

Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases: an update

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Most readers of this June issue of the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* will receive it in their congress bag during the 11th Annual European Congress of Rheumatology in Rome. This fact gives me, as Editor, a special opportunity to briefly update readers on some technical features and some particular content issues.

First, I am grateful for the confidence in the journal from the scientific and clinical communities, which is reflected by the increasing number of high quality submissions. Numbers are not always useful to describe the quality and effectiveness of a scientific journal, but a few examples can be helpful: the impact factor (IF) has gradually increased and the IF for 2008 (the most recent at time of writing) reached 7.188 (table 1). We handled 1635 new submissions in 2009, the acceptance rate for original research (concise and extended reports) is now 18% and average time from submission to review underway is 14 days, from submission to first decision (all papers/reviewed papers) 32/56 days and the average turnaround from submission to acceptance is 103 days.

Researchers always want to have their work published as soon as possible, and the journal and publisher share this interest. *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* was quick to feature an online first publication system, but the time from online to print publication increased in 2008–2009 to about 1 year, which was considered unacceptable. Bumper issues at this year's and last year's European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) congresses, together with an increase in the number of pages in 2010 as well as a strict editorial policy, has contributed to a considerable reduction in this interval from acceptance to print publication. An additional feature that is increasingly used is the opportunity to publish online supplementary material (details about methodology, tables and figures,

and videos as well, if relevant). The online publication system was changed at the end of last year; the ambition is to have all accepted papers published online in the final, fully edited, typeset and proofed version 3 weeks after acceptance. Unfortunately, the publisher has faced some capacity problems with typesetting, but the 3-week goal will be achieved in the near future. The advantage will be that all papers will only appear in one final copyedited version: first online, and then printed 4–6 months later.

This journal issue contains many important papers within the area of basic and translational science, as well as in clinical and epidemiological research. We assume that the new EULAR recommendations for management of rheumatoid arthritis with synthetic and biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs will be of special interest to many clinicians.¹ These recommendations are supported by five systematic literature research papers that also appear in this issue,^{2–6} and an accompanying editorial is written by two of our American colleagues.⁷

In this issue you will also find the first two commissioned review papers under the title of Reviews 2010.^{8,9} *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* has invited authors with broad perspective and authority in their fields (usually one European and one non-European for each paper) to write review papers on recent advances (Last Decade) in our understanding of the disease, and, when relevant, pathogenetic

Table 1 Impact factor for *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* for the period 2004–2008 (source: ISI Web of Science)

Year	Cites	Items two previous years	IF
2008	4205	585	7.188
2007	4193	654	6.411
2006	3754	651	5.767
2005	3353	482	6.956
2004	2436	622	3.916

IF, impact factor.

aspects that lead to therapeutic opportunities (State of the Art). The last part should address the research agenda and which progress we may expect over the next 10 years (Future Perspectives). One of the papers in this issue addresses spondyloarthritis,⁸ the other patients' self-management.⁹ The latter is of particular interest in an issue that is available at a congress that also represents a true partnership between medical professionals, researchers, health professionals and people with rheumatic diseases. We hope that this series of review articles to be published in 2010 will be of educational importance and also stimulate readers in identifying research topics for the years to come.

I hope the readers will enjoy this and following issues of the journal. Feedback to the Editor, Associate Editors and Editorial Board members that can further enhance the quality of the journal is always welcome. Finally, I would like to wish readers who receive this issue at the EULAR congress a successful meeting and enjoyable time in Rome!

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; not externally peer reviewed.

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