

Editorial

My annual report is again written at a time when *Pharmaceutical Research* is undergoing major changes. Manuscript submission has continued to climb during 1988 to 330 papers, a 15% increase over the previous year. In comparison to the doubling of manuscript flow during 1986 and 1987, this smaller jump in 1988 signals the beginning of a new phase for the journal. Together with the explosive development of the AAPS, the initial exponential growth phase was expected, but now we are entering a phase in which *Pharmaceutical Research* has to compete with major journals in other fields for the best research articles from the top laboratories. Many of the competing scientific journals are dedicated to specialty fields in which they play a major role in highlighting novel ideas and trends. Bringing your research results to a much broader audience counts as one of the major advantages of a general journal, such as *Pharmaceutical Research*; however, the general journal must also offer high impact within the scientific community of a specialty area.

We are now adjusting editorial policies and procedures to make *Pharmaceutical Research* competitive for further expansion and to ensure a steadily increasing level of scientific quality. Since the overall impact of a scientific journal is directly related to its size, as one of the important factors, we will let the journal grow over the next few years to an annual volume of 1500–2000 pages. Expecting a manuscript flow of 360 for 1989 and 400 for 1990, we have set the page volume at 1008 for 89, and we may require 1200–1300 pages for 1990, at a 40% rejection rate. Previous annual page budgets were: 330 (1986), 600 (1987), 810 (1988). Hence, *Pharmaceutical Research* will grow sufficiently to accommodate a critical mass of research papers in each of the specialty areas of the AAPS Sections: Pharmaceutics and Drug Delivery (PDD), Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacodynamics, and Drug Metabolism (PPDM), Analysis and Pharmaceutical Quality Control (APQ), Pharmaceutical Technology (PT), Medicinal and Natural Products Chemistry (MNPC), and the new emphasis areas, Biotechnology and Clinical Sciences.

In order to identify more directly research articles with specialty areas, we will soon divide *Pharmaceutical Research* into suitable sections. More importantly, we are now appointing Associate Editors in each of the AAPS specialty areas. Associate Editors will work closely with the main editorial office to assure continuity and adherence to standard procedures, such as rapid manuscript evaluation on the basis of the external peer review system. Also, an Associate Editor in Economic, Social, and Administrative Sciences will be recruited to develop a News and Commentaries section for the journal. With these changes, we feel that the already strong position of the journal will gain the additional momentum to break into new territories.

Beginning in 1989, we are providing the external referees of *Pharmaceutical Research* with copies of the other referee's comments (anonymous) and the editorial decision. This additional service was repeatedly requested, and it serves to provide the referees with better insight into the editorial process. I wish to emphasize again that the diligent scrutiny of our referees truly represents the foundation upon which the journal can build its scientific reputation, and the service of the referees is acknowledged each year in the December issue of the journal. During the current year alone, we expect to send out some 800 manuscript copies for review, and this number is steadily increasing! While the Editorial Advisory Board can absorb a share of these papers, we will be looking toward our readership and the AAPS membership to also serve in this most important referee function.

Here are a few more numbers for the statistics buffs among you. The rejection rate of 37% for 1988 remained nearly the same as in previous years, although referees have apparently increased their expectations of the quality of the work submitted to *Pharmaceutical Research*. Each research article is refereed by scientists in the respective specialty area, who decide on what constitutes a satisfactory level of novelty, technical advance, and quality for publication within their own field. The distribution of articles among the specialty areas was as follows for 1988: PPD, 34%; PPDM, 25%; APQ, 15%; PT, 13%; MNPC, 10%; other, 3%. Thus, Pharmaceutics and Drug Delivery remains at the top and has even added a few percentage points, while the remaining areas were largely unchanged. With the introduction of Biotechnology and Clinical Sciences for 1989, it is of interest how the distribution of the specialty areas will be affected. As an example, several papers counted under PDD or APQ in 1988 will fall into the Biotechnology area in 1989. Similarly, drug studies in patients will move from PPDM to the Clinical Sciences. The regional distribution of the articles published in 1988 was: USA and Canada, 128; Europe, 17; Japan, 9; other, 3. Recently, contributions from abroad have steadily increased, and we expect that a good share of the projected increased manuscript flow will come from international authors. Such a trend is paramount to the long-term development of the journal.

I take this opportunity to thank the editors, editorial advisors, referees, and authors for their commitment, and the leadership of the AAPS for their support of *Pharmaceutical Research*.

Wolfgang Sadée
Editor