European Journal of Human Genetics

Eur J Hum Genet 1997;5:179

Gert-Jan B. van Ommen
Editor-in-Chief

Editorial

At the end of 1997, the five-year association between the European Society of Human Genetics and Karger will come to a close. Heavy competition on the publishing market and the need to devote the most of its budget to Society activities have led the ESHG General Assembly in Genoa to decide for moving the Journal to Stockton Press, a subsidiary of MacMillan Journals, publisher of several journals in the genetics field.

The Society owes much to its first publisher, S. Karger AG in Basel. The publisher, Dr. Thomas Karger and his staff have been very helpful and supportive in the first steps of the Society to establish its own journal. In the following years we have had a pleasant collaboration with Mr. Thomas Nold, who supervises the EJHG-related activities of Ms. Linda Haas in the editorial office and Ms. Pamela Koppay-Pinto and Ms. Suzanne Willi in the production department. Their services, and the founding editorship of Prof. Dr. Giovanni Romeo in the first three years, 1993–1995, have laid the basis of the present success of the Journal. The first impact factor of 3.2, while modest on a scale of 1–30, is high for a newcomer, favourable for a general genetics journal and quite an achievement for a medium which devotes its pages to contributions originating from countries as diverse in resources, facilities and experience, e.g. the UK and Slovenia.

In return, the rising tide of molecular insights into clinical questions, combined with the attraction of a good citation score, have – fortunately – put a heavy burden on myself, associate editors, section editors and reviewers. Even in the holiday season this year, some 6–10 manuscripts have reached the editorial office weekly. This is up by at least a factor 2 from last year. The first effect is that the last issues of this year will be thicker, and it brings closer the time that the journal will move from 6 to 8 and ultimately 12 issues per year.

Many new insights emerge due to the recent wave of genomic data. Comparative genomics is entering the field at central stage, fingering potential disease genes by cellular location and function of homologs in other organisms, as witnessed by the recent implication of the Friedreichs ataxia gene product fraxatin in mitochondrial function. DNA chip technology will soon revolutionise not only diagnostics but also gene expression analysis in diseased tissue and cancer. This will greatly enhance genotype-phenotype correlation studies as well as gene-environment interaction analysis. In turn, this will allow much better dissection of the causes of pathology. So while clinical geneticists may have some misgivings about the emphasis in recent output of – reflecting submissions to – the EJHG, in a short time better prognostics and differential diagnostics, as well as more concrete choices in disease management will come their way.

The EJHG will continue to strive for a balance between clinical and molecular aspects, between advanced technology and valuable patient resources and cytogenetic findings, between pilot programmes and providers of services. In short, between the front and the field.

No changes, therefore, except for the address: After September 1st, please submit your papers directly to the new address of the EJGH Editorial Office: PO Box 9503, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.

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E-Mail karger@karger.ch
Fax + 41 61 306 12 34
http://www.karger.ch

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