

## Editorial

The publication of a scientific journal is a major responsibility but also a unique tool to advance the scientific field to which it is addressed.

Since the Greek civilization, medicine has been following 2 different paths. One sees medicine as represented in ancient times by the school of Aesculapius and involved a series of 'supranatural' procedures. The other considers it as a science that is based on human rational thinking as proposed by the school of Hippocrates, supported by constantly increasing knowledge of the structure and function of the human body.

A scientific journal dedicated to ophthalmology must, therefore, support the development of ophthalmology as a scientific discipline. This means that the information it carries should incorporate basic scientific principles, such as comparison to reference standards or normal populations, and good characterization of the spectrum of patients that it addresses.

As an example, randomized trials are clearly the 'gold standard' for judging whether a treatment does more good than harm, and they should be fostered and progressively more welcome in the journal. However, it is understood that individual clinical expertise is also essential to decide whether the external evidence obtained from clinical trials applies to the individual patient at all, and, if so, how it should be integrated into clinical decision.

Patient-oriented translational research connecting information from the basic sciences to daily clinical practice in the office will also be particularly welcome. Laboratory data are fundamental to the development of the

practice of ophthalmology and its constant improvement, bringing improved understanding of disease and new therapies. To achieve these goals, basic laboratory research must show that the final objective is there from the start.

*Ophthalmologica*, founded in 1899, is one of the oldest ophthalmology journals and has a tradition to keep and respect.

I am particularly honoured to follow in the steps of the previous Editors-in-Chief. This is a major responsibility and a great challenge. The best sign of respect to my antecessors is to make *Ophthalmologica* an even better journal and improve its position in the ranking of the ophthalmology journals.

EURETINA, the European Society of Retina Specialists, has entered an agreement with S. Karger AG to make *Ophthalmologica* its official journal. As a result, although *Ophthalmologica* is to remain a journal covering all aspects of ophthalmology, it will give special attention to retina contributions regularly dedicating issues to the retina. It is expected that it will become the European journal for retinal diseases, a forum which is still not available in the European ophthalmological journals. Expert reviews updating the publications in the retina field in a critical manner will also be a regular feature.

These objectives will be addressed by a large team with an increased number of Associate Editors and Editorial Board Members. The success of the journal will depend much on their motivation and commitment. I am extremely happy to have their support.

*J. Cunha-Vaz, Coimbra*