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npj Dementia: Transformative research, global perspectives



I am delighted to be the inaugural Editor-in-Chief of *npj Dementia*. The launch of our journal comes at a critical turning point for our field – for the first time, disease-modifying therapies for dementia are finally reaching patients, yet we simultaneously see a looming wave of largely modifiable risk factors challenging the communities that may struggle to access these cutting-edge treatments. To overcome the enormous challenges in brain health that we face with an aging global population, we will need to broaden the ways we develop our knowledge, innovations, and solutions.

npj Dementia will lead dementia research as a transdisciplinary, open-access journal that publishes a selective yet inclusive body of work that advances the field towards effective disease interventions. Manuscripts published in *npj Dementia* will highlight the value of deep clinical phenotyping as a required component for developing a mechanistic understanding of disease biology, while emphasizing the importance of multidisciplinary and translational research. In addition to its focus on common forms of neurodegenerative dementias, *npj Dementia* will also be very keen to spotlight rare, atypical, and early-onset dementias as a means to uncover unifying and novel mechanisms of disease. In addition, we will welcome submissions focusing on reversible forms of dementia, which may yield important neurobiological insights also relevant to neurodegenerative dementias. Finally, the journal will take pride in highlighting work focused on under-studied populations and from around the globe.

In addition to standard-length case-control cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, *npj Dementia* will feature a broad scope of clinical, translational, epidemiological, computational, social sciences, and basic research, and may feature: (1) brief reports highlighting new findings that challenge traditional field dogma; (2) clinical series and case reports highlighting unusual clinical, pathological, and/or genetic findings; (3) descriptive reports of new datasets, methods (including clinical assessments), and/or cohorts available for broad research use (including accompanying documentation of code, data sharing resources, protocols, etc.) to highlight studies that generate important datasets for the field; (4) rigorous studies with negative results; (5) mechanistic studies

probing the basic biology underlying different dementia-causing processes.

In addition to having a globally representative associate editorial group, *npj Dementia* will ensure representation of a diverse set of lead and senior authors across identities of gender, nationality, and discipline to promote more equitable representation in the field of dementia research.

Furthermore, I believe one of the most important ways we can have an impact as researchers is by effectively communicating our science to a broad audience. To this end, we will contribute to dementia research by providing a home for rigorous research communicated with clarity that leads the field in discovery, imagination, and innovation while simultaneously acknowledging that not all meaningful research will occur at the leading edge of the field. Work that cements our scientific foundations deserves broad visibility alongside studies that push forward the boundaries of our knowledge. Authors are encouraged to report negative studies so the field can continue to move forward rather than silently reinventing the wheel and squandering finite resources. ‘Selective’ does not have to mean ‘flashy’; to me, it implies a high standard of rigor and fidelity—studies that are broadly cited because of the lasting impact they have on the field. It means we can embrace ‘outside the box’ thinking that is reproducible and generalizable, even if it challenges field dogma. High quality research, whether large or small in scope, will stand the test of time and provide the foundation for discovery that is required to efficiently advance the field. Required for this advance is the encouragement of the creative younger minds entering the field with bold ideas and unburdened by field doctrine; supporting the next generation of innovators and retaining them as researchers will require broad efforts across multiple venues—not just labs and institutions—and *npj Dementia* intends to lead the field by being a first-in-class forum for trainees, both for the exchange of scientific knowledge and also for building community.

On a personal level, my goal at *npj Dementia* is to give a voice to the unheard and, in doing so, broaden the scope of what it means to have a voice in science. We will achieve this by building bridges of communication between those with differing viewpoints so the field can more

effectively work together towards scalable solutions that promote brain health. Academic medicine is for everyone – science is a vehicle for innovation, progress, and change. Let us embrace this opportunity to promote well-being for all.

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Author contributions

J.S.Y. is solely responsible for this manuscript.

Competing interests

J.S.Y. is Editor-in-Chief of *npj Dementia* and serves on the scientific advisory board of the Epstein Family Alzheimer’s Research Collaboration.

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