

Osteoarthritis and Cartilage



Editorial

Changing of the guard: OAC in transition



This issue of *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage* marks a significant transition. A new editorial team is in place for only the third time in its history. At such moments, it is useful to review past accomplishments as a preface to commenting on plans for the coming years. OAC published its first issue in January 1993, printing the proceedings of the first OARSI Congress. It was a quarterly publication until 1997, when it expanded to six issues annually, and ultimately became a monthly publication in 2001. Roy Altman, the founding Editor-in-Chief, established it as a premier source of research in OA. He shepherded the growth of the journal until he was succeeded by Stefan Lohmander in 2008, who continued to greatly expand the reputation and reach of OAC. From relatively recent beginnings, the journal now attracts more than 900 submissions annually, and supported more than 1,000,000 full-text downloads in 2015 alone. The leadership of Professors Altman and Lohmander has resulted in a widely respected and cited source of peer reviewed literature in the area of osteoarthritis and cartilage biology, and OAC has certainly become the primary multidisciplinary forum for such reports.

This is an exciting time for those of us who study osteoarthritis. As the disease grows ever more prevalent with the aging of populations worldwide, osteoarthritis has attracted dramatically increased interest among biomedical investigators. A PubMed search revealed that the number of publications identified by the keyword “osteoarthritis” has increased more than six-fold in the last two decades, from 753 in 1990–4559 in 2015 alone, and in total, more than 155,000 publications are identified by “osteoarthritis” or “cartilage” through 2015. Our field encompasses a remarkably broad community of disciplines and interests. To some, the name “*Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*” may appear either anachronistic or unnecessarily restrictive; after all, our understanding of osteoarthritis has long ago progressed to account for involvement of all structures of the joint, and indeed, even of the entire organism. Nonetheless, OAC has always published contributions focused on all aspects of osteoarthritis, and as our concept of the disease process evolves, we will continue to seek out contributions that span the entire discipline. Some areas that have taken on greater importance in the last few years are osteoarthritis-mediated pain, the inflammatory component of OA, clinical trials of novel therapeutics, and the interpretation of novel imaging modalities. We have named Associate Editors with expertise in each of these fields, along with other focus areas that have not been highly represented in our pages previously, and we encourage submissions in these and all areas of osteoarthritis research. As the universe of OA investigation expands, OAC remains ideally positioned to publish the most interesting papers among this large pool, and we look forward enthusiastically to the ever-expanding interest in our field.

Readers will notice a great deal of continuity in the new editorial leadership, as well as some significant additions. I am pleased to welcome two new Deputy Editors to the team, Ewa Roos and Frank Beier. In addition, statistical inference has become increasingly critical to scientific reporting, and ensuring the validity of statistical usage has become more complex. To reflect this expanding need, a new role has been created, that of Associate Editor for Statistics, and George Luta and Aleksandra Turkiewicz have agreed to serve in this role. Each brings extensive expertise in varied statistical models. In addition, look for an updated Web presence and a substantially larger footprint in the world of social media, and expect a far more interactive online experience, especially with regard to correspondence to the editors. To facilitate this transition, Ali Mobasheri has agreed to become the Associate Editor for Social Media and Correspondence; feel free to email Ali with your ideas and suggestions about how to optimize this function. A component of our modernized Web presence will also include an improved author interface; within the year, a quicker and more modern system for submitting and reviewing manuscripts will be live.

The readership of *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*, and the osteoarthritis community in general, owe a great debt to Stefan Lohmander and to his leadership team of Joanne Jordan, Wim van den Berg, and Jonas Ranstam. They were remarkable stewards of the journal and oversaw a period of dramatic growth in its volume and importance. While we have large shoes to fill, the new team is excited about the opportunities in a rapidly changing scientific and clinical environment, and we look forward to continuing the growth and the influence of *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage* in the coming years.

Conflict of interest

There are no relevant conflicts to disclose.

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