

Editorial

Antimicrobial resistance is a major challenge for management of infectious diseases. The lack of new classes of antimicrobial agents and the rapid development of resistance require new approaches to deal with the problem. One such approach is the use of nanotechnology, where materials with dimensions on the atomic or molecular scale, are being investigated for their potential role in killing or reducing the activity of microbial pathogens. The review ‘Antimicrobial Nanoparticles: applications and mechanisms of action’ in this issue of the Journal is therefore timely and I hope will encourage readers to explore this exciting field of research. Another approach which is being pursued extensively in many countries is the study of ‘traditional’ medicines for antimicrobial activity. Ayurvedic medicine has been practiced in Sri Lanka for over 5000 years and is rich in decoctions and other preparations using indigenous plants. The activity of two such products is reported in the current issue and highlights the need for systematic study of medicines used by a very high proportion of the Sri Lankan population.

Healthcare workers in under-resourced countries experience many limitations in providing optimal care to their patients. The case reports presented in this issue of the Journal focus on limitations of laboratory diagnosis as well as treatment, particularly in unusual or rare presentations of disease.

The availability of on-site diagnostic microbiology services in the state hospital system in Sri Lanka is relatively recent. However, with the appointment of specialist microbiologists to a rapidly expanding number of hospitals, clinicians are being provided with reliable and timely service. The four case reports are a reminder to all readers of unexpected causes of infection as well as the emergence of resistance, neither of which will be recognized in the absence of an efficient microbiology service. The case reports also highlight the need for further development of the service, particularly in identification of less commonly encountered pathogens and performance of appropriate antimicrobial susceptibility testing.

We hope that you will continue to find the contents of this issue useful and thought provoking. Do let us have your feedback as well as contributions for publication in forthcoming issues. Please visit the journal’s submission and peer review website at <http://www.sljol.info/>. We would also invite you to register as a Reviewer, as the availability of a wide pool of subject specialists for this purpose would assist us in our task of continuously improving the quality of the Journal.

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