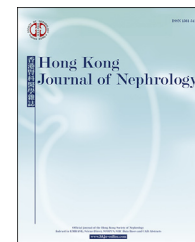


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## EDITORIAL

## Time to say goodbye

The news that our Society's official journal, the *Hong Kong Journal of Nephrology*, would draw to a close after publishing its concluding issue in October this year came as no surprise to me and was actually long anticipated. Nevertheless, I am still saddened that "the end day" has finally arrived.

In the late 1990s, our Society's Council felt that with the rapid growth and development of nephrology in Hong Kong, it was time for the Society to publish its own academic journal. After just about a year's preparation, the first issue of the *Hong Kong Journal of Nephrology* was published in October 1999. That year also marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our Society. The missions of our journal were: (1) to promote clinical and scientific research in nephrology; (2) facilitate communications among nephrologists and renal nurses from Hong Kong, China, and the international community; (3) provide continuous medical and nursing education.<sup>1</sup> It was hoped that our journal would eventually become a regional nephrology journal serving Hong Kong, China, and the Asia-Pacific region. Our Society took pride in publishing the *Hong Kong Journal of Nephrology*, as very few medical specialty societies in our locality at that time had their own academic journal.

Our journal was launched successfully and was well received by both local and international nephrology communities. The content of our journal was rich and diversified. Each issue contained review articles by local and foreign experts, five or more original articles, as well as a number of case reports, short communications, and technical notes. Our journal also published the annual report of the Hong Kong Renal Registry and abstracts of our Annual Scientific Meetings. Between June 1999 and February 2004, our journal had received 120 submissions from all over the world including China, Australia, Japan, Southeast Asia, Europe, North America, and the Middle East.<sup>2</sup> The abstracts of the International Society of Nephrology 2004 Conference on Prevention of Progression of Renal Disease were also published in our journal.

I joined the editorial board in 2001. At that time, our journal was still operating in the "old fashioned" style: manuscripts were submitted by mail to the Editor-in-Chief, who would then allocate the manuscripts to the assistant

editors to carry out the review process. Communication with the authors and reviewers was mainly done by mail and fax. As expected, the turnaround time of the manuscript review process was rather prolonged. At that time, our journal received more manuscript submissions than we could publish, and we had to reject some of those that did not meet the journal's standards. The manuscript submission procedure has since been modernized progressively. Starting from 2003, authors were encouraged to submit their manuscripts by e-mail. In 2012, a new online manuscript submission system was introduced, which greatly enhanced the efficiency of the manuscript submission and review processes.

The editorial board and our publisher have been exerting constant efforts to have *Hong Kong Journal of Nephrology* included in various scientific bibliographic databases, particularly Index Medicus. Our journal became indexed in EMBASE in 2002, and in SCOPUS and CAB ABSTRACT 4 years later. In 2006, after publishing our journal for almost 8 years, the editorial board decided to apply for inclusion in Index Medicus. Unfortunately, our application was not successful, which was a setback for us and rendered our journal less competitive than other indexed journals in attracting good-quality manuscript submissions.

During my term as chairman of the Society between 2008 and 2010, the number of manuscript submissions to our journal substantially decreased. Only 10 original articles were published in four issues of our journal over the 2-year period. Five of them were submitted by local Renal Units, whereas the remaining five were submitted from India and the Middle East. Our journal was also not able to maintain financial self-sufficiency as it did not have paid subscription, and the number of advertisements placed in our journal was not sufficient to offset the publication cost.

At one stage, it was hoped that our journal could continue to serve as a domestic journal by publishing clinical studies and case reports with local flavor. It could also provide a platform for publishing the Hong Kong Renal Registry Reports and abstracts from local and international meetings organized by our Society. The editorial board has made repeated attempts to encourage manuscript submissions from members of our Society, especially from

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younger fellows. Two special awards were established by the Society last year for the best manuscripts prepared from the nephrology exit dissertations and the interhospital renal meeting presentations, respectively. Regrettably, all of these efforts have not been able to generate sufficient enthusiasm from our members to increase the number of manuscript submissions.

In recent years, the editorial board has been struggling to secure enough manuscripts for publication. However, because of the persistent lack of manuscript submissions, it has become increasingly apparent that the publication of our journal cannot be sustained in the long run. After much deliberation, the current Council finally made the difficult but seemingly inevitable decision to wind down our journal.

Our journal has had a glorious past. It has served our Society in many splendid ways over the past 18 years. Due credit should be given to Professor Philip Li, Professor Alex Yu, Professor C.C. Szeto, and their editorial board members for their hard work and dedication over the past 2 decades.

We are also grateful to our publishers—Lippincott Williams and Wilkins and, later, Elsevier—for their excellent professional support. It is time to say goodbye. Our journal will, without any doubt, occupy a very important and unique place in the history of our Society.

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