After serving for several years as Associate Editor of Crisis, I am honored that I have now been called upon to do the “main job.” Starting with this issue, I will act as first Editor-in-Chief of Crisis, taking over from Annette Beaubrais (who will sit beside me as second Editor-in-Chief) and from John Connolly, who will continue to serve the journal as member of the Editorial Board. I believe we are all indebted to Annette and John for their excellent work. If Crisis today has an impact factor of 1.31 (the same as Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, by the way), a large portion of the credit goes to them and their dedication.

I am most honored to be taking up this job, and I promise authors and readers to do my best in further improving the journal. I have no Copernican revolution in mind, just the promise of strong commitment and a few hopes.

First, I feel committed to maintaining the multidisciplinary character of Crisis, which will continue to reflect the nature of the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and its multiethnic and multicultural membership. In addition, I would love Crisis to attract contributors and readers from disciplines and domains traditionally a bit more “external” to suicidological debates, such as education, anthropology, history, health economics, mathematics, and research methodology. More contributors from the areas of ethics and sociology would also enrich us all. A great deal of research has been dedicated to suicide and its prevention in the past two decades; it is my conviction that to bring suicide research to the next stage, we need to operate by using different competencies and profiting from a diversity of disciplines. This will widen our perspective and improve our understanding.

 Needless to say, my editorial colleagues and I will also continue to try and increase the scientific profile of Crisis by publishing contributions of the highest scientific standard. We are all now actors on a global stage, and impact factors and citation indices are necessary features of every author’s publication profile, with which he or she “competes” for funding. A journal, too, has constantly to strive for improvement in order to remain “competitive.” However, it is with some hesitation that I use the adjective “competitive” in this context, since our main mission is to advance suicide prevention – not to prevail over other journals. At the time of writing this Editorial, Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior is also looking to appoint a new Editor-in-Chief, while Barbara Stanley has been looking after Archives for Suicide Research for around 2 years now. In many ways it might be ideal if the three main journals in the area of suicide could each identify their own specialties and develop them, in some sort of loose agreement with each other. I do not agree with those colleagues that maintain that there are too many organizations and too many journals in the field of suicide. To judge from the number of submissions Crisis received between August 1 (the time when I actually started handling new submissions) and the end of September (n = 31!), I have to conclude that there might even be room for a fourth journal. As a passionate supporter of suicide prevention, I can only be happy that many people (scholars, clinicians, volunteers, and young scientists in particular) are now dealing with suicide research and prevention programs. It seems to me worth remembering that when the International Academy for Suicide Research was founded, the basic idea inspiring its foundation was the need to stimulate research activities, since IASP was at the time felt to be lacking in that regard. I must say that the stimulus of new “competition” turned out to be a real blessing for IASP, because the association’s congresses rapidly became the natural home for the best research from around the world. I believe we can all be proud of what IASP is today – and its potential has yet to be fully expressed, when we consider activities like the World Suicide Prevention Day and its impact in more than 70 countries around the globe. We can, and I am sure will, do much more than this . . .

As far as Crisis itself is concerned, I am delighted to announce that a new online electronic manuscript submission and peer-review system for Crisis is scheduled to go

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live on November 4, 2008 (my thanks here go to Annette
Beautrais, for starting the process of getting the system set
up). I am particularly pleased with the system chosen by
Hogrefe, our publishers. In fact, I believe the Editorial
Manager system (produced by Aries Systems Corporation,
Boston, MA) is among the best around: It is simple, quick,
and effective, and makes progress through the review pro-
cess clear and transparent to authors, reviewers, and editors
alike. The system is now in use by more than 2,900 journals
worldwide. So, from now on all contributors and reviewers
are requested to submit their work through the Crisis sub-
mission and review portal, which can be reached through
the journal’s website at www.hogrefe.com/journals/crisis.

Other changes we are introducing for Crisis concern the
abstracts, which, starting next year, will be structured with
sections on Background, Aims, Methods, Results, and
Conclusions. A declaration about possible conflicts of in-
terest will be required for each submission. Biographies at
the end of the articles will continue to be a feature of Crisis,
but will be limited to 50 words. In addition, we will publish
dates of receipt, revision, and final acceptance. Full instruc-
tions for authors can be found on the journal’s website.

I am also very happy to report that Dr. Stefano Occhi-
pinti, an experienced biostatistician and an esteemed col-
league here at Griffith University, has agreed to serve as
Statistical Advisor on manuscripts. This is particularly im-
portant, because if it can sometimes be difficult to find
good and timely reviewers, it is even more difficult to ob-
tain competent opinions on statistical issues.

There is of course more to come, and I intend to keep
readers and authors appraised of developments by means
of regular editorials in Crisis.

Finally, I would also very much welcome comments and
suggestions from authors and readers, both about how Crisis
should continue to develop to meet the changing needs
of readers – whether scientists or “front-line” practitioners
– and authors, and of course also about the topics, issues
and research that are reported within its pages.

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