Progress in 2007

Gut in 2007

Spiller R

Editor's report for past year

As always, looking back over the year, it is my pleasant duty to thank many people for contributing to another very successful year. Firstly, to my associate editors, who have managed to handle the 2105 manuscripts submitted this year with efficiency and speed. Our median time to first decision is steady at 23 days for all papers. Given that we only publish around 12% of all submitted original manuscripts, we "reject without review" around a third that have little chance of success, feeling that authors would rather have a quick decision than a long wait. Regrettably, it is particularly these weaker papers that are hard to get reviewers for, which often results in a long delay that is frustrating for all concerned. Although we call this "reject without review", this is somewhat misleading because each manuscript is carefully evaluated by the relevant associate editor and the editor before a decision is reached. Of those manuscripts that meet the standard for external review, the median decision time is 34 days, which, allowing for 14 days for external reviewers, usually means a decision at the next associate editor fortnightly meeting. Only the very best can be accepted and this has led to a gratifying rise in our impact factor, which is now 9.0 (see fig).

Our aim is to be an international journal and we are pleased that we receive manuscripts from all over the world. I am also gratified that the acceptance rate is becoming similar wherever papers are submitted from, as authors come to realise both the aims and standard of *Gut*. Our aims are to

Figure 1 Gut impact factor.

"publish original articles describing novel mechanisms of disease and new management strategies, both diagnostic and therapeutic, likely to impact on clinical practice within the foreseeable future". The articles are, therefore, not only ground-breaking but also relevant to clinical practice, which we hope is the appeal of the Journal. With the aim of increasing our exposure worldwide, we have recently co-hosted a very fruitful joint meeting in Beijing with the *Chinese Medical Tribune*. We have an increasing proportion (currently 15%) of our manuscripts submitted from Japan, China and South East Asia, a trend that we hope to encourage as there is a lot of good science going on there.

To maintain our international representation we rotate our associate editors on a 3-yearly basis and it is with some regret that we have to say goodbye to Massimo Pinzani from Università di Firenze, Italy, who leaves after 3 years dealing with hepatology manuscripts. I would like to thank him for his enthusiastic support, efficiency and wise advice

over these years. Emad El-Omar from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, also leaves after 4 years; 3 as an associate editor and 1 as deputy editor. Again, I would wish to record my gratitude for his consistent, strong support, efficiency and enormous ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of even the most difficult manuscripts. On 1 January 2008, the hepatology baton will be passed from Massimo Pinzani to Ramon Bataller, from the renowned hepatology centre, the Institut de Malalties Digestives i Metabòliques Hospital Clinic, Barcelona, Spain, while the upper gastrointestinal baton will pass from Emad El-Omar to Ernst Kuipers, head of the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Erasmus University Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Both have internationally recognised expertise and we are looking forward to them joining the team.

During the year there have also been changes in the editorial office, with Clare Spencer joining us to handle manuscripts and Claire Folkes replacing Gavin Stewart as development editor for *Gut*. Kathryn Walsh now acts as production editor, putting the Journal together in the place of Melissa Dodd. Gary Bryan provides expert computer support for the website and manuscript handling. I would like to thank all the staff, past and present, for their hard work, without which there would be no Journal.

Finally, but definitely not least, my thanks go to our reviewers who consistently provide insightful, critical reviews and without whose expert advice we could not produce the high quality Journal that we all aspire to. With your help, the whole *Gut* team looks forward to 2008 with great enthusiasm.

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