

Editorial

Surging ahead



2017 was a very successful year for *RBMOnline*, most notably with the announcement of an Impact Factor of 3.249, the highest yet achieved by the journal since its inclusion in the ranking nearly 10 years ago, and matched by improvements in other ranking metrics such as CiteScore, Article Influence and SNIP. This outcome reflects the increased quality of the papers published in the journal and places it in sixth position in the ranking of reproductive biology titles. As part of the continuing development of the journal, we welcomed Richard Anderson to the team of editors [Anderson, 2017], joining Mina Alikani, Juan Garcia Velasco and Martin Johnson, and allowing the Chief Editor more time to focus on strategic considerations. After the considerable changes to the structure of the Editorial Panel in 2016 [Fauser, 2016], there were fewer subsequent changes this year, but most notably we thank a long-standing member of the editorial panel, Thomas Pool, for all of his hard work over the many years of his involvement with the journal, most recently as a section editor for clinical embryology, and we look forward to our continuing collaboration with him as a member of the emeritus editorial board. He is replaced by Henry Malter, whom we welcome as a new section editor. We also welcome TC Li, previously a member of the editorial board, as an additional section editor for infertility.

In addition to these editorial changes, the post of Digital Communication Officer was created to support Elsevier's existing activities on social (and other) media and to provide the editors with a new way of highlighting the journal's content. Thus, Kimberley Byron-Dodd joined the team to launch the @RBMOnline twitter account and to liaise with the press and other media outlets. As an adjunct to this, the *RBMOnline Digest* was launched, a quarterly summary of key papers in the journal delivered by email – an easily accessible form. We hope that these new activities will help to bring the exciting research reported in the journal to as wide a readership as possible and to highlight the journal's particular approach to curating its content.

In a further development in 2017, *RBMOnline* became officially affiliated with the annual Congress on Controversies in Obstetrics, Gynecology & Infertility (COGI), with the establishment of a session at each annual congress dedicated to showcasing some of the best work published in *RBMOnline*, and an opportunity for delegates to subscribe to the journal at a preferential rate. The inaugural session at the 2017 COGI meeting in Vienna provided a platform for the winner

and selected runners-up of the 2016 Robert G Edwards Prize Paper Award to present their work. Now entering its eighth year, this annual Award has become an established and welcome element in the range of activities of our journal. The papers published in 2016 resulted in a long-list of 12 papers, that was reduced to a short-list of 4 papers by our section editors, any one of which would have been a distinguished recipient of the award, but the truly outstanding article chosen by our senior editorial panel to receive the award was *MicroRNA miR-200b affects proliferation, invasiveness and stemness of endometriotic cells by targeting ZEB1, ZEB2 and KLF4* by Eggers et al. [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rbmo.2015.12.013>]. Remarks from section editors about this paper included: 'An excellently designed and executed mechanism study on endometriotic qualities and characteristics', 'Novel and improves our understanding of the etiology and disease characteristics of endometriosis, a highly significant disease of complex, uncharacterized etiology.', 'Potentially will provide a useful marker and possible therapeutic target for the enigmatic disease – endometriosis.', and 'Lovely paper brings mechanistic insights into micro RNA biology in a very common clinical condition.' We congratulate the winning and short-listed authors for their excellent contributions to our journal! Work will now start to select the best paper from those published in 2017. Further information about the selection process and past winners can be found on the *RBMOnline* website [www.rbmojournal.com and <http://www.rbmojournal.com/content/prizepaper>].

Choice of a winning paper becomes harder each year as the submission rate of high-quality papers continues to increase – possibly in part as a direct consequence of the developments described above – having reached 704 by the end of October in 2017 compared with 608 for the same period in 2016, an increase of 15%. This is inevitably accompanied by a high rejection rate – currently running at around 75% – the latter posing a difficulty for us as we strive to help authors to improve the quality of content and presentation via constructive reviewing, suggestions for revision and robust adjudication. To help us at the outset of this task we increasingly recommend to authors whose native language is not English that they use the Elsevier English Language Editing Service, available at www.webshop.elsevier.com.

With more papers comes the need for more reviewers, particularly those who can support our efforts to reduce the time from submission to publication. Encouraging potential reviewers to accept

invitations to review, and to provide comments in a timely fashion, is an important part of the publication process (Fauser, 2017). The Elsevier Reviewer Recognition platform, launched for *RBMOnline* at the end of 2015, contributes to this effort by offering reviewers the opportunity to compile a formal record of reviewing activity for both Elsevier and non-Elsevier journals and to create a public review profile. More information is provided at www.reviewerrecognition.elsevier.com.

Notwithstanding the increase in submissions, readers may have noticed that we are publishing fewer papers arising from the study of social and cultural implications of new reproductive technologies. Papers in this burgeoning field are now largely finding a home in our new journal, *Reproductive BioMedicine and Society Online* (RBMS), an online-only, open-access publication (www.rbms.com) launched in June 2015 (Franklin and Johnson, 2015) and now in its fifth volume (Franklin, 2017). It is the policy of both journals that the preferred journal for publishing such papers will continue to be RBMS, as RBMS gains in stature and also gains recognition by relevant ranking agencies.

Our editorial panels constitute a veritable *Who's Who* of assisted reproduction! The members help us with advice and refereeing, and to all of them we express our thanks for their commitment to *RBMOnline*. Our reviewers and authors are our life-blood and we thank all the past year's reviewers by name in the prelims. Thanks also to the staff at Elsevier, led by Greyling Peoples, for their continuing commitment to the efficient production and promotion of the journal. Finally, the editors would like to express their appreciation to Kamal Ahuja and the Board of Reproductive Healthcare Ltd for their continuing moral and financial support for the journal, and to Eddie Kuan and David Hoskins in particular.

And last, but certainly not least, the editorial office staff remains dedicated to the production of our first-rate journals. Caroline

Blackwell, as ever, has been the mainstay of the office, keeping the editors on track, and, as the public face of the journals, bearing the brunt of enquiries and fronting the stand at the ESHRE meeting in Geneva. Our deepest thanks to Caroline for all her dedicated hard work! The submission rate continues to be healthy, a challenging task for her, and for Catherine Field and Maria Murphy in the editorial office, to whom likewise we extend our deepest thanks.

At the brink of a new year, we look forward to further growth and development for *RBMOnline* and RBMS in the months ahead, and we wish a productive and exciting 2018 to all our contributors, editors, reviewers and, of course, our readers!

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