

Thorax: the prostate years

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Thorax had a good 2013. We were all buoyed by a large rise in our impact factor from 6.525 to 8.376, by far the largest rise seen in our specialty area, cementing our position as the second-ranked respiratory journal behind the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* (impact factor 11.041). We suspect this has led to an increase in submission of high-quality manuscripts and are hopeful that gains in impact factor will increase. In part our improved impact factor reflects a reduction in original articles published per edition from 10–12 to 8–10 with the introduction of new content published in the 'Chest Clinic' section aimed at the jobbing clinician without a major research interest. However, the tremendous hard work of the associate editors, deputy editors, reviewers and the editorial team and the high-quality manuscripts sent in by you, our readers, have been much more important and hugely appreciated factors.

The acceptance rate for original articles is now 11% and the overall acceptance rate is 23%. Editorial turnaround times continue to improve. The average time to first decision in 2013 was 19 days for all papers and the average time to first decision for reviewed papers was 40 days, a modest improvement from 2012. The instant reject rate has reduced from 43% to 37%. We have seen an increase in time from on-line publication to paper publication from 4 to 5 months, reflecting an increase in our backlog of accepted papers. This is something we are monitoring carefully.

A major new initiative in 2013 was to increase our on-line visibility; something not easy for editors-in-chief for whom the fountain pen is the acme of modern communication. We have appointed Tom Fardon from Dundee as our first 'e' associate editor. Tom has done a fantastic job starting up a *Thorax* blog and on-line forum. He set up very successful Twitter and Facebook sites coinciding with the

European Respiratory Society (ERS) meeting. The latter attracted a reach of 1093, making it the second most popular Facebook site at the meeting, behind the ERS's own site. The *Thorax* website has had a major revamp and now contains a large number of podcasts many of which were recorded by Jennifer Quint and other Specialist Registrars who have interviewed the primary author of articles featured in journal club. Please do take the time to check these out.

We have evaluated readers' views in a survey. Unsurprisingly, the number of readers accessing the journal in print form only continues to fall and those with exclusive on-line access increase. Views on content were generally very positive. Readers valued particularly the brief summary of recently published papers in journal club. In response to this feedback, we have introduced a new one-page summary of recent advances published in other journals called 'What's hot that the other lot got'. We thank Jennifer Quint for taking on the organisation of this. We have introduced a new subsection of our 'audit, research and guidelines updates' named Cochrane's corner dealing with brief summaries of important Cochrane reviews, National Institute of Health and Care Excellence reports and other systematic reviews. Please do consider submitting a manuscript of around 1500 words, five references (including one to the full review) and one table of figure. Additional material can be placed on-line.

We have continued to highlight important current issues in our Hot off the Breath section. We highlight an article by John Britton supporting the use of e-cigarettes as a step down from smoking¹ and our campaign against smoking with repeated digs at the government's lily-livered stand on plain packaging of cigarette packets in Airwaves. Expect more in this area in 2014, unless the government gets a grip (see that pink thing flying past the window?). We published very successful themed issues on tuberculosis and pneumonia in 2013, coinciding with the respective World Days, and plan a pulmonary vascular themed issue in February 2014 and an issue linked to the American Thoracic Society meeting in May. The

former will include a new format of review consisting of the top 10 issues a supraregional pulmonary vascular service has to deal with in the field of pulmonary thromboembolism. We like this format and would be delighted to receive other reviews from tertiary centres in the same vein. We continue to receive few suitable case-based discussions. Please do consider submitting a manuscript describing cases that make an important teaching point or illuminate disease pathogenesis; we are less interested in cases that are notable for their rarity value only. We will consider three formats: a clinical dialogue between clinicians; a lesson of the month and a response to a referral note. Please see the on-line instructions for authors for more information. From 2014 onwards, we will include the submitting institution in our title (ie, case-based discussion from the Glenfield Hospital).

Last year we awarded prizes for the editors² and deputy editors³ favourite papers. To commemorate the London Olympics and an amazing year of sport in 2012, we awarded gold, silver and bronze medals. 2013 has been an even more amazing year of sport with another British victory in the Tour de France, England victorious in the Ashes (twice!), a victory over the All Blacks by the England rugby team, Andy Murray becoming the first Brit for a lifetime to win Wimbledon and Justin Rose the first Englishman for half a lifetime to win the US Open golf championship. Most remarkably, one of your editors won the Lipscombe trophy for the best gross score in the British Thoracic Society Golf tournament for an unprecedented seventh consecutive year. To commemorate this remarkable year of sporting achievements, we will be awarding prizes again for our own major champions: the authors of the best adult clinical, paediatrics, epidemiology and basic science papers. The prize for most effective blowing of his own trumpet has already been awarded despite hot competition to our Lipscombe trophy winner, again for an unprecedented umpteenth years in a row. Please look out for reviews of 2013 by the editors and deputy editors announcing the other prize winners over the next few months.

We are approaching their fourth year of a 5-year term and have entered our prostate years; whether this will increase urgency or reduce stream remains to be seen. We continue to receive first class editorial support and excellent ideas on how to develop the journal from our team of

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associate editors and the editorial board. Ian Joseph Riñon has replaced Jam Gida as our editorial assistant. Both have done an amazing job dealing with often errant editors and (less often) badly behaved associate editors and authors. We thank them and you for your fantastic support in 2013 and wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2014.

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