
Editorial

Back to Boston!

Gordon C. Weir

Forty-five years ago the journal *Diabetes* was born in Boston under the editorship of Dr. Frank N. Allan. As recounted in an excellent history of *Diabetes* by a former editor, Dr. R. Paul Robertson (1), the first volume contained a description of the origins of the journal by Dr. Elliott P. Joslin. It seems fitting that *Diabetes* is finally returning to Boston with its editorial office based at the Joslin Diabetes Center.

Our 6-month shakedown cruise is now over, and we are on our own. On July 1, new manuscripts started to arrive in Boston, as the St. Louis office continued to handle the old ones. The St. Louis team has been extraordinarily helpful to us both in providing such a fine example in how to run a journal and in generously advising us about countless large and small details. I particularly want to thank the recent editors, Drs. Philip E. Cryer and Julio V. Santiago, the editorial assistant, Mary Weis, and another former editor, Dr. R. Paul Robertson, for their availability and wise counsel. My great fortune is to be joined by an outstanding group of associate editors consisting of Drs. Barbara E. Corkey, Edward S. Horton, C. Ronald Kahn, George L. King, Andrzej Krolewski, Arthur A. Like, David M. Nathan, and Neil Ruderman. Our editorial office, managed by Debbie Moskowitz and her assistant Kathleen Gaden, has guided the transition period beautifully. We also appreciate the support of Mark Leader, Peter Banks, and Susan Lau of the publications staff of the American Diabetes Association.

Our task is not just to keep *Diabetes* in its position as the most prestigious journal in its field but to make it even better. The fundamentals are obvious: we must maintain the most rigorous scientific standards, make important decisions about which articles are most appropriate for readers interested in diabetes research, and be as efficient as possible in handling manuscripts. But the better we do with these basic tasks, the more attractive we will be to scientists deciding where to send their papers. Hopefully, readers like our new cover design with its added color and new subject headings, which should make it easier to spot articles. An icon depicting the insulin molecule has been added to the cover, in part to recognize the 75th anniversary of its discovery. We will consider replacing the icon next year and welcome suggestions for a new symbol relevant to diabetes. A new category of sub-

mission has been introduced in the form of Brief Genetics Reports. There is a flood of new information about genetics, and many important findings can be summarized very succinctly. Otherwise, the journal format is not much changed. The staples of the journal remain: Perspectives in Diabetes, Original Articles, and Rapid Publications. We expect to continue to publish carefully chosen supplements on subjects of interest to the readership. Instead of instituting a regular letters to the editor section or a running series on controversies in diabetes, we will be pleased to consider particularly relevant letters, and some controversies might be highlighted with juxtaposed commentary.

It is imperative that *Diabetes* benefit from the revolution in communications so that scientific information can be disseminated as efficiently as possible. This influence is being felt at every stage of our activities. *Diabetes* even has a homepage on the World Wide Web (<http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes>). We are not quite ready to jump into electronic publishing, but we are carefully watching what is being done by journals like the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. However, we can use the new forms of communication to speed up the reviewing process. This should benefit the journal because as scientists gain more confidence in our speed and reliability, they will be more likely to send their papers. A particular priority will be Rapid Publications, which must have a shorter time between submission and publication.

Every manuscript goes through a surprising number of steps before it is published. The main rate-limiting factor for any journal is obtaining outside reviews. The most difficult tasks are to get reviewers to agree to review papers in the first place and then to have them complete their reviews in a reasonable period of time. Of course, all scientists have the responsibility of participating in the peer review process, but as editors, we must always acknowledge the countless hours generously given by so many. We often forget to appreciate how efficient our reviewers usually are, compared with those in fields such as literature or history. We will continue to exhort our reviewers to respond quickly in every way possible, using the spectrum of gentle reminders, prodding, begging, cajoling, demanding, and possibly resorting to something resembling harassment. Just as we have high expectations for the reviewers, as editors, we must push ourselves just as hard to move papers along as fast as possible. All of the in-between steps can be facilitated by e-mail, fax, phone, and express mail. Now it is just as easy to obtain reviews from Europe and the Far East as from New York or Chicago.

The past 45 volumes of *Diabetes* tell a remarkable story of the twists and turns taken by science to understand this exas-

From the Research Division, Joslin Diabetes Center, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts.

Address correspondence to Dr. Gordon C. Weir, Editor, *Diabetes*, Joslin Diabetes Center, One Joslin Place, Boston, MA 02215.

perating disease. Now we are in the midst of an exhilarating acceleration of progress. Who could have imagined the current fare on our pages: the deluge of articles on leptin; the onslaught of mysterious signal transduction elements such as shc, Sos, MEK, Grb, ras, and raf; the chorus of the exocytosis proteins Rab, SNAP, SNARE, and VAMP; and the endless lists of CD cell markers and interleukins. These funny names are taking us to some important places. Hopefully, by the end of our tenure, important articles will appear that will point toward ways to prevent at least some forms of diabetes, to provide some cure equivalent, or to find new pharmaceutical agents that reduce the burden of complications.

As editors, we are temporary guardians of something very precious. Although *Diabetes* is a journal of the American Diabetes Association, we must remember that this is our journal, and by that I mean the community of scientists who create the new knowledge and the readers who learn from this science. Our team in Boston will represent you as best we can over the next few years, but please think about our special journal and pass on suggestions about how it can be improved.

REFERENCES

1. Robertson RP: History of *Diabetes*, the journal (1952–1991): editor's swan song. *Diabetes* 41:1–5, 1992