



Editorial

Commentary from the Editor

As we enter our 29th year of publication, we face political instability on both sides of the Atlantic, with the US President firing his close senior associates like kingpins and the UK Prime Minister having her senior cabinet members resigning in droves at their dissatisfaction with her No Deal Brexit option for leaving the European Union. Neuromuscular Disorders is of course very familiar with crisis situations, mainly imposed on us by our Publishers, such as changing horses in midstream with a new Production Manager in the midst of our annual congress issue, or changing typesetters at a critical time, or changing from a well-tryed and friendly on line system of uploading and handling papers (EES) to a completely chaotic and untested system, Evise, causing major difficulties for our authors as well as reviewers.

When Neuromuscular Disorders was launched in 1991, the main objective was to bring together papers of special neuromuscular interest, after a review of the literature for the previous year by Luciano Merlini showed that papers of interest were scattered over a wide range of Journals. We also drew up a rudimentary Gene Table for the first issue, filling half a page, which grew exponentially over the years and is now published once a year in the December issue and also available on the web. The current table fills 30 pages, with a small font just on the verge of the comfort zone for the over 60s. There is also a list of new references.

The introduction of an Impact Factor based on the number of citations of a paper, irrespective of its quality, to replace the traditional citation index, further consolidated the longstanding tradition to send high-flying manuscripts to the high-profile journals.

The subsequent advent of online rapid publication on a commercial basis has produced an uneven playing field to the disadvantage of traditional publications. However, what is much more disconcerting is the recent advent of online “pre-publication” uploading of manuscripts without peer review. As this could pose a major problem in the neuromuscular field, I shall discuss it in detail in the next issue of the Journal.

Meanwhile back on the shop floor, the system with Executive Associate Editors has continued to function smoothly, with all submissions registered through the Editorial Office, then channelled to an appropriate Executive Associate Editor for handling and peer review, coordinated by our Editorial Manager, Jane Miller, and coming back to the

Editor-in-Chief for final approval prior to acceptance for publication. We now have 15 EAEs and welcome two additional ones, Haluk Topaloğlu and Werner Stenzel, who have previously served as Associate Editors.

We welcome to the regular editorial board Reghan Foley, and say a fond farewell to Helen Roper and thank her for her years of dedicated support as she retires from professional life and moves to pastures green.

We very much appreciate the hard work put in by the large number of **Reviewers** who have helped to maintain the standard of the Journal through their expertise and commitment. Their names are listed below. If any readers are particularly interested in reviewing papers in their area of expertise, they are welcome to contact the Editor with their background details. We also welcome recommendations from current Editorial Board members of their high-flying associates.

Our annual published version of the **Gene Table**, which is also freely available as open access online, has been very successful over the years and has once again been updated for the recent December print issue by our new Gene Table Editor, Gisèle Bonne, together with her colleagues François Rivier and Dalil Hamroun. If readers are aware of new advances we would appreciate it if they could bring these to Gisèle’s attention for immediate inclusion in the online gene table.

The editorial board met most recently at the annual WMS congress in Mendoza, Argentina, in October. The overall acceptance rate for peer reviewed papers submitted to the journal has remained stable at around 27%. To expedite decisions for papers of borderline interest or quality, we introduced three years ago a fast track assessment process involving consultation with our EAEs. This has proved to be effective and the pre-peer review rejection rate is 38% this year, versus 28% last year.

Although the Journal was launched some five years ahead of the **World Muscle Society**, which adopted it as official journal, the fortunes of the two have been closely intertwined and we are grateful to our longstanding **Publishing Editor**, Peter Bakker, and our publishers, Elsevier, for their continued support of WMS through an annual royalty, currently around 20,000 euros, which has allowed us to provide at least 50 fellowships which have now been raised from 500 to 1000

euros, for the annual meeting for young researchers, and also for the six annual Elsevier prizes of 500 euros each for the best presentations by young researchers at the annual meeting, plus 20 runner-up prizes of one year's membership of WMS, inclusive of the Journal.

WMS continues to expand exponentially each year and it has become increasingly difficult in recent years to contain this expansion within our finite limits of retaining the interactive and personal nature of our meetings. It also has implications for finding appropriate venues away from the hurly burly and distractions of the major cities. Having passed our 500 ceiling over five years ago we are now having difficulty retaining a 750 ceiling.

We are extremely grateful to our Production Editor, Chloe Norris, for her excellent and unstinting support, with her great ability to resolve questions and challenges as they arise, and for her professional and friendly interaction.

