

## LETTER

### *To the Editor:*

I received my most recent issue of the *Journal of Hyperbaric Medicine*, Vol. 3, No. 3, today and was very disappointed at one of the articles, namely, Multiple sclerosis: its etiology, pathogenesis, and therapeutics with emphasis on the controversial use of HBO. The journal is, as stated on the cover page, a publication of the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society. As such, it should represent the policies of UHMS regarding the use of HBO.

The 1986 edition of *Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, A Committee Report* states that "it is still difficult to conclude that HBO benefits" MS patients. This is the official policy of the UHMS in respect to multiple sclerosis. I think that publishing an article in the official journal of the UHMS that states as its conclusion "Based on comparative efficacy and safety considerations, it is recommended that HBOT be used for treating early MS and for treating MS-associated cerebellar and bowel-bladder dysfunction," is harmful to the future of HBO therapy. This type of article gives individuals like Dr. Eugene Robin and other critics of HBO therapy the ammunition they require to seriously hamper our efforts to get widespread acceptance of HBO for appropriate conditions.

It is the editor's responsibility to ensure that the articles published in the journal are consistent with the official policies of the UHMS and are supportive of efforts to achieve credibility for HBO as a legitimate medical specialty. Papers such as the one I am referring to are not consistent with this responsibility. If the journal cannot get sufficient high caliber, quality papers, I think it would be to our benefit to miss an edition rather than to print harmful articles. Perhaps the journal should simply assume the role of an "abstracting" journal and encourage authors to submit papers on HBO to established surgical and medical journals.

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### *The Editor replies:*

We thank Dr. Zel for his opinion. The paper by Gottlieb and Neubauer was reviewed and specially selected for publication due to the comprehensive literature provided and the extensive summary of the field.

By no means is their opinion endorsed by this editor or by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society, but we solicit additional letters on this debate.