

Editorial

Established journal, new Editor

It is with great pleasure that I take over the editorship of *HPB* from Robin Williamson. The journal has meant a lot to me over the years as, during the period of my stewardship of the Secretary General position, I had negotiated its birth and the structure which has got us to this stage of its development. I was delighted when my colleagues, David Carr-Locke and Robin Williamson initially took on the task as the first editors in order to launch this ambitious venture of a new journal owned by the IHPBA. David Carr-Locke's involvement was only brief but Robin Williamson continued over the last 5 years and has been instrumental in guiding the journal to its current successful position. I would like to pay an enormous tribute to Robin for his tireless work on behalf of the IHPBA and of the journal. He has seen the journal through changes of a number of publishers and the difficulties that have been associated with those changes. Despite all of these difficulties, he has continued to produce what has increasingly been an outstanding journal. He and the publishers have achieved partial indexation and, as a result of their hard work, we are now on the verge of full indexation and inclusion in the citation index. This is no mean feat in the time of the journal's existence and is a testament to Robin's tenacity and outstanding contribution to our association.

I am very fortunate to be taking over the reins as Editor-in-chief at a time when the journal is so healthy and on the verge of achieving great strides in its upward journey on the citation index. I anticipate that this news will encourage both members of the IHPBA and non-members to send their most important contributions in the area of HPB to the journal of the IHPBA.

As Editor-in-chief, I see my role as the chair of a large family of members which includes the regional editors, the Editorial Board, the Council and committees of the IHPBA, as well as all of the 1000 members of our association. I therefore invite all of your contributions in support of this very important activity of our association. The success of the association and the journal are interlinked and both will progress and be successful as

long as this relationship remains strong. I cannot believe that there would be any member of the IHPBA at whatever level of involvement who would not wish the association and our journal to succeed. Hence I invite all of you to further embrace the journal as your own and together let's make it into the most successful specialty journal in the area of HPB.

In recent years we have been fortunate in receiving a significant number of contributions so that now we are in a position to accept only the best of contributions for the journal. Sadly this success is associated with a significant percentage of submissions that need to be rejected. It is unfortunately one of the signs of success of a journal and I hope that the members will accept this as an educational experience, improve their submission according to the guidelines of the reviewers and re-submit. Another consequence of increased submissions is the timing of publication which, by necessity, is now running at approximately 4–6 months after submission. Consequently, you will note that, although I take over as editor-in-chief with the first edition of 2004, i.e. issue 6.1, all of this edition has been edited by my predecessor, Professor Robin Williamson, and I pay particular tribute to him for his editorship of this issue.

Readers of *HPB* will have noticed a number of changes associated with this issue. The most significant change is on the cover of the journal which, from now on, will highlight major manuscripts in each issue. The editors have also decided that a number of the issues will concentrate on themes and issue 6.2 will begin this change with the theme of liver transplantation. The thematic issues will not only include the topic that has been chosen, but also your original contributions. With each thematic issue, a guest editor will provide an editorial encompassing the manuscripts of the chosen topic. I would like at this stage to acknowledge the number of colleagues and friends from the IHPBA community who have already approached me and offered to guest edit an issue on their chosen theme. I would like to take this opportunity of inviting all of the membership

of the IHPBA to give thought to such a contribution and make contact with either myself or one of the regional editors with your ideas.

The other new innovation that will be seen as the issues in 2004 evolve will be a segment in the journal titled Letters to the Editor. This is open to all members and other readers of *HPB* to have their say on either previous articles that have been published in *HPB* or issues of importance to them as they may relate to either the IHPBA or the practice of *HPB* in their country or internationally. This will also be a section where interesting case reports might be included. As my predecessor has indicated, it is the aim of *HPB* to reduce the case report content of the journal, as journalistic

experience indicates that such reports are very rarely read. However, if the members and contributors have an interesting case that they may wish to share with their colleagues, I would invite them to submit it as a letter to the editor in the format previously described.

HPB is a young journal. It has gone through a painful childhood in development, although now it has entered an exciting period of development. I would like all of the readers and members to join me, the other editors and the Editorial Board in making this the most vibrant and relevant journal to the specialty of hepatobiliary and pancreatic disorders.

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