

## Editorial

In its new role as the official journal of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS), *Pharmaceutical Research* has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of manuscript submissions and an expanded readership. As Editor, I feel privileged to serve both the AAPS and the general scientific community, and I feel a keen sense of urgency to utilize the many opportunities afforded by the interaction of the journal and this major new scientific association. Not the least among these, the journal will provide a yardstick by which excellence is measured. I therefore implore all AAPS members to help establish *Pharmaceutical Research* as the premier scientific forum for pharmaceutical scientists, which has the potential for major impact on and recognition by related disciplines in the chemical, biological, physical, engineering, and biomedical sciences. Members should interact with the journal as authors, as referees, by citation, and through the contribution of letters and opinions. Knowing the extraordinary strength that the AAPS has gathered over its first months, I am confident that *Pharmaceutical Research* will have the necessary member support to fulfill these high expectations.

Rapid growth has necessitated several changes in the editorial process. It is my pleasure to welcome Professor Douwe D. Breimer as the Associate Editor for Europe. Effective April 1, 1987, all *European* manuscripts should be submitted to Professor Breimer in Leiden, where all editorial decisions concerning these papers will be made. (See the Instructions to Contributors for the full address.) Douwe Breimer has served for many years as the Scientific Secretary of the Federation Internationale Pharmaceutique (FIP), and has organized superb scientific symposia on a wide range of topics for FIP meetings. Further, he continues to serve as the Founding Director of the Center for Bio-Pharmaceutical Sciences in Leiden, which itself represents a unique model for a new generation of European pharmaceutical research centers with strong ties to university, industry, and government. His wide-ranging research interests and experience in drug delivery, pharmaceuticals, metabolism, toxicology, and drug development will serve to strengthen these focal areas of *Pharmaceutical Research*. The Executive Council for the AAPS enthusiastically welcomes Prof. Breimer. The journal retains its international scope with respect not only to Europe, but also to Japan and the many other countries from which published papers have derived. The AAPS welcomes international members, and *Pharmaceutical Research* is included with the membership fee. In addition, a special discount for personal subscriptions, outside the AAPS, assures that the journal remains readily accessible throughout the world.

We are also increasing the number of editorial advisors in the near future, and I am grateful for their expressed willingness to monitor the quality of *Pharmaceutical Research*. This includes reviewing many submitted papers, an exceed-

ingly important duty requiring considerable personal dedication. We continue to respond to nominations from the AAPS sections, as well as select external editorial advisors both nationally and internationally. I am very much looking forward to a rewarding and stimulating collaboration among editors, editorial advisors, and the authors and readership of *Pharmaceutical Research*.

A major mission of *Pharmaceutical Research* formulated at its inception is to provide a forum for all biological and physicochemical sciences that are relevant to the pharmaceutical area. While the AAPS continues in its traditional areas of strength in pharmaceutical technology, pharmaceuticals, biopharmaceuticals, pharmacodynamics, and drug analysis, it also reaches out into new fields and expands existing areas of interest in medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, clinical sciences, and biotechnology—to name just a few. *Pharmaceutical Research* will incorporate these target areas and act as liaison with outside fields so that we can share the excitement at the cutting edge of these fields and incorporate their novel ideas into the pharmaceutical sciences.

Let us now discuss the editorial evaluation of submitted manuscripts, a point of frequent contention and misunderstanding. We have adopted several formats that include reviews (mostly by invitation) and research manuscripts that are usually reviewed by at least two external referees. Unfortunately, this process takes from 4 to 8 weeks, and in a few cases even longer. Further, it is the hallmark of any excellent scientific journal that more manuscripts are submitted than can be published. This is true for *Pharmaceutical Research*, and was the reason for doubling the number of pages published in 1987. The goal is further expansion, becoming a monthly publication. In general, *Pharmaceutical Research* will not function as a repository for regulatory documentation of new drugs or drug formulation, but rather as a forum for principles of drug research. This rule is not engraved in stone and exceptions may be made for manuscripts that offer initial documentation of characteristics of a drug belonging to a new class of agents. Similarly, novel technological procedures will be considered. In addition, to publish the maximum number of quality papers, new manuscript formats have been developed—ones that condense publishable papers. The mainstay of *Pharmaceutical Research* will be the report format (2000 words). Technical notes (1000 words) represent a new category in which research findings can be presented concisely and rapidly, without losing any impact. Full-length research articles (4000 words) will be reserved for scientific contributions of *above average* value. Although I rely on the judgment of each author to select the most suitable format, I am set against unlimited growth merely to accommodate papers with marginal new findings, as this would dilute the journal's quality. In many cases I recommend to the authors to con-

dense their manuscripts significantly; there frequently is a lot of unnecessary repetition or ancillary annotation that can be safely omitted. (In fact, feeling somewhat concerned about this, I have gone back to my own papers and cut these also.)

With these criteria in mind, the decision to accept or reject a paper is an editorial prerogative based on the quality of results and conclusions, data presentation, manuscript length, number of manuscripts under consideration at the time, and the combined judgment calls of the external referees. Although there is ample opportunity to make a wrong decision, authors should consider that one wrong argument in the referee's commentary usually has very little effect on the paper's overall rating. Therefore, *I propose that authors in most cases simply abide by the editorial decisions.* However, I remain most interested in learning about factual errors, and rebuttals are not ruled out. Referees and editorial advisors for their part must understand that, when they assign average priority to a manuscript without mentioning any additional interesting features of the work, it may result in rejection of the paper. We cannot allow a backlog of papers to build up, with resultant delays for future papers.

Good research must be published without undue delay. This is why we have taken all the steps outlined above—our goal is to publish the maximum number of quality papers, all speedily.

Finally, I wish to share with you my impression of the first meeting of the AAPS held November 1986 in Washington, D.C. This was not merely a continuation of previous meetings of the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences. There was a newly felt excitement, many new faces, and high-quality work in a number of different areas that were previously underrepresented. I was most concerned about the last day of the meeting, particularly because posters from my laboratory were scheduled on this Thursday morning. I am very pleased to note that the scientific quality, diversity, and excitement were sustained throughout the meeting, a most encouraging sign for a promising future for the pharmaceutical sciences and the AAPS.

Wolfgang Sadée  
*Editor*