board members the ability to quickly identify content experts across the world to serve as peer reviewers. Finally, the use of social media has provided an opportunity to highlight open-access articles to an audience that extends beyond current subscribers. Collectively, *IJATT*'s current international presence is instrumental to achieving the journal's

mission of publishing content that has a strong relevance to the clinical practice and care of sport-related injuries and illnesses.

Again, the current international presence is attributed to the accomplishments of preceding editors who:

- Formalized a referral relationship with the *Journal of Athletic Training*
- Developed reviewer guidelines³
- Updated author guidelines
- Created social media accounts (@IJATT_HK)

Going forward, I plan to leverage these accomplishments and further expand the international presence by:

- Inviting researchers/clinicians to serve on the editorial board from across the world. Based on citation data acquired through the Web of Science, works published within *IJATT* are being cited in research reports from author groups from all over the world (i.e., Europe, Asia, and Australia). This trend in citations signifies that the content published in *IJATT* is impactful across the world and that many sports medicine researchers/clinicians utilize the journal to answer shared clinical questions. As such, identifying additional international researchers/clinicians to serve on the editorial board would further expand the professional network of the journal; thus, potentially attract new authors, reviewers, and readers.
- Increasing the social media presence of *IJATT*. I must admit, my social media presence is rather underwhelming; however, I do recognize that with the correct approach, social media can be a powerful tool for disseminating information and developing new professional relationships. In addition, it creates opportunities for open dialogue between stakeholders of the journal, where conversations related to a specific research report/CASE/critically appraised topic (CAT) do not stop at publication, but rather start. To achieve this vision, I hope to appoint a member of the editorial board to oversee operations related to *IJATT*'s social media.

Exploring Relationships With Other Athletic Therapy/Training Organizations

To provide the best healthcare services to our patients, leaders of the profession of athletic training sought opportunities to further identify/develop clinical techniques and professional procedures by globalizing.⁴ To facilitate this process, in 2000, the World Federation of Athletic Training and Therapy was created with the aim to optimize health of individuals who are active by providing international leadership and collaboration in the profession of athletic training.⁵ In addition to the World Federation of Athletic Training and Therapy, the International Arrangement (IA) was launched to provide certified athletic trainers/therapists an

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opportunity to be mobile between countries where credentialed clinicians can obtain credentialing from a different country by “challenging” their respective certification exam.⁶ Briefly stated, the IA ensures comparable best practices, quality education, and professional standards between each credentialing organization. Presently, the current credentialing organizations included in the IA are the Board of Certification for the Athletic Trainer (the United States), Athletic Rehabilitation Therapy Ireland, British Association of Sport Rehabilitators, and the Canadian Athletic Therapists Association.⁶ These collective efforts highlight the worldwide interest in establishing the best possible care for patients who sustain sport-related injury/illnesses through the profession of athletic training.

So, how does/can IJATT contribute to the profession’s globalization efforts?

- a. Utilize the vision of the IA. Being the professional journal for athletic trainers and athletic therapists, *IJATT* offers subscribers the opportunity to earn continuing education units (CEUs) that can be used to maintain their certification from the Board of Certification for the Athletic Trainer and Canadian Athletic Therapists Association. From an author and reviewer perspective, individuals who publish within the journal and/or complete peer reviews for *IJATT* can also earn Board of Certification for the Athletic Trainer approved CEUs. Considering the standards required to be included within the IA, there are likely some similarities regarding CEU requirements across each credentialing organization. Therefore, it may be appropriate for *IJATT* to develop relationships with the Athletic Rehabilitation Therapy Ireland and British Association of Sport Rehabilitators credentialing organizations to explore CEU opportunities for their respective athletic therapists and sport rehabilitators.
- b. Continue to embrace the numerous other credentialing bodies and professional organizations across the world that share a similar vision as the profession of athletic training.^{5,7} Although *IJATT* may not have the ability to provide CEUs to the clinicians within these organizations, the journal can serve as a platform for researchers/clinicians to disseminate research findings and present CASE reports unique to their respective country/region.
- c. Reemphasize that the words selected for *IJATT*’s Mission are purposeful and applicable to all athletic trainers across the world. *IJATT* is “the professional journal for athletic trainers and athletic therapists. *IJATT* publishes peer-reviewed content focused on (a) clinical applications of research findings; (b) techniques and clinical insights for enhancing the

recognition, management, and prevention of sport-related injuries and illnesses; and (c) professional practice issues relevant to athletic training and athletic therapy.” Therefore, if you are a researcher from South Asia and want to report findings related to decreasing the incidence of lumbar stress fractures among cricket players, *IJATT* is a journal you should consider. Or, if you are a physiotherapist from Australia and want to know the effects of instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization on range of motion, strength, and power,⁸ you will find the content within *IJATT* of interest.

In closing, I cannot thank Jennifer and Patrick enough for their mentorship and friendship over the years. You have made an enormous impact on *IJATT* and the profession of athletic training. I am grateful for the opportunity to keep your momentum going. I also want to thank the Associate Editors for their commitment to the journal and for your support as I transition into this new role. Under your guidance, I am excited to implement these initiatives and continue to uncover other opportunities to enhance *IJATT*. Finally, I look forward to working with the talented editorial team at Human Kinetics. Let’s keep the ball rolling!

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