

PEER REVIEW - 2015

JA Platt, Editor

The dental scientific literature is being challenged as a rapidly increasing number of “peer-reviewed” journals strains the ability of the qualified reviewer pool to meet the demand. (In 2014, Thomas Reuters Journal Citation Reports assigned an Impact Factor for 88 dental journals. Five years earlier, they rated only 64.) In addition to this expanding group of traditional publications is a large number of recently introduced online journals. Just as with print journals, online publications demonstrate a wide range of scientific rigor and review. Some of them deserve and are receiving support from reviewers.

Significant changes are also occurring within the reviewer pool. In some places in the world, such as the United States, the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty has greatly decreased. It is this group which has provided significant peer-review support over the past decades. Many of the recently hired younger faculty come on board as clinical track faculty with little incentive to be involved with research and the peer review process. Oftentimes, the new faculty have minimal previous research experience and no desire to participate as reviewers.

These factors (increasing journals and decreasing reviewers) result in fewer people being asked to carry a greater load in providing peer review oversight of our literature. When I gather with other

editors, a common topic of conversation is the shortage of qualified and willing reviewers. Clearly, the future of peer review, and how it is accomplished, is being challenged. Thankfully, *Operative Dentistry* continues to benefit from the dedicated service of a large number of volunteer reviewers who provide important feedback for the authors of manuscripts to improve the content and presentation of information. Reviewers also provide critical information for the editor as ultimate publication decisions are made for each article. Of the 504 articles submitted to this journal over the past year, a total of 120 articles were accepted. Each article had at least two reviewers who worked with the authors and the editorial team to improve, and then approve the submission. To be done well, this task requires significant effort and a commitment to excellence.

I remain extremely grateful to the group of scientists and clinicians who provide this critical service. What follows is a list of people who have provided reviews for us over the past year. I thank each one of them. And you, as a reader of *Operative Dentistry*, if you know any of these people, give them your thanks as well. They are a committed group of volunteers working diligently to maintain the integrity of peer review!