

Editorial—New routes to rapid publication

I have discussed before in these pages the frustrations and difficulties that pharmaceutical scientists experience in ensuring rapid publication of research results. Most leading journals, including the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, endeavour to speed up the refereeing and publication process as much as possible, but are often prevented from publishing all papers rapidly because of the large number of acceptable papers being received. Even when space is available, substantial pieces of work may often require revision and even further experimental work in the light of peer review criticism, an essential feature of acceptance of published work by the scientific community. I have pointed out previously how the authors themselves can assist expediting publication by ensuring their submitted work is in accordance with the Journal's guidelines, both with respect to content and to presentation; attention to these aspects make both the review process and the editorial process more straightforward. The *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* will continue to make efforts to help authors achieve these aims, but in addition is making two initiatives towards rapid publication.

The *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* will continue to cater for authors wishing to submit their research work in hard copy; however, we will now consider new texts submitted on disk; a hard copy of the whole article must also be included for the referee's consideration, but this need not be double spaced. Good originals of all Figures must also be included. Submissions are favoured in ASCII format, although the more popular wordprocessor packages can be accommodated. These measures should reduce costs, both for the author and the editorial office, and editing on disk should reduce errors in transcription up to the stage of printing. It should be noted that we definitely do not want camera-ready copy and plain text without typographical embellishments is sufficient, using italics (or underlining) only as required by scientific convention.

The second measure is the introduction of a new rapid-communication, monthly journal, entitled *Pharmaceutical Sciences* which will appear in January 1995. As for the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, the new journal will publish research reports relating to all aspects of the pharmaceutical sciences, but will enable rapid publication by restricting the length of the papers and by accepting and processing submissions exclusively in electronic form. However, to enable such reports to be published with as little delay as possible—and we anticipate publication within twelve weeks—then the full co-operation of referees and authors is paramount. For the former, an impressive panel of eminent pharmaceutical scientists has already been assembled to ensure rapid and authoritative review of

papers in all disciplines. For the latter, authors must adhere to the following guidelines:

—All submissions must be on IBM-compatible disks, in ASCII format, or in one of the popular wordprocessing formats.

—A hard copy of the paper must accompany the submitted disk, but this need not be double-spaced typescript.

—All submissions must be according to the guidelines published in the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*; any submissions not doing so will be returned to the author, without evaluation by the referee.

—All Figures must be of the best quality, suitable for reproduction in *Pharmaceutical Sciences* after reduction to single-column width.

—The total length of the communication must be contained within two or three printed pages; *Pharmaceutical Sciences* is adopting this restriction to enable referees to commit time appropriate to a very rapid reply to requests from the Editor. As a guide, a three-page article would contain 2000 words of text, three small Figures and a Table, plus no more than ten key references.

Further details and advice on submission to the new journal can be obtained from the Editorial Office.

What of the role of the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* with the appearance of this new, rapid-publication journal? First, it should be emphasized that the new journal is not to encourage 'salami' publication, but will encourage rapid publication of important results. It should be noted that, at least in the United Kingdom, judgment on researcher's work is now more and more based on the quality of a limited number of papers, rather than on a long list of publications. The role of the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, then, is to provide a vehicle for more considered, complete works, which researchers can point to as their major contributions. In recent years, the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* has gradually increased in size, without any commensurate increase in subscription and we plan to expand this Journal even more in 1995, enabling the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* also to reduce the total time taken from submission to publication; this effectively represents a doubling in the coverage of the pharmaceutical sciences by these learned journals.

Are you already planning your next research paper in the pharmaceutical sciences? If so, you may like to consider submission to either of these two journals; whichever you chose, you can be assured that the editorial team will, as always, put its best efforts into ensuring timely publication of important advances in the pharmaceutical sciences.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN