

Professor J. Calvin Coffey: development of *Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP)*

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Editor's note

The 10th Annual Meeting of Chinese College of Surgeons was held in Beijing International Convention Center from 18 to 21 May 2017. It was our honor to have an exclusive interview with Professor J. Calvin Coffey (*Figure 1*), Chair of Surgery, Graduate Entry Medical School, University of Limerick.

In the interview, Professor Coffey shared ideas on reclassification of mesentery as an organ. He discussed the implications of reclassification.

Professor Coffey is the Editor-In-Chief of the journal *Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP)*. We were curious about his views on the prospect of working with the AME group to develop MAP.

For more details, please see the video interview at: <https://youtu.be/nvAphFLat7E> (*Figure 2*) (1).

Additional interview transcripts

MAP: According to the review in the journal *"The Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology"*, you mentioned the proposed reclassification of the mesentery as an organ "is universally relevant as it affects all of us". Would you like to explain this further?

Professor Coffey: Sure, it is not just important to one person. It is important to everyone. Therefore, it is universally important. A continuous and single mesentery occurs in all patients, even if they have an embryological abnormality. This is very useful, because it means that the surgical principles (2-4) we adopt in one patient, can be adopted in all patients (5).

MAP: What are the implications of reclassifying the mesentery as an organ?

Professor Coffey: Firstly, you can consider the mesentery as an organ. If you do, then you can ask questions the same questions that you ask of all other organs. What are its functions? Is it altered in disease? Can organ-based



Figure 1 J. Calvin Coffey, BSc, PhD, FRCSI, CS: Editor-in-Chief, *Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP)*; Professor, Foundation Chair of Surgery, Consultant Open/Laparoscopic/Robotic Colorectal Surgeon, University of Limerick, University of Limerick Hospitals Group, Limerick, Ireland.



Figure 2 Professor J. Calvin Coffey: development of *Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP)* (1).

Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1705>

treatments help treat diseases?

One function of the mesentery is to maintain connection between most of the organs in our abdomen, and the systems of the body. Organs such as the liver, stomach,

spleen, pancreas, intestine (3,4), colon, rectum are all held in position by the mesenteric frame, helped by peritoneum. But it is the mesenteric frame that transmits nerves, blood vessels and lymphatics from organs to the rest of the body.

The mesentery is a centrally important element in the anatomical continuity of the body in general.

Diseases that arise in the mesenteric organ include volvulus, mesenteric sclerosis, mesenteric panniculitis, desmoid tumors, lymphoma, malrotation and many others.

Diseases that can spread to involve the mesentery include colorectal, gastric, and pancreatic cancer. Inflammatory conditions can also affect the mesentery.

Then there are diseases that we think may arise within the mesentery and spread to involve the intestine. One of these is Crohn's disease, and there is a growing body of data to suggest that the mesentery plays a more important role in this condition than we previously thought (4).

MAP: What is the reason for starting the journal MAP (Mesentery and Peritoneum) with AME?

Professor Coffey: Up until now, research on the mesentery was being conducted in many different fields of science and medicine, without being joined up under one broad heading. Considering the mesentery as an organ helps systematic investigation, which is called science, by bringing multiple findings together into one scientific field.

Our thoughts are that we are at the start or the restart, of the science of the mesentery (2).

The mesentery and peritoneum are anatomically intimately linked. They can only be separated with great difficulty. So, the science of the mesentery must take into account that of the peritoneum.

An open access scientific platform was needed to bring this science to the fore, and to start its development in a meaningful manner.

Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP) is that scientific platform and it provides us with an opportunity to develop mesenteric and peritoneal science in a fully systematic manner.

MAP: You have mentioned the aim of MAP is to enhance the communication of the highest quality basic, clinical and translational research in the field of mesenteric and peritoneal science. Can you share more about your goals?

Professor Coffey: The mission of the journal is to communicate and to publish the highest-quality research. We will take original manuscripts, review articles, case

reports and many other article types. All will be submitted to an intensive peer-review process. Only articles that meet a certain standard will be published.

We aim to complete this process quickly, as close to real time as possible. This is an exciting field and we think that it is essential that we are highly responsive at all times.

Our editorial board comprises key leaders across multiple countries (Russia, USA, France, Britain, Germany, Spain, Brazil, Columbia and many more). So there will be no language restriction in terms of editorial capacity. This is a key property of the journal which aims to be as inclusive and representative as possible.

MAP: How do you feel about the cooperation with AME? What is your impression of AME?

Professor Coffey: The AME group appears to be a strong publishing group with efficient processes. Publications by the AME group include journals and books, and are of a high standard.

As a result, the editorial team, which is of the highest international standard, is delighted to work towards developing *Mesentery and Peritoneum* with the AME Group.

About Professor J. Calvin Coffey

J. Calvin Coffey, Foundation Professor of Surgery and Chair at the Graduate Entry Medical School, University of Limerick and surgeon at the University Hospitals Group Limerick, is the Foundation Editor-In-Chief of *Mesentery and Peritoneum (MAP)*. Prof. Coffey also holds positions as deputy director of the 4i Centre for Interventions in Infection, Inflammation and Immunology (University of Limerick), is a national council member of Irish Hospital Consultants Association and was previously RCSI Vice-Dean of Surgical Training, and council member of the Surgical Infection Society Europe. He is a founding member of the Health Research Institute, University of Limerick. After completing surgical training at the Cleveland Clinic Ohio, he was the youngest appointed Chair of Surgery in Ireland.

"It is an honor to be involved at the start of this journal and this science" said Coffey who obtained a first class honor BSc in Anatomy in 1995 before obtaining a medical degree in 1998 and a PhD in 2005. He completed surgical training in 2010 and after appointment pioneered the introduction of numerous robotic surgical services in

Ireland.

Prof. Coffey is chief author on the reference textbook “*Mesenteric Principles in Gastrointestinal Surgery: basic and applied science*”. This is the first reference textbook in the field of mesenterics and is also the first text of its kind to incorporate fully interactive digital models to accelerate the educational process.

“*Our goals are to set up the mechanism by which we can achieve the mission statement of the journal, and that is the communication of the highest quality basic, clinical and translational research in the field of mesenteric and peritoneal science.*”

Coffey is regarded as having considerable expertise in clinical, scientific, educational and administrative processes as well as bringing a broad translational perspective to *MAP*.

Coffey was recipient of numerous national and international named lectures (including the Millin Lecturer, Thomas Myles Lecture and the Robert Smith Lecture) as well as several state of the art and keynote lectures. In 2012 he was awarded the James IV Travelling Fellowship by the James IV Association of Surgeons. He has published widely in including articles in *Nature Reviews Gastroenterology and Hepatology* and *the Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology*.

A fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and alumnus of the Digestive Diseases Institute at the Cleveland Clinic, Coffey aims to “*emphasize interdisciplinary and diverse scientific research by leveraging the open-access platform to enhance the transparency, quality and diversity of the research communicated through MAP.*”

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Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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