

Editorial

Asian Journal of Andrology is advancing towards a bright future

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As time quickly passes, we once again have the opportunity to wave goodbye to last year and welcome the New Year. This is also an ideal point at which to reflect on the past and envision a brighter future for *Asian Journal of Andrology* (AJA).

Although we cannot find more time, we can maximize what fleeting time we have. We are proud to have succeeded in making the most of 2009, thanks in part to our distinguished Editorial Board members, reviewers, authors, readers and sponsors, whose efforts continue to contribute to the success of AJA.

Last year was AJA's first year being published by *Nature Publishing Group* (NPG). The transition to NPG went smoothly, and we continue to make the most of this fruitful partnership.

The first issue of 2009 was a Special Issue on *Prostate Cancer* organized by guest-editors Dr Roger Kirby and Dr Shu-Jie Xia, who presented a collection of review and research articles outlining the current basic and clinical understanding of prostate cancer. This issue was a great success, and we plan to publish more special issues on topics of intensive global research.

Another notable event in 2009 was AJA's 2008 impact factor, released by Thomson Reuters in June. The journal's impact factor rose to 2.059 – a 28% increase over the 2007 impact factor of 1.609, and a substantial and encouraging increase since the journal's launch in 1999.

More recently, the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Andrology (3APFA) was held in conjunction with the Tenth Anniversary Celebration of AJA on 10–13 October in Nanjing, China. Approximately 600 meeting participants from every corner of the globe enjoyed a well-organized program of lectures encompassing a wide range of thought-provoking topics in basic and clinical andrology that centered on the theme of “Environment, Lifestyle and Genetic/Epigenetic Factors, and Men's Health”. The positive feedback we have received since the conference reflects the resounding success of this productive and constructive congress.

As we face the New Year and its challenges and opportunities, obvious questions include how AJA envisions the future and what actions the journal has planned. Highly motivated by the wisdom and suggestions of our Editorial Board members worldwide, we have full confidence in shaping a vibrant and exciting new perspective for the journal. We will continue to welcome the help of the most qualified, enthusiastic and reputable scientists to achieve our aim of establishing an interactive communication platform for authors, Editorial Board members, readers and editors.

We will also introduce new article types, *Authoritative Commentary*, *Opinion Articles*, and *Debates on Hot Topics* and organize more Special Issues to highlight important and upcoming topics in andrology. By keeping a close eye on the state-of-the-art in andrology, AJA's scientific quality will continue to improve.

An example of this is the current Special Issue on *Semen Analysis in 21st Century Medicine*, which is the result of months of hard work of two esteemed guest-editors, Prof David J. Handelsman and Dr Trevor G. Cooper, as well as the many distinguished authors who kindly contributed their intuitive and insightful thoughts on the recommendations and guidelines for quality control and interpretation set down in the 5th edition of the World

Health Organization (WHO) Laboratory Manual for the Examination and Processing of Human Semen [1]. The purpose of this collection is to discuss some of the ‘behind the scenes’ controversies – many of which persist – including the origins, utility and specific applications of population reference ranges for semen analysis, problems with modern morphological methodology, and the possibilities and limitations of using semen analysis in population or clinical research studies beyond its original use for male infertility evaluation. We anticipate more lively discussions among scientists and clinicians on this broad topic, which has animated the field of andrology.

AJA began in 1999 with the aim of building an academic platform for the exchange of scientific information, to promote scientific communication and cooperation in Asia and throughout the world. Today, more than ten years later, we are proud to say that we have made enormous progress towards this goal. AJA is still young, but has great energy, great enthusiasm, great vision and great expectation. Facing the challenges the coming decades may bring, we resolutely reaffirm our aim to make AJA an international medical journal of the highest standard. The work ahead is still formidable, but with the solid foundation we have already built, with AJA’s energy and enthusiasm, NPG’s strengths, and with the efforts of our supporters, our aim can, should and will be attained!

As we listen to the steps of the New Year approaching us, and hear the bells ringing out the old year and ringing in the new, we sincerely wish you a happy, healthy and harmonious life in this holiday season.

Best wishes for the New Year!

References

- 1 World Health Organization. WHO Laboratory Manual for the Examination and Processing of Human Semen, 5th ed. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2010.