

Learning: The *JNM* Editorial Process

As part of the SNMMI leadership for 4 years, I was involved and took a great interest in many educational opportunities sponsored by the Society. It was a great honor to assume the position of editor-in-chief of *JNM* in January 2012. The main mission of *JNM* is to disseminate scientific information to all members of the SNMMI and the medical community at large in a concerted effort to advance the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Particularly daunting last year was the complexity of determining which submissions—of the nearly 1,200 received—should be chosen to make up the approximately 250 articles that we shared with our 19,000 readers and the medical community. Fortunately, there are a great many individuals under the *JNM* editorial umbrella who are willing to share their experience and scientific knowledge and to help decide which manuscripts will best advance the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging.

Of particular benefit has been the expertise and advice of the *JNM* associate editors who were already on board when I became editor-in-chief: Johannes Czernin, Wolf-Dieter Heiss, John A. Katzenellenbogen, Wim J.G. Oyen, Barry A. Siegel, and David W. Townsend. To that distinguished list, last year I added Michael M. Graham, who is both a nuclear medicine physician and a basic scientist; Jan Grimm, who joined us as the series editor for “Focus on Molecular Imaging” and is now an associate editor; and Albert J. Sinusas, whose background in cardiovascular imaging includes both the clinical and the preclinical aspects of that field.

In our constant effort to assist SNMMI members in fulfilling their official continuing medical education requirements, Kirk A. Frey was appointed associate editor with particular emphasis on continuing education. Several adjustments have recently been made in the area of credit for reading *JNM*’s continuing education articles, including the ability to obtain self-assessment module (SAM) credit. In 2012, physicians and technologists had a wide array of topics from which to choose. The topics included new developments for imaging dementia and applications for PET/MR imaging in oncology, neurology, and cardiology. Other recent advances in some traditional nuclear medicine imaging techniques were also brought to the educational forefront, including radioiodine scintigraphy with SPECT/CT, modern imaging of paragangliomas as well as a look at the various modalities currently used to image multiple myeloma and other plasma cell diseases, and a review on vascular mapping and hepatic perfusion imaging.

After many years as an associate editor, Barry A. Siegel has recently modified his role to that of editorial consultant. Therefore, in 2013, we have welcomed David A. Mankoff to

the *JNM* team as an associate editor. His main areas of expertise include endocrinology and oncology, with a particular emphasis on breast cancer imaging. Jonathan McConathy has also signed on as the new “Focus on Molecular Imaging” series editor to continue offering our readers concise articles on recent advancements in molecular imaging. In 2012, under Jan Grimm, these included pieces on photon detection concepts, ultrasound microbubbles, preclinical SPECT instrumentation, and a 2-part article on imaging of programmed cell death.

Harvey A. Ziessman took on the task of editing *JNM*’s Newsline in order to keep readers informed about scientific events, government decisions, and other pertinent information in the field, and Nancy Knight agreed to continue as the consulting editor for Newsline. Finally, E. Edmund Kim continues to be the associate editor for book reviews.

All of the individuals mentioned above have been invaluable in determining which preclinical and clinical research manuscripts are published in *JNM*. In an effort to ensure the accuracy and consistency of these articles, we have implemented 2 modifications to the review process. The first of these encourages all reviewers to readily alert us of any concerns they may have about the statistical integrity of a manuscript. Subsequently, we have significantly increased the number of papers going out to a third referee with the sole intent of examining their methodology and statistical analysis. Second, we have initiated a formal process on the part of the associate editors and the editor-in-chief to grade all referees on the basis of comprehensiveness, reliability, and timeliness of the review and their adherence to the recently revised “Instructions for Reviewers.” This is particularly aimed at constantly improving the quality and usefulness of reviewer comments to authors. Although reviewers are certainly asked to guide the editors in the decision-making process, it is the information that we provide to those individuals who labored over their submission that is of paramount importance. These detailed recommendations allow authors not only to understand why a specific decision was made but also, more importantly, to fine-tune their work for eventual publication in *JNM* or another journal. That was also the impetus for reworking our “Information for Authors” last year: to provide submission guidelines on not only the specifics of *JNM* style but also the generalities of sound medical and scientific writing.



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Also playing a critical part in the *JNM* editorial process are the members of the editorial board, who review between 5 and 12 manuscripts per year. These individuals also help broaden the reviewer base by recommending colleagues who are not currently providing reviews. In addition, their presence on the board symbolizes the wide-reaching scope of *JNM*. Expanding this impact is also the key role of the 6 international associate editors: Frans H.M. Corstens in The Netherlands, Myung-Chul Lee in Korea, Giuliano Mariani in Italy, Andrew M. Scott in Australia, Nagara Tamaki in Japan, and Jiahe Tian in China. As in 2011, articles submitted by authors outside the United States in 2012 represented more than 50% of all published articles. Published research articles from Europe decreased from 45% in 2011 to 37.5% in 2012, articles from Asia increased from 9% to 15.5%, articles from Australia and New Zealand increased from 2% to 3%, and articles from North America increased from 42% to 44%.

The acceptance rate was stable from 2011 to 2012, at 29%, and the turnaround time from submission to acceptance continued to be approximately 12 weeks as targeted, slightly less than in 2011. In 2012, *JNM* published a total of 245 articles, including 208 original research articles (113 clinical and 95 basic science), 12 brief communications, 10 continuing education/SAM articles, 8 “Focus on Molecular Imaging” articles, and 7 special contributions. Two of the special contributions were guidelines, one on dopamine

transporter imaging with ^{123}I -ioflupane SPECT and the other on ^{131}I therapy. *JNM* also published 17 book reviews.

As clinical efforts become increasingly geared toward personalized medicine, interest is also increasing in targeted imaging and therapy with molecular imaging. Keeping our readers up to date on the rapid advances in molecular imaging will continue to be a challenging task. However, because of its high impact factor as assessed by *Journal Citation Reports*, *JNM* has been ranked the top medical imaging journal worldwide for the past 4 years. The *JNM* impact factor was 6.381 in 2011. This recognition of high-quality articles and growing influence in the field of imaging should enable us to continue broadening the excellent educational opportunities offered by *JNM*.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the entire team of *JNM*, the associate editors, the editorial board, and the reviewers who make the publication of our journal possible. I also want to acknowledge Susan Alexander, Mark Sumimoto, Susan Nadolny, and Paulette McGee from the SNMMI and Tom Ebers, the assistant to the editor at Vanderbilt University, who work relentlessly to coordinate the efforts of the entire team and to keep the review process efficient and timely.

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