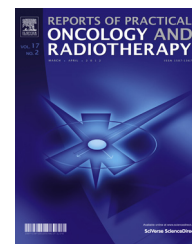


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Editorial

Annual Board of Editors meeting in Prague: Current and future directions for RPOR



Every year, the 10 co-Editors and the Editor-in-chief of this journal meet to discuss a variety of journal matters. The main aim, of course, is to continue improving the journal to serve the needs of our readers. The annual meeting is held in a different country each year, organized by one of the co-Editors on a rotating basis. The 2014 meeting was organized and hosted by our co-Editor Jiří Petera from the Czech Republic, in the beautiful city of Prague.

We believe that readers and contributors may be interested in knowing more about the journal and our vision for it in the coming months and years. In this editorial we present some of the highlights of current and future developments at the journal.

1. Inclusion of RPOR in the PubMed database and Open Archive

In 2014, RPOR was included in the PubMed Central (PMC) database, thus making it even easier for readers and authors to locate RPOR articles via PubMed, the most popular search engine/database for biomedical authors. All RPOR articles published more than 12 months ago are now open-access and freely available for all through PubMed Central. This development will undoubtedly promote greater awareness of the journal and, in fact, we are already seeing an increase in the submission rate as more authors become aware of RPOR.

2. Applications to Thomson-Reuters to obtain a journal Impact Factor (IF)

Despite the many achievements of RPOR in recent years, the journal has not yet received an IF. This may surprise some readers, particularly considering that the simulated IF (based on Elsevier data) for 2013 (articles published in 2011 and 2012 and cited in 2013) would be a very respectable 1.19, placing the journal well ahead of many oncology journals with an official IF. The simulated IF suggests that RPOR merits strong consideration to receive a formal IF from Thomson-Reuters.

We have recently applied for an IF and fully expect that our application will ultimately be approved, especially in light of the continuous improvement in the quality of our journal in recent years. The journal metrics, which we discuss in more detail below, clearly show the impressive achievements that RPOR has made in recent years. Nevertheless, even as we await a decision on our application, we continue our work to further improve the journal. For example, we have implemented a more rigorous manuscript revision process, which has already begun to yield fruits in terms of the quality of papers submitted.

3. Journal metrics

Some of the journal metrics (impact, speed of acceptance/publication, country of submission, etc.) are available on the journal web page at: <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/reports-of-practical-oncology-and-radiotherapy/>. However, we would like to highlight some of the more interesting measures, which illustrate the growing importance of RPOR in the biomedical literature. For instance, the rejection rate—a measure of quality and rigor—has increased from 11% in 2010 to 50% in 2014. This is a remarkable increase, especially for a journal without an official Thomson-Reuters IF. We are now forced to reject half of all submissions, and if present trends continue, the rejection rate appears poised to increase further. The rate of rejection is, in large part, a function of increased submissions, which have risen from 67 in 2010 to 129 in 2013 (final 2014 data not yet available), thus doubling in only 3 years. Another interesting metric that also illustrates the growing awareness of RPOR is the number of full-text downloads, which have increased from 20,530 in the year 2011 to 42,676 in 2013. Total downloads in the year 2014 are expected to reach an estimated 74,000, a remarkable 75% increase in just one year.

Geographic variation has also increased in recent years: although Europe still accounts for the bulk of submissions, we have seen increasing interest from Asia (notably China

and India), the Middle East, and Latin America. RPOR is, truly, becoming an international journal.

4. Special issues

In recent years, we have increased the number of special issues dedicated to a single topic in order to provide readers with comprehensive and current information on topics of strong interest. Examples include, *Cancer in the Elderly* (edited by Jiří Petera); *Acute Radiation Syndrome* (edited by Laura Cerezo and Miquel Macia); *Total Skin Electron Radiation* (edited by Tomasz Piotrowski); and *Radiation Oncology in Latin Speaking Countries: a link between Europe and Latin America* (edited by Jose Luis Lopez Guerra). Each of these special issues is coordinated (that is, edited) by one or two volunteer Guest Editors. Given the work involved in coordinating a special issue, the Board of Editors has decided to implement a new journal policy: all special issue Editors will be invited to join the Editorial Board. The reason for this is clear: accepting the coordination of a special issue indicates a strong commitment to RPOR—and what better way to improve the journal than by recruiting authors who have already demonstrated their dedication?

We are currently preparing a number of special issues on a variety of topics, including Boron Neutron Capture, Skull Base Tumours, and Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT), among others. These will be published in 2015/2016.

5. Truly international collaboration with radiotherapy societies

One of the aspects that makes RPOR unique and differentiates it from many other oncology journals is the wide geographic diversity of participating radiotherapy societies. RPOR is supported by radiotherapy societies from countries in Eastern and Central Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania), Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal), and Latin America. This diversity is reflected in the many

nationalities of the journal co-Editors and the members of the Editorial Board.

Such a wide diversity is not common, but we believe that this diversity enriches the journal immensely, particularly as it gives us a perspective that is perhaps underrepresented in the better-known journals in this field. RPOR represents a common publishing platform that serves a diverse, multilingual group of specialists from around the world.

6. Concluding remarks

The annual meeting of the Board of Editors is a wonderful opportunity for the Editors to meet face-to-face to discuss important journal matters, but also to for us to keep up to date with the challenges and current status of radiotherapy in each country. This first hand knowledge, in turn, helps us to have a better understanding of the issues that most concern and interest our readers. This knowledge helps us to assure that the articles published in the journal are both relevant and timely.

As this editorial makes it clear, RPOR has made major improvements in recent years and the journal is now stronger than ever. We are committed to continue working hard to promote the journal on behalf of our Authors and Readers. We encourage all of our readers to continue reading and actively contributing to what we hope you think of as *your* journal, Reports of Practical Oncology and Radiotherapy.

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