contentincontext

Change is good

"Large-scale change never works unless it's guided by a vision and a set of strategies," says John P. Kotter, retired Harvard Business School professor and a leading authority on managing organizational change. And, he continues, "it's necessary to do it in pieces."

Taking these words to heart, we've been making some changes at *Modern Drug Discovery* that you may have noticed. Although many so far have been piecemeal, May marks an important transition. With this issue, *MDD* is introducing a full complement of departments that each month will cover issues and activities related to pharmaceutical R&D.

Our goal is to keep readers informed about the science, business, and management of drug R&D with stories that are topical, interesting, and relevant. You'll find this first in our broad-ranging New and Noteworthy section, which contains brief stories relating important scientific, regulatory, and business events.

To expand our business coverage, *MDD* has added a Focus on Business department. There, you'll see both brief items—wrapping up major deals, product developments, and marketplace happenings—and longer, more analytical stories. For example, Associate Editor Kimberly Cleaves looks at the impact of Bristol-Myers Squibb's problematic deal with ImClone Systems and the long-awaited approval of ImClone's anticancer drug Erbitux. We also report on Steven Burrill's annual biotech industry overview.

To keep on top of what research and business leaders are thinking, we now offer People and Perspectives. Several first-hand views are presented in this month's discussion of the National Research Council report *Challenges for the Chemical Sciences in the 21st Century* and its relevance to medicine and health. Here, and in all our stories, *MDD*'s goal is to talk with working scientists, regulators, business people, and other newsmakers in drug R&D.

Meanwhile, *MDD*'s longstanding Diseases and Disorders department has been expanded to cover the latest product developments in major disease areas. We also still follow regulatory and government activities in Clinical Trials Track and in Rules and Regulators. In these, Associate Editor David Filmore highlights two important developments this month: how nonprofits are exploiting legal fine points to try to force generic drugs onto the market, and the launch of the first clinical trials in more than 60 years for tuberculosis vaccines.

Filmore has also written this month's cover feature on vaccines against bioterrorism agents. He explores not only the progress various companies have made in creating vaccines, but also the vagaries of having the U.S. government as pretty much your only customer. Still, the drug industry "is cautiously optimistic that we are in the throes of the emergence of a new industry in America, called biodefense," Filmore reports.

Of course, *MDD* hasn't forgotten the more practical aspects of drug R&D in its Applications Notebook, Tool Box, and Sites and Software departments. Similarly, the second feature story this month, contributed by informatics specialist Bill Ladd of Spotfire, Inc., describes the data-handling challenges wrought by laboratory automation and offers high-throughput data analysis solutions.

Kotter warns about the tendency of organizations to stop the change process before it is actually completed. As editor, I'm not afraid to admit that the changes you are seeing at *MDD* are part of an evolutionary process to further meet our readers' informational needs. More change is coming. So, I invite you to keep reading—and to tell us via *mdd@acs.org* what you think of our new direction—as this process unfolds.