

EDITORIAL

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A scientific manifesto for a new 5-year period: a new horizon for Pneumonia

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Pneumonia has a new editor-in-chief for the next five years. I received the communication of this key news in my personal career at the end of the 2023. An honor but also a great responsibility.

My previous activity as Associate and Methodological editor of important scientific journals in the field of clinical medicine, respiratory and infectious diseases has provided to me with a crucial background in the editorial field. My research activity has helped me understand the importance of the study findings for the routine life.

The content of my first Editorial as Editor-in-Chief of *Pneumonia* includes my welcome to the editorial board and to the readers.

The present Editorial was intended to be written at the beginning of my mandate, but the decision to postpone it was related to the assessment of the health status of the Journal, based on one of the core publishing indicators, the impact factor (IF), which has increased to 8.5 for the year 2023, including citations of the years 2021 and 2022, and to the update of the members of the Editorial Board. The increase is a successful step for the Journal, and merits should be highlighted to the editorial team, including the former Editors-in-Chief and the board of the Associate Editors who selected excellent articles cited several times by other scientific journals.

The idea of a continuous process of renewal of the Associate Editors is aimed at improving the performance of the Journal, at increasing the expertise of the editorial

board in old and new areas of research, at enhancing the inclusivity (e.g., geographical with scientists from low- and middle-income countries, gender-related, etc.).

The main objective of a scientific journal should be the dissemination of the medical and scientific knowledge aimed at improving the management of the patients, health preservation and strengthening. Its target readership should be healthcare professionals, advocates, policymakers, and patients.

It would seem superfluous to point out, but the quality of this knowledge should be highest: from its content depends the quality of the healthcare and the future of the scientific research which is based on a continuous process of trial and error. The scientific research is characterized by two interconnected fields: one oriented to the identification of the cause/s and mechanisms of a disease and the other to the assessment of new therapeutic and preventative interventions. Then, *Pneumonia* is the natural home for basic, translational, and clinical research for all respiratory infections, whose epidemiological burden is relevant worldwide, especially focusing on pneumonia which is the “core business” of the Journal. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic clearly highlights the importance of the infectious diseases field, frequently underestimated by some scientists and policymakers. This means that the research in the field of respiratory infections should be scaled-up: new energy should be continuously provided on what a clinical problem is and how to manage it.

Pneumonia is a clinical and public health issue: the community-acquired and the healthcare forms represent a daily challenge in high- and low-income countries. More attention should be deserved to the continuous and systematic collection of epidemiological data to better

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describe the burden and discover clinical, social, and economic determinants worldwide. More experimental studies should be carried out to identify rapid, sensitive, and specific diagnostic tools, new effective therapeutic and preventive molecules to improve the prognosis of at-risk individuals. On this basis, *Pneumonia* will assess new studies aimed at addressing key gaps of knowledge in the pneumonia field.

This is the legacy of Professor Allan Cripps who deceased in 2022 and founded this Journal: during a 40-year period his intellectual contribution and love for mucosal immunology, especially for that related to childhood infections, for vaccine development, and for diagnostic technology paved the way for high-quality research in the Journal.

Today we collect this heritage with renewed spirit and scientific dedication.

Scientific publishing is in a magmatic state where poor-quality research is increasing pushed by business of some editorial companies and aims for academic career advancement. Scientific ethics should be highlighted every time and everywhere, because the final scope of research and of the editorial process is improving medical understanding, knowledge, and awareness of both the scientific and societal communities to ameliorate health conditions, policies, clinical and public health practices, to transform health attitudes and behaviors worldwide.

The open access approach of the Springer Nature editorial group is the best solution to achieve those goals, being intended to increase the visibility of key scientific results and enlarge the readership, involving those minorities who were excluded in the recent past for economic, financial, cultural, religious, philosophic, political, racial and ethnic issues.

What should you expect from this 5-year term?

New editorial formats will be implemented and more room will be given to those successfully adopted until now: editorials on critical topics and accompanying relevant articles, original articles, research letters and correspondences for the scientific debate, as well as an agora format which simulates the squares of ancient Greece for a comparison of pros and cons and opinions on hot topics, and a forum on media contents.

The editorial team is trying to address scientific research needs of readers and scientist authors, for instance by speeding up the immediate and after-review response for a submitted manuscript and favoring and supporting preprints. As the COVID-19 pandemics has proved, a faster publication process is needed, ensuring the quality of the scientific findings.

The performance of the Journal could be evaluated using several, internationally recognized, publishing indicators and rapidity of the peer-review process: they could

drive and fascinate both authors and readers on reliability and trust of the scientific materials in the infectious and respiratory disease fields.

More attention should be devoted to the recruitment of peer-reviewers: the complicated editorial setting and the busy routine life have dramatically reduced the availability of excellent and expert peer-reviewers; more responsibility will rely on the Associate Editors and the Editor-in-Chief in the assessment of the submitted manuscripts and in the invitation to publish articles in the Journal.

We would like to improve the relationship with international organizations (such as World Health Organization, US-CDC and ECDC) and international and national scientific societies, supporting their research, advocacy, and scientific needs aimed at the respiratory health.

Apart from clinical and experimental subjects, more room will be given to public health aspects of respiratory infections: vaccines, infection control, antibiotic resistance, One Health, climate crisis, and their relationship with respiratory infections, will be welcome.

Authors' contributions

GS wrote the article.

Declarations

Competing interests

AZ, Quiagen, Insmad, Pfizer. The author declares no competing interests.

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