

Podcast_August 2016

Hello and welcome to the Editor's highlights of some of the contents of the August 2016 issue of AJPH, the new branding of the American Journal of Public Health. This is Alfredo Morabia, I am the Editor-in-Chief.

Several papers in this issue are about the ongoing opioid prescription epidemic for which Meldrum explains that it has been historically governed by the converging interests and profits of the pharmaceutical industry, insurance carriers, and drug traffickers.

In an attempt to control the epidemic in Staten Island, NY, Kattan and colleagues improved knowledge and likely prescribing practices after visiting physicians and nurse practitioners to explain that (1) a 3-day supply of opioids is usually sufficient for acute pain, (2) prescribing opioids for chronic noncancer pain should be avoided, and (3) any high-dose opioid prescriptions should also be avoided.

In the July issue Tsao and colleagues showed that the \$15 minimum wage would reduce premature deaths. In this issue Komro and colleagues estimate that had all US states raised their minimum wages by one dollar in 2014, thousands of low birth weight and neonatal deaths could have been avoided. In an editorial discussing these and other public health effects of raising the minimum wage, Leigh concludes that increasing wages can improve psychological well-being and job satisfaction, and reduce unhealthy habits and income inequality.

In an editorial Uchendu and colleagues, including Omalu, the doctor featured in the movie Concussion, warn that veterans have repeated traumatic brain injury from explosives, mines, training, boxing, and football and are therefore at risk for chronic traumatic encephalopathy.

In a research article van Lenthe and colleagues distinguish five groups of women in the US and in Europe based on whether they work, have children, or are married. Single working mothers are more common in America but this alone cannot explain why American women die more from cardiovascular diseases than European women.

Brown finds that California saves \$67 to \$88 for every dollar invested in public health. The methodological details provided allow other health departments to compute the average return on public health investment in their states.

Finally, in the Book and Media section, Samet reviews “London Fog—The Biography” By Christine L. Corton” from the perspective of an epidemiologist who has studied, taught on, and fought air pollution for decades. A fascinating read!

All of the articles mentioned in this podcast are available in open access.

Thank you for listening. This is Alfredo Morabia at AJPH. For more podcasts visit us at AJPH.org