It has been nearly 5 years since I became editor in chief of the American Osteopathic Association’s (AOA) publications. I oversee several publications, including JAOA—The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association, The DO, Practice Pointers, and The Whole Patient. The only peer-reviewed journal that is my responsibility is the JAOA. I believe that the JAOA is the osteopathic medical profession’s premier publication, our major academic voice to the world, and I would like to review what is new for this most important journal.

Over the past year, the JAOA’s Editorial Advisory Board, spearheaded by myself and two associate editors to whom I am deeply grateful (Felix J. Rogers, DO, and Michael M. Patterson, PhD) concentrated on restructuring the Editorial Board of the JAOA, reducing article turnaround time from submission to publication, and more recently, directing our attention to enhancing the JAOA’s peer reviewer roster.

Earlier this year, the AOA Board of Trustees approved a new editorial board restructuring plan. Soon, each college of osteopathic medicine will be given the opportunity to participate in the editorial board selection process. I will be asking each of our institutions to nominate a basic scientist and a clinician-academician to the editorial board. The JAOA Editorial Advisory Board will select individuals from this distinguished group of nominees for appointment to our journal’s editorial board. In addition, our specialty colleges will participate in this process by nominating clinicians; several ad hoc members will be selected as well. The purpose of this restructuring process is to enhance the JAOA’s overall scientific and academic mission. The manuscript review process will provide a level of reviewer expertise that has never been achieved previously.

We have been concerned about the time it takes from initial submission of a manuscript for review to the time the manuscript is published (or perhaps rejected), as we believe it is extremely important to disseminate information to osteopathic physicians in a timely fashion. Most important, the JAOA has to disseminate cutting-edge scientific information as quickly as possible, particularly as it pertains to osteopathic medicine, science, and medical education. The Editorial Advisory Board has established a new set of guidelines that should expedite this entire process. Currently, we have shortened our manuscript review process to 3 months, and we are confident that we should be able to publish manuscripts within 1 year. Strengthening the editorial board will enhance and facilitate this process. In the past, it was not unusual for a manuscript submitted to the JAOA to take more than a year to be published. We believe that this delay substantially reduced the enthusiasm of contributors to submit manuscripts to our journal. The new accelerated review process should dramatically change that situation.

Strengthening our manuscript reviewer roster is an ongoing process, but during this year, we will enhance our journal’s access to outstanding and highly qualified reviewers. Our new roster should include both physicians and nonphysician scientists and educators who are experts in osteopathic medicine, science, and medical education and who have been identified as important for the JAOA and the osteopathic medical profession. Drs Rogers and Patterson and I are committed to enhancing the reviewer roster, and we will be dependent on both the Editorial Advisory Board and the new JAOA editorial board for identification of expert reviewers.

Finally, the JAOA is extremely interested in your scholarly endeavors. We are most interested in new osteopathic medical research that is scientific, clinical, and educational. Osteopathic physicians are interested in high-quality review articles that primarily focus on osteopathic principles, concepts, and practice, but also on other clinical topics. Case presentations are most important if they focus on osteopathic principles and practice; however, a unique and important clinical case report that is not so focused is also welcome for consideration by the JAOA. New articles are needed if we want to maintain the strength of our profession from a scholarly direction. We are looking forward to receiving scholarly work from each and every one of our colleges of osteopathic medicine.

Gilbert E. D’Alonzo, Jr., DO
Editor in Chief