

EDITORIAL

Another new year



2018 was another successful year for *RBMO*. As part of the continuing development of the journal, we have strengthened the team of editors to include Chris Barratt, Felice Petraglia and René Eijkemans, who join Mina Alikani, Richard Anderson, Juan Garcia Velasco and Martin Johnson, allowing the Chief Editor, Bart Fauser, more time to focus on strategic considerations. Profiles of the new editors will appear in a subsequent issue. After considerable changes to the structure of the Editorial Panel in 2016, there have been fewer recent changes, but most notably we thank a long-standing member of the Editorial Panel, Nils Lambalk, for all of his hard work over the many years of his involvement with the journal, most recently as a Section Editor for the section 'Periconception, pregnancy, children outcomes'. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with him as a member of the Emeritus Editorial Board and wish him well as newly appointed Editor-in-Chief of *Human Reproduction*. We also welcome Virginia Bolton, previously a member of the Editorial Board, as an additional Section Editor for clinical embryology.

A major change in 2018 was the adoption of a new format and cover design, beginning with the September issue, which we hope you all appreciate. We felt that the format of the journal no longer reflected our aspirations for it: innovative and on the forefront of new developments in reproduction. We considered many options, and we are all extremely happy with the end result. It is different, creative, modern and eye-catching. In particular, we are pleased to have commissioned original artwork for our covers that will feature over the years to come. We have also modified the name of our journal from *RBMO Online* to *RBMO*, with a consequent new logo. Being 'online' was really something new in 2000 when the journal was launched, but this – of course – is no longer a distinctive feature. We hope that you, our

esteemed readers, will like the new look of the journal as much as we do.

The past year also saw the move of the editorial office from its original home at Duck End Farm in Dry Drayton, where our founding editor, Bob Edwards, lived with his family and from where he launched the journal some 18 years ago, to Bourn Hall, where he established the first-ever IVF clinic with Patrick Steptoe and Jean Purdy. This move continues to emphasize the link with our founding editor and with IVF itself.

Our official affiliation with the World Congress on Controversies in Obstetrics, Gynecology and Infertility (COGI), inaugurated in 2017, was again celebrated with a session at the 26th Congress in London in November dedicated to showcasing some of the best work published in *RBMO*. In addition a special lecture marking the 40th anniversary of the birth of Louise Brown, sponsored by the Edwards and Steptoe Research Trust, was given by Katie Dow who presented a talk entitled *The birth of the first 'test tube baby' in the British press* based on her paper published in *RBMO's* companion journal *RBMS* ([https://www.rbmsociety.com/article/S2405-6618\(17\)30019-9/pdf](https://www.rbmsociety.com/article/S2405-6618(17)30019-9/pdf)). *RBMO* marked the anniversary by publishing a special online-only collection of selected key historical papers from *RBMO* and *RBMS* relating to the events leading up to the birth of Louise Brown, including the paper by Katie Dow (available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/reproductive-biomedicine-online/special-issue/10J76S2B3MX>).

We are delighted to announce that the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society and the Academy of Clinical Embryologists, India have become additional affiliated societies. We look forward to working with them.

The Robert G Edwards Prize Paper Award, now entering its ninth year, is an established and welcome element in

the range of activities of our journal. A long-list of 9 papers published in 2017 was reduced to a short-list of 5 by our section editors. Any one of these would have been a worthy recipient of the award, but the truly outstanding article chosen by our senior editorial panel to receive the award was by Chloë De Roo and co-workers entitled *Ovarian tissue cryopreservation in female-to-male transgender people: insights into ovarian histology and physiology after prolonged androgen treatment* ([https://www.rbmojournal.com/article/S1472-6483\(17\)30140-2/pdf](https://www.rbmojournal.com/article/S1472-6483(17)30140-2/pdf)). Remarks from section editors about this paper included: 'This study demonstrates a normal cortical follicle distribution in trans men (female-to-male) after more than a year's treatment with testosterone. This, apart from providing information about the maintenance of the reproductive potential in these individuals, also gives background information for the performance of studies on ovarian physiology.', 'This was an important publication providing guidance in an emerging area of human fertility preservation.', 'Androgen supplementation is increasingly used. The paper gives us an insight in the pathophysiology of follicular recruitment under androgen treatment.', '... an important publication providing guidance in an emerging area of human fertility preservation.', and '... one top candidate due to basic descriptive info it provides and the contemporary nature of the question.' 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 2018. Further information about the selection process and past winners can be found on the *RBMO* website (www.rbmojournal.com).

Choice of a winning paper becomes harder each year as the submission rate of high-quality papers reported last year has continued this year, reaching 708 by the end of October in 2018 compared with 700 for the same period

in 2017. This is inevitably accompanied by a high rejection rate – currently running at around 80% – 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, 2016). The Elsevier Reviewer Recognition platform, launched for RBMO 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.

An issue of concern for both the editors and the authors has been the delay between acceptance of a paper and its appearance online, due to the process of careful checking of each paper before it is made available to readers – something that we and indeed many of our authors consider a very responsible exercise. It is not a practice that we intend to change for the final published version of papers, but we have taken the decision to publish papers online immediately following acceptance, before these checks take place, so as to make papers available at the earliest opportunity in this fast-moving field. We are confident that this, together with measures to increase the throughput of papers, will ensure timely publication of submissions in the future.

Notwithstanding the increase in submissions, readers may have noticed that we are publishing fewer papers

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 companion journal, *RBMS* (*Reproductive BioMedicine and Society Online*), an online-only, open-access publication (www.rbms.com) launched in June 2015 (Franklin and Johnson, 2015) and now in its seventh volume. 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! They help us with advice and refereeing, and to all of them we express our thanks for their commitment to *RBMO*. Our reviewers and authors are our life-blood and we thank all the past year's reviewers by name in this issue. 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. Our thanks go to the team in the Editorial Office, namely Caroline Blackwell, Catherine Field and Maria Murphy. We would also like to thank Esther Pickard, who has provided excellent support to Caroline during 2018. Our thanks also to Kimberley Byron-Dodd, Digital Communications Officer for her input throughout 2017 and 2018.

At the cusp of a new year, we look forward to further growth and development for *RBMO* and *RBMS* in the months ahead, and we wish a productive and exciting 2019 to all our contributors, editors, reviewers and, of course, our readers!

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