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EDITORIAL

New Editor-in-Chief

“A scientist is happy, not in resting on his attainments but in the steady acquisition of fresh knowledge” (Max Planck)

It's time for a change in the leadership of our journal, one Editor (FN) is leaving, another Editor (PR) will take the helm from January 2013. We are currently working closely together to ensure a smooth hand over of responsibility. Indeed, the new Editor is not really new to the Journal, having been an Associate Editor for the last five years and a member of the Editorial Board for many more years than the outgoing Editor who began in 2007.

Here just a brief biography of the new Editor: Paolo Russo (born in 1958 in Naples, Italy) is a Professor of Medical Physics at Università di Napoli Federico II, Naples, Italy, where he graduated in Physics in 1981 and where he started his staff career in Medical Physics in 1984. His scientific and technical expertise is broad in scope: after initial activity in the analysis of biomedical signals in the study of ocular motility disorders, in the development of fiberoptic sensors for radiation dosimetry and in the application of photo-acoustic spectroscopy and imaging to biomedicine, his scientific interests focused on the development of systems for medical imaging in diverse fields, from Digital Mammography and Digital Autoradiography with microstrip detectors and photon counting pixel detectors, to semiconductor based photon counting detectors for compact gamma cameras and for PET; from small animal SPECT and for CT imaging to cone beam breast CT with dedicated scanner.

Max Planck's quote above seems to be quite an appropriate motto for both of us. Definitely, it was a great time and good experience for FN to serve you, the authors and readers of our journal, for five years, to enjoy the competent support of the team of Associate and Honorary Editors, to benefit from the hard work of our reviewers and to rely on the perfect management of the Publisher. However, it's not bad gaining back a bit more freedom and facing other challenges. The new Editor on the other hand is happy about the opportunity to have “a steady acquisition of

fresh knowledge”, on a much broader scale than in his own field of scientific expertise. Actually, the Editor's normal burden of responsibilities, i.e. processing and editing submissions and the development of the scientific profile of the journal is more than counterbalanced by the new things learnt when reading and evaluating the manuscripts. Actually, during the last 5 year term the Editor dealt with about 580 manuscripts. Thanks to our authors!

However, resting a minute to reflect on “our attainments” over the last term, we may modestly claim the journal has sailed a good course through the rough sea of strong competition. Without being too negative about the notorious Impact Factor with all its inherent weaknesses, in particular when assessing smaller and quarterly journals, we recognise it still has an important influence over authors when they decide where to publish, and this magic number has shown the tendency to rise over recent years for EJMP. There are good reasons to expect a more steadily growing IF over the coming years as we increase our frequency from a quarterly to bimonthly publication, starting from the first issue of 2013. Nevertheless, we will maintain our strategy of focussing on high-level review articles introducing the reader into the ever expanding field of biomedical physics with its fascinating interface of medicine, biology, chemistry, and engineering and not to forget to our own huge territory of physics. We will also devote efforts to expanding worldwide the dissemination of EJMP, in order to reach medical physics communities with new potential for development.

A frequently debated issue is the time required to get a submitted manuscript published. Of course, the time span from submission to the printed version is not a meaningful quantity, in particular not for a quarterly journal like ours. Today with electronic prepublication opportunities rather the time from submission to the availability of the manuscript as an electronic document (Digital Object Identifier,

DOI®) is what matters. It makes sense to split this interval into the time from submission to acceptance and from acceptance to the availability of DOI. The former interval varies widely, mainly because the authors require quite different time lengths for revision of their manuscript according to the recommendations of the reviewers. Quite consistently over the last years, in our journal the average turnaround time from acceptance to the citable DOI was about 4 weeks. Perhaps additional measures such as requests for shorter revision time, faster reviewing process and some improvements at the publisher side may result in a further reduction of the time for the whole editing process of a manuscript.

Compared to the beginning of the last term the number of subscriptions of EJMP increased significantly, i.e. from 70 in 2007 up to 137 in 2011. Based on this encouraging trend the journal from 2013 on will be published in six issues per year. These figures signal a steadily growing visibility of the journal in the medical physics community. One of the aims of the EJMP as a European journal is to promote medical physics throughout Europe. Hence, we are particularly pleased to welcome the Irish Association of Physicists in Medicine (IAPM) which recently affiliated with EJMP, and whose members now receive the Journal. It was the intention of the AIFM and later the EFOMP to give the former *Physica Medica* a more European face, and what is a more convincing approach if more national member organisation like in Italy, France, and Ireland adopt EJMP as their own membership journal?

The leaving Editor wants to express his sincere gratitude to the Associate Editors and the whole Editorial Board, the staff of the Publisher and the AIFMP and EFOMP Officers, in particular the many reviewers for spending so much time for the Journal, and not least all authors who make it possible that such a wonderful journal continues its service for science reporting and dissemination, education and training for the medical physics community, starting from the first international issue of *Physica Medica* in 1988. Finally, he acknowledges the continuous support of the Honorary Editor Prof. Alberto Del Guerra and mostly the partnership with the new Editor.

The incoming Editor – in acknowledging the honour of this nomination and appointment by AIFM and EFOMP as the third Editor of EJMP, wants to express his gratitude and appreciation to Prof. Nüsslin for his outstanding job as

Editor of EJMP in the period 2007–2012 over which time the Journal has strengthened its position among the top-ranked peer-reviewed medical physics journals and for his friendliness and advice in these years and particularly during this takeover period. He also thanks the Honorary Editor and former Editor, Prof. Alberto Del Guerra, for his endless support, encouragement and advice during more than two decades of dedication to the journal. Starting from such outstanding predecessors, and confident in their future support, the new Editor confirms his commitment *not in resting on his attainments* but in even greater efforts and dedication, in cooperation with the Associate Editors and the Editorial Board of *Physica Medica: European Journal of Medical Physics*, for attracting and promoting good science and acquiring *fresh knowledge*.

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