Finally, words of appreciation and gratitude to Jane Miller, our longstanding, indefatigable Editorial Manager, who has been in the driving seat since the launch of Neuromuscular Disorders in 1991 and continues to keep the journal on track with her bubbling good humour, incredible efficiency and seemingly perpetual motion, despite recurrent external forces trying to derail it.

We live in remarkably dynamic and exciting times in the neuromuscular world. The very productive period of expansion and recognition of many new disorders and unravelling of many new genetic causes has now given way to the exciting developments on the therapeutic front with various new genetic techniques for attacking the root causes of the disorders with spectacular therapeutic successes in SMA. This is currently a very active area, on the crest of the wave, and is bound to expand dramatically in the years ahead.

The muscle fraternity has grown exponentially in the past few years and for the recent WMS congress in Mendoza we once again reached full capacity.

The 25th WMS Congress will see us back in Europe in beautiful Copenhagen, Denmark, hosted by John Vissing. Full details can be found in the back pages of this issue, and the website has already gone live for registration at www.wms2019.com. We are once again anticipating a full house so be wise and register early to avoid disappointment. Look forward to seeing you in Copenhagen.

Victor Dubowitz
Editor-in-Chief

Reviewers consulted 2018.

A. Abicht	O. Bodamer	L. Cripe	C. Fiorillo
P. Agrawal	M. Boentert	Z. Davidson	J. Florence
M. Aleman	G. Bonne	M. Davis	A.R. Foley
V. Allamand	J. Bourke	J. De Bleecker	B. Fontaine
B. Allard	A. Breiner	M. De Carvalho	D. Fürst
Y. Allenbach	S. Brown	C. De Lattre	E. Garcia-Arumí
H. Amthor	C. Bruno	M. De Visser	K. Gawlik
E. Androphy	A. Burghes	D. De Vivo	N.E. Gilhus
C. Angelini	G. Butler-Browne	N. Deconinck	T. Giugliano
B. Anlar	J. Böhm	F. Deymeer	A. Glanzman
Z. Argov	C. Campbell	J. Diaz Manera	H. Goebel
A. Atalaia	S. Cannon	M. Dimachkie	N. Goemans
S. Attarian	A. Capasso	S. Dittrich	N. Goyal
U. Badrising	V. Carelli	S. Donkervoort	S. Greenberg
N. Barisic	P. Carlier	J. Dowling	A. Guidon
R. Barresi	N. Carrillo	D. Drachman	J. Haberlova
R. Bauer	D. Castro	T. Dreher	P. Hackman
D. Beeson	A. Ceribelli	D. Duan	A. Hahn
L. Bello	A. Childs	A. Echaniz-Laguna	K. Hamanaka
R. Ben Yaou	P. Chinnery	T. Evangelista	E. Hammaren
O. Benveniste	L. Christopher-Stine	F. Evesson	Y. Hayashi
G. Bernert	K.W. Chung	A. Evoli	C. Heatwole
E. Bertini	E. Ciafaloni	B. Eymard	C. Hedberg-Oldfors
J.A. Bevilacqua	S. Cirak	M. Fanin	J. Hendriksen
S. Beydoun	K. Claeys	A. Fayssoil	B. Hervier
R. Bhatia	G. Comi	A. Ferlini	D. Hilton-Jones
S. Biliciler	M. Confalonieri	A. Ferreira	V. Hinton
L. Bindoff	S. Cook	R. Finkel	J. Hogrel
R. Bloch	S. Corbetta	J. Finsterer	R. Hohlfield

K. Hollingsworth	E. Malfatti	R. Orrell	A. Schenone
R. Horvath	M.C. Malicdan	O. Paciello	R. Schiffmann
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T. Hundsberger	P. Mandich	D. Pareyson	B. Schoser
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S. Iannaccone	R. Mantegazza	K. Patel	A. Schänzer
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A. Jordanova	K. Mathews	S. Perlman	S. Sebille
V. Juel	E. Matthews	J. Pesquero	T. Sejersen
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H. Kan	O. Mayer	S. Petrini	J. Senderek
P. Kannu	A. Mayhew	R. Phadke	P. Serdaroglu Oflazer
A. Ayse Karaduman	J. Mayr	A. Pichiecchio	S. Servidei
D. Kemaladewi	E. Mazzone	R. Piercy	C. Sewry
M. Kennerson	L. Mccann	G. Piluso	P. Sharma
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R. Kley	L. Merlini	P. Pradat	N. Staff
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F. Magri	A. Oldfors	J. Sarparanta	B. Valentine
I. Mahjneh	M. Olive	M. Savarese	J. Vallat
M. Malaguarnera	D. Orlikowski	U. Schara	S. Van der Maarel

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P. Van doorn	G. Vita	J. Wanschitz	J. Woodard
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