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Editorial

Here's to 2019, with an expanded reputation of *Annals of PRM*



On behalf of the editorial committee of the *Annals*, I wish a happy new year to all readers as well as authors and reviewers who contribute to the reputation of the journal. We hope to extend to 2019 the extraordinary success obtained in 2018. Indeed, the year 2018 will remain a milestone in the journal's history [1], with the establishment of its first impact factor (2017 IF), overall within the highest of the rehabilitation category: 5th/65 without self-citations and 6th otherwise. The SCImago metrics based on a 2-year window (citations/doc over 2 years) was also excellent, ranking the journal 9th/122 in the Rehabilitation category. Other SCImago metrics based on a 3-year window will follow this progression in 2019.

These excellent metrics award efforts since the journal's transformation in 2008, the first step being a bilingual version, then since 2015, the publications and editorial process entirely in English [2,3]. Many other changes were made to enhance the quality and international visibility of the journal. A journal steering committee was created, independent of the "Société Française de Médecine Physique et de Réadaptation" (SOFMER) board of directors. Its mission was to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the journal in light of the international scientific competition, objectively analyze bibliometric indicators, and make appropriate decisions to ensure more visibility of the published content. The editorial committee was restructured in terms of scientific merit and wide geographical representation, with international experts from all continents who were well recognized in their respective fields covering most rehabilitation professions. A novel editorial policy was defined and the scope of papers to be published in the *Annals* was defined. Good preliminary studies were published as letters to the editor, together with outstanding clinical cases and notes of scientific interest. Authors were strongly encouraged to register their studies in international databases and to follow international guidelines [4] (see instructions for authors). Authors were also strongly encouraged to declare any funding sources for their studies. Editors were particularly attentive regarding these requirements and ethical considerations. Meanwhile, the number of solicited reviews or update papers was increased, which allowed for the publication of 2 or 3 special issues (SI) per year. All SIs met with great success. Over 2 years, papers in the SI Osteoarthritis (editors F. Rannou & E. Coudeyre, 2016) were cited a mean of 11 times; papers in the SI Brain Computer Interface (I. Laffont & J. Luaute, 2015) were cited 7.5 times; papers in the SI Brain Plasticity and Motor Recovery after Stroke (P. Marque, G.

Rode, and D. Pérennou, 2014) were cited 6.2 times; papers in the SI Behavioral Disorders after Traumatic Brain Injury (J. Luaute & P. Azouvi, 2016) were cited 5 times; and papers in the SI Neuromodulation (N. Roche, B. Bussel, and D. Bensmail, 2015) were cited 4.8 times. The most recent SIs cannot be assessed yet but seem promising: Cardiovascular Rehabilitation (J.M. Casillas & V. Grémeaux, 2017), Spatial Cognition (G. Rode, P. Azouvi, D. Pérennou, 2017), France-Canada (S. Nadeau & P. Dehail, 2017 and 2018), and the last edited, Sounds and Rhythm in the Brain: Rehabilitation Perspectives (I. Laffont and S. Dalla Bella, 2018).

The number of submitted manuscripts multiplied by 6 in 10 years, reaching about 400 in 2018, with a sharp increase once the 3.4 IF was revealed after the fall adjustment by Clarivate Analytics. This could mean that the number might double in 2019, which is a new challenge. An incredible number of manuscripts are now being submitted to Rehabilitation journals besides the *Annals*. In 2017, 4200 articles were published in the 33 journals of the first half of the Rehabilitation Category of Journal Citation Report (JCR, Claryvate Analytics). The mean rejection rate of these 33 journals is 70%, so they may have received a total of 14,000 submissions, for about 25,000 submissions per year (in 2017) for the panel of journals indexed in the JCR and twice more if one considers the panel of journals indexed in the Rehabilitation category of the SCImago Database. With 2 reviewers per submitted manuscript, all manuscripts submitted to Rehabilitation journals annually would require 100,000 reviews, just for a first round of expertise. This explains why all editors of Rehabilitation journals share the difficulty of finding good reviewers available to deeply analyze papers on time. Because more and more journals want to speed up the review process, the pressure on reviewers is becoming a major problem. This situation might even alter the ultimate purpose of the review process – to maintain the integrity of science by filtering out invalid or poor-quality articles. Also because of space constraints, only a few submitted manuscripts may be published. Hence, the editors of the *Annals* have opted for a drastic reduction in selection of papers and send to reviewers only manuscripts with reasonable chance of being appreciated by reviewers, who are asked to help authors improve papers. Our peer review is now performed by international experts, and particular effort is made to shorten the editorial process and make the journal attractive in this regard. A first decision is reached at about 1 month, on average, after the submission. At the end of the editorial process, more than 80% of full papers spontaneously submitted (not solicited for a SI) are rejected.

Decisions regarding which articles will most benefit readers and improve patients' rehabilitation are sometimes difficult to make. Besides ensuring the robustness of methods, including a sufficient sample size and control conditions or control participants, as well as validity of the results, important factors considered are the uniqueness of the approach and novelty in the field, together with the quality of the writing and the clarity of the presentation and the main message (scientific or clinical). To deal with a massive inflow of manuscripts from all continents owing to the very good ranking of the journal in the field, the steering committee has decided to recruit new associate editors, privileging colleagues from Asia and Australasia, who are not yet represented. This will be a new step.

The firm and steady increase in the number of article downloads is yet another indicator of the success of the journal. The number of downloads has been multiplied by 5 in 5 years, and should reach 850,000 in 2018, originating mainly from (in decreasing order) the United States, France, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, China, Korea, Belgium, Italy etc. This extraordinary leap forward attests to the strong interest of the international readership for the papers published in the *Annals*. Our editors are delighted to see this evolution. We encourage authors and reviewers to sustain their efforts and help us continue to improve the quality of the *Annals*, a transdisciplinary journal of Rehabilitation establishing synergies between professions and fields, with an assumed orientation toward translational research.

Disclosure of interest

The author has not supplied his declaration of competing interest.

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