

From the Editor

From the Editor

ONE YEAR AGO, I LOOKED FORWARD IN THESE pages to the year ahead, anticipating an eventful year, both for this journal and for the wider world. It has certainly been so for both. 2008 will undoubtedly be a year long remembered. For the journal, there have been major changes, not without their teething troubles, but as the year comes to its end, a certain calm and order has descended. Early in the year, we changed to a system based entirely on the web for submission and assessment of manuscripts. As with all alleged solutions in information technology, practice is not as straightforward as theory. For me, the editorial office, our reviewers, and also for some of our authors, there have been frustrations with some of the processes. In many instances, the new system seems to have generated work, rather than saved it, and has complicated processes that previously seemed simple. To any of our readers or reviewers who have had any problems with the system, I extend my apologies. We have persevered, addressed any issues as they have arisen, and I do believe the web-based system has now settled down, but we will continue to try and streamline it whenever we can.

One advantage of the new system is that it enables us to monitor more closely and accurately the process of submission and assessment. I can report, therefore, that during this year we have had an average of 18 manuscripts submitted each month, and have accepted for publication just one-third of those submitted. The average time from submission to first decision has been 57 days. We do all we can to give our authors a decision as soon as possible. We will be monitoring this latter figure carefully to reduce it wherever possible. I am well aware of how much authors value quick decisions about the publication of their work. Making decisions about which articles to accept for publication is never easy. To make sure we are as rigorous as possible, we depend critically on the support of our expert reviewers. This last edition of the year is an opportunity to say “thank you” to all

our reviewers, who have contributed so much to the journal over the year. As an editor, it is a privilege to see how much time and trouble that many reviewers put into their reviews. Their contribution to the journal is immense. It is fitting that we acknowledge and thank them on the journal’s homepage at www.journals.cambridge.org/cty.

Many of the papers published are considerably enhanced by the incorporation of suggestions from the reviewers. Indeed, it is unusual for any paper to be accepted without some revision, minor or major, at the suggestion of the referees. What is it that constitutes a good review? There are no easy answers, as reviewers vary greatly in style, but for the editor a good review is one that gives unambiguous, authoritative, advice about the scientific merit of the submitted article. Is the method used by the investigators valid, and do the conclusions follow from the results? Is the study original? Is it important? Is it of interest to our readers? If the reviewer does not have the expertise relevant to the study in question, suggestions of alternative reviewers are very welcome, as identifying reviewers with the necessary expertise is sometimes difficult. For the authors, a good review, whether the reviewer recommends publication or not, contains advice about how the study could be improved, or where it might better be submitted.

Authors and the editor both value reviews that are returned promptly so decisions can be made as soon as possible. Many of our reviewers are also our active authors, for peer review must mean just that, namely reviews of articles by other active researchers in the field. Effective peer review is the basis of much scientific publication. To be successful, it must encompass an implicit commitment that investigators both expect expert review of their own work, and provide considered reviews of high quality for the work of others. If you submit your work for publication in *Cardiology in the Young*, I hope you will also accept, if invited, the obligations of providing such reviews of high quality of

the work of others. This is the lifeblood of our journal. In this final issue of a momentous year, therefore, I thank all our authors, and our reviewers. If you wish to submit an article to *Cardiology in the Young*, you can do so via our web-based system at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cty>. In closing,

I wish all of you the very best wishes for the coming year.

Edward Baker
Editor-in-Chief
E-mail: ctyeditor@cambridge.org