

Editorial

With the third issue of PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH in hand, it is time to take stock and to reflect on the introduction of this new journal to the scientific community. During the planning stages, several objectives were set: the general nature of the journal that includes all aspects of pharmaceutical-biomedical research, emphasis on relatively short reports and research articles that provide key information in a readable fashion, concise reviews that highlight research developments, and a spectrum of different types of articles such as editorials and commentaries on ethical, political or economic issues of interest. I believe that we have met these objectives with the first three issues of PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH, indeed better than we had anticipated for the initial period of publication. Above all, there was no shortage of submitted manuscripts, the best indication that a perceived need for a general scope pharmaceutical journal does exist. The carefully staged review process by independent referees – many of whom highly regarded in their field – served to aid the authors in improving their manuscripts or to screen out those papers unsuitable for publication in PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH.

To judge on the quality of the scientific content must be left to the individual reader. First comments from colleagues expressed surprise that a new journal could attract full research articles of considerable interest and quality that surely would have been acceptable in respected and established journals. With this trend continuing I anticipate that PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH will assume an excellent reputation and wide distribution. To this point authors from many countries have contributed manuscripts, the bulk coming from the USA, Europe and Japan. It is our hope to keep PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH free from local interests or dominance by one region alone.

Of major concern today is the time elapsed between submission of a manuscript and its final publication in the journal. We will try to keep this time to a minimum; however, certain limits

are given with the adoption of a thorough reviewing system that is essential to the quality of the published articles. In most cases the need for revision of the manuscript according to the referee's suggestions imposes an additional delay that is clearly worthwhile in terms of improved clarity and interpretation of the results. This process may take several months. Yet, authors should realize that with many journals the longest delays occur after final acceptance of the paper. It is here that we can most efficiently shorten the overall time to publication by careful planning of each issue on the basis of judicious editorial decisions on the acceptance of papers, editing of lengthy manuscripts, and last not least preferential treatment of concise articles that consume less journal space without providing less information. I am pleased that with the first several issues of PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH we will achieve an overall publication time of between 6 to 12 months.

A potential problem looms ahead with the very large scope of the journal. With more submitted manuscripts anticipated in the future, the criteria for acceptance in PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH will be in constant flux. While scientific quality always provides the overriding censor, special areas of emphasis will emerge in accord with new trends in the pharmaceutical sciences. Each area will be allotted a finite space in the journal that is determined on the basis of emerging research trends and the quality and number of the submitted manuscripts. Hence, the acceptance rate may be different for the various research fields that are covered by PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH, a situation that is encountered with other general journals, such as Science or Nature.

Whether PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH continues to mature as a major journal in its field will depend on your support as author, user and subscriber.