Editorial

Dear Readers

Over five years ago, the first issue of the *Journal of Molecular Diagnostics* was published, coincident with the fifth annual meeting of the Association for Molecular Pathology. The birth of the journal signified our enthusiasm for molecular pathology, and the recognition that as this field grew, we needed a place to address the issues that faced us in the practice of molecular diagnostics. *JMD* was created as a forum for the Association of Molecular Pathology, a place to report scientific advances, new technologies, correlations with human disease and other types of diagnostic testing, and report on issues that impact the overall practice of molecular diagnostics. The first issue contained 74 abstracts and five original articles.

Five years has brought significant change to our field. We now measure our assays in minutes to hours thanks to new technologies, such as real-time amplification with fluorescent detection. Gels have all but disappeared from our labs, and radioactive detection is largely history. Automation is becoming both a reality and a necessity. Multiplex analysis and detection is commonplace, and some of us are beginning to implement chip technologies in our laboratories. Point-of-care molecular testing no longer seems the stuff of science fiction. In the United States, both specialty certification in molecular genetic pathology and accredited fellowship training programs have become realities. The progress is staggering and exciting. Such changes are a constant in our professional lives.

In other ways our jobs are unchanged. Quality control activities, seemingly endless documentation, accreditation, laboratory inspections, regulatory oversight, insufficient reimbursement, and patents and royalty issues all remain significant challenges to the molecular testing laboratory. Such activities consume much of our time and energy, and always will.

Also unwavering is our continued need to come together, either in person at scientific meetings or in the pages of this journal to share our ideas, advances, and collaborative efforts. Increasingly, *JMD* publishes work

from worldwide sources, and has contained the proceedings of meetings held abroad. It represents an avenue to bring us together and advance molecular pathology worldwide. In the coming years, *JMD* will continue to bring us together to shape our field and its future.

The growth and success of *JMD* mirrors that of molecular diagnostics. Manuscript submissions have tripled, and the fifth anniversary issue of *JMD* was significantly thicker than ever before. In fact, in 2005, our publication frequency will increase to five issues per year. For the journal, the past five years have brought a transition to web-based submission and review of manuscripts and on-line access to articles. In the near future, on-line publication of articles before the print version will speed dissemination of information. There remains a great need for actual journals, however. Scientific journals serve as a focal point for interest groups within the whole realm of science. Certain topical journals, like *JMD*, are filled with papers of interest, each of which I find warrants my attention. Old-fashioned, perhaps, but I enjoy having an actual journal issue in hand to slip into my briefcase for reading on a plane or elsewhere. Electronic technologies may lighten the load, but hopefully will never make the printed journal a thing of the past.

One of the most rewarding activities of my professional life these past five years has been this journal. I am tremendously honored and enthusiastic to be able to continue for another five years as Editor-in-Chief. I wish to thank my colleagues for their ongoing confidence in me. The Associate Editors, Editorial Board and reviewers, along with the authors who have entrusted us with their work, really deserve the credit for the success of the journal. Additionally, the Editorial office staff has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of *JMD*. It has been an exciting start for the *Journal of Molecular Diagnostics*, and even more exciting to imagine where we will be in another 5 years.

Karen Kaul
Editor-in-Chief