Annual report

Rising impact, fast review: Annual Report October 1997 to September 1998

We are pleased to see *Thorax* back as the respiratory journal with the highest impact factor in Europe (2.3, ISSN Statistics 1998). This undoubtedly reflects the high quality of submitted papers. Our review system is still working extremely quickly. The median time to first decision was 56 days for full papers and 24 days for short papers, which compares favourably with last year's figures and is a marked improvement on previous years (table 1).¹ We believe that this decision time is by far the most rapid of any respiratory journal. Our policy of only accepting the best papers² is reflected again in the acceptance rate which, for papers submitted in the year up to 30 September 1998, will be somewhere midway between 15% and 45% (table 2). The number of original papers is down slightly (table 3),¹⁻³ with the UK and Western Europe being the main source of our manuscripts (table 4).¹⁻³ *Thorax* is an international journal and we are keen to increase the number of papers that we publish from other parts of the world. In keeping with this approach we have expanded the international advisory board in an attempt to make it more representative of worldwide respiratory medicine. We would therefore encourage contributors from North, Central and South America, Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Australasia to think about *Thorax* for their work.

Last year saw the publication of important guidelines on the management of respiratory diseases including tuberculosis⁴ and lung cancer.⁵ In conjunction with guidelines on COPD,⁶ asthma,⁷ and nebulisers⁸ which were published in 1997, these serve as a useful concise source of current wisdom in respiratory medicine. 1998 saw the end of the highly successful *Science Matters* series⁹ with continuation of the review series on passive smoking¹⁰ and

Table 4 Geographical distribution of submissions

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
UK	253	291	320	303	265
Western Europe	220	266	264	236	242
Spain	50	46	42	45	44
The Netherlands	35	51	44	49	41
Italy	28	38	48	19	38
France	19	27	28	24	27
Turkey	15	13	14	22	20
Israel	15	20	17	15	10
Eire	13	10	8	7	5
Switzerland	12	10	13	9	5
Germany	11	16	26	23	20
Belgium	9	17	12	11	10
Greece	9	7	7	6	15
Austria	3	7	5	5	3
Portugal	1	3	0	0	2
Malta	0	1	0	0	2
USA and Canada	100	101	71	84	76
Japan	47	65	53	64	46
Australasia	32	38	31	60	48
Scandinavia	27	36	32	39	36
Asia	22	34	26	26	35
Eastern Europe	6	7	10	3	6
South America	5	14	10	3	3
Africa	5	7	4	4	3
Middle East	4	13	5	9	5

new review series on lung infections¹¹ and genetics,¹² in addition to a supplement on sleep disordered breathing¹³ and important articles on coal mining and COPD.^{14 15} The Year in Review supplement¹⁶ also seems to have been well received by the respiratory community. The letters section of the journal continues to be a forum for active debate and we would encourage people to send us their opinions on articles and editorials that we publish.

Overall, 1998 was a very successful year for *Thorax*. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the associate editors for maintaining the high standard of the journal and the excellent support from the BMJ Publications staff, Elizabeth Stockman who has provided technical editing to a consistently high standard despite relocating in Bermuda and Rachel Orme who has run the editorial office superbly well despite the foibles of the executive editors. We would also like to thank the Year in Review editors and contributors for producing the goods yet again and the members of the advisory board and referees whose vital contribution is gratefully acknowledged on page 94. Most of all we thank the contributors for continuing to send high quality work to *Thorax*. We appeal to researchers around the world: send us your papers, we will give you a quick review and, if accepted, your paper is likely to be widely cited.

A J KNOX
J BRITTON
Executive Editors

Table 1 Median time to first decision (days)

	1995/6	1996/7	1997/8
Full papers	74	44.5	56
Short papers	82	38	24

Table 2 Decision on papers submitted 1997/8 as at 30 September 1998

	Case reports	Papers	Short papers	Rapid communications
Total	211	398	31	7
Rejected	177 (84%)	217 (55%)	22 (71%)	3 (43%)
Accepted	12 (6%)	59 (15%)	6 (19%)	3 (43%)
Pending	22 (10%)	121 (30%)	3 (10%)	1 (14%)

Table 3 Articles submitted by category

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Original papers	410	493	415	411	398
Case reports	242	252	247	212	211
Short papers	14	48	51	40	31
Editorials/reviews	34	38	38	53	81
Review series	6	18	31	26	13
Supplement articles	12	16	41	29	17
Case report commentaries	3	7	11	7	7
Rapid communications	—	—	5	5	7
Total	721	872	839	783	765

1 Knox AJ, Britton JR. Annual Report October 1996 to September 1997. *Thorax* 1997;52:1023.

2 Britton JR, Knox AJ. *Thorax*: from the new Editorial Office. *Thorax* 1996;51:561.

3 Britton JR, Knox AJ. Annual Report October 1995 to September 1996. *Thorax* 1996;51:1177.

4 Joint Tuberculosis Committee of the British Thoracic Society. Chemotherapy and management of tuberculosis in the United Kingdom: recommendations 1998. *Thorax* 1998;53:536-48.

- 5 Lung Cancer Working Party of the British Thoracic Society Standards of Care Committee. BTS recommendations to respiratory physicians for organising the care of patients with lung cancer. *Thorax* 1998;53(Suppl 1):S1–S8.
- 6 British Thoracic Society. BTS guidelines for the management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. *Thorax* 1997;52(Suppl 5):S1–S28.
- 7 British Thoracic Society, *et al.* The British guidelines on asthma management: 1995 review and position statement. *Thorax* 1997;52(Suppl 1):S1–S21.
- 8 British Thoracic Society. Current best practice for nebuliser treatment. *Thorax* 1997;52(Suppl 2):S1–106.
- 9 Rogers DF, Laurent GJ. New ideas on the pathophysiology and treatment of lung disease. *Thorax* 1998;53:200–3.
- 10 Britton JR, Weiss ST. Health effects of passive smoking: introduction. *Thorax* 1997;52:904.
- 11 Hill S. Lung infections: introduction. *Thorax* 1998;53:57.
- 12 Britton J, Hopkin J. Genetics and pulmonary medicine: introduction. *Thorax* 1998;53:388.
- 13 Fleetham JA, ed. The cardiovascular implications of sleep disordered breathing. *Thorax* 1998;53(Suppl 3):S1–S54.
- 14 Rudd R. Coal miners' respiratory disease litigation. *Thorax* 1998;53:337–40.
- 15 Coggon D, Taylor AN. Coal mining and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: a review of the evidence. *Thorax* 1998;53:398–407.
- 16 Hendrick DJ, Mitchell DM, eds. 1998 Year in Review: selected topics in respiratory medicine from 1997. *Thorax* 1998;53(Suppl 2):S1–S72.