Celebrating 35 Years of Success

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In 2014, we celebrate the 35th birthday of Hypertension, with the journal firmly maintaining its position as a premier journal devoted to basic or clinical hypertension research. Our 2012 impact factor was 6.873, and the cited half-life for Hypertension was 8 years.

Previous Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of Hypertension, Dr John Hall, summarized the history of our journal in his two editorial contributions. However, he said little about his own excellent and sustained 10-year stewardship of Hypertension.

This brief Editorial will focus on 2 closely related topics: the close collaboration between the American Heart Association Council for High Blood Pressure Research and Hypertension and the outstanding contributions of Dr John Hall, EIC, between 2002 and 2011.

The journal Hypertension came into being in 1979, thanks in large part to the inspiration and determination of an early Chair of the High Blood Pressure Council, Dr Louis Tobian, who was seeking a special project to mark his tenure as Chair. In the very first issue of the journal, then EIC Dr Harriet Dustan noted that one important role of the journal would be to publish the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Council for High Blood Pressure Research either as one of the regular issues or as a supplement. From that time forward, the Council leadership and Hypertension have enjoyed a close and mutually beneficial working relationship focused on the understanding and control of hypertension. In fact, the early success of the journal “was attributed in large part to the support of the Council for High Blood Pressure Research….” Conversely, the Editors of Hypertension have consistently strived to make the journal an important vehicle for achieving the overall mission of the American Heart Association and especially that of the Council for High Blood Pressure Research. In recent years, the formal partnership between the Council on the Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease and the Council for High Blood Pressure Research has further encouraged nephrologists and other renal specialists to make Hypertension an important publishing home.

The modern era of scientific publishing (with thousands of competing journals, emphasis on fast turnaround times for authors, open-access publishing, renewed emphasis on impact factor) has produced new challenges for the Editors of Hypertension and for the scientists and clinicians who read the journal and publish their best work there. How do we continue to have Hypertension be the premier, must-read journal in the field while still serving the broader mission of the American Heart Association and its Councils? Fortunately, the current Editorial Board and Council leadership have maintained the practice established many years ago of open and frank communication. This is enabled especially by regular attendance and reports by the EIC (or her representative) at Council Leadership meetings and other activities. The recent strategic planning process of the Councils also included in-depth consideration of the Council’s past and future relationship with the journal and how it can be strengthened to everyone’s benefit. Therefore, it is anticipated that even in today’s more complicated publishing climate, Hypertension will not only continue to be the venue for the very best research in the fields of hypertension pathophysiology and clinical management, but in addition remain a critical participant in the larger mission of the Council for High Blood Pressure Research.

This close working relationship between Hypertension and the 2 American Heart Association Councils had been made stronger during Dr Hall’s editorship. Dr John Hall was the first EIC who was not an MD, and as with everything he does, he gave his best to being EIC of Hypertension. He was well aware that being at
the helm of the journal that published both basic and clinical science papers would be challenging. John’s aim was to improve the performance while maintaining the balance between excellent clinical and basic science. Having established his vision for the journal, he never wavered and never looked back.

In addition to regular academic duties at his institution, Dr. Hall would spend at least 4 to 5 hours a day on Hypertension, including weekends. His exceptional dedication and work ethic helped him to reach his ambitious goals for the journal. Dr. Hall felt that it was his and the Editors’ job to ensure that the authors received the quickest possible decisions while maintaining absolute fairness of the editorial process. For example, the review times from submission to first decision dropped from 4 to 2 weeks, where it remained throughout his tenure as EIC (Figure 1). The speed of publication also improved under his editorship, with the online published ahead of print articles available at 4 weeks and the time to print reduced to 7.6 weeks (Figure 2).

In summary, the period of Dr. Hall’s leadership was made remarkable by his and his entire team’s continuous striving for perfection and excellence. The current editorial team has been trying to continue this outstanding tradition from January 1, 2012.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all past EICs (Figure 3), Associate Editors, Consulting Editors, Guest Editors, Editorial Board Members, and our excellent community of referees, authors, and readers. Our mission is to be the best hypertension journal in the world (Figure 4) for many years to come.

Happy Birthday Hypertension.

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References
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