

A Parting Perspective of the Journal's Evolution

This will be my final editorial as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Oral & Facial Pain and Headache*, as I stepped down last month from the editorship, a position I have held for 20 years. I will take this opportunity to highlight some of the features and achievements of the Journal over the past 20 years and to say a special thank you to several colleagues.

I took on the position of Editor-in-Chief in 1998 from Chuck McNeill, who had assumed this position from Hal Perry. Over the subsequent 20 years of my editorship, there have been many advances in knowledge bearing on the diagnosis, management, and underlying mechanisms of acute and chronic pain states in the orofacial region, and I am very pleased to look back and see the steady evolution of the Journal and its contribution to this knowledge base. On the basis of the number, quality, and significance of its published articles and its indexing and impact, the Journal has become the leading journal dealing specifically with oral and facial pain and headache and one of the top journals in the pain and dental fields.

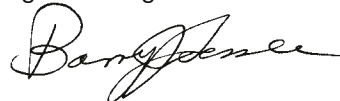
While the Journal continues to publish four issues each year that include articles mainly addressing clinical studies related to diagnosis and management, several features have changed over the past 20 years. These include the increased proportion of articles based on clinical or experimental studies in humans and laboratory animals that have addressed mechanisms of orofacial pain, related sensorimotor activities, and psychosocial factors. A more recent development has been the broadening of topics to include a focus on headaches and other pain conditions in the orofacial region; this move resulted in a name change from *The Journal of Orofacial Pain* to *The Journal of Oral & Facial Pain and Headache*. In addition, the Journal went "electronic" several years ago, and this has generally enhanced the submission and review processes. The number of submissions to the Journal in recent years has progressively increased, and the number last year reached an all-time high. Another notable change related to submissions over the past 20 years has been the increasing proportion of submissions from Asia and South America, as North America and Europe had been the very dominant sources of submissions in earlier years.

The increased number of submissions undoubtedly reflects in part the Journal's indexing features and impact factor, the quality and significance of its published articles, and its increased prominence in the field. The Journal is indexed and/or abstracted in several online databases, and its impact factor, which was first acquired almost 20 years ago, has been in the 1.5–3 range for the past several years. Indeed, the

Journal's 2016 impact factor, released last year, was the highest ever achieved for the Journal. This measure of the impact of a journal places the *Journal of Oral & Facial Pain and Headache* in the top 20 of the approximately 90 journals in the dental-related field, a position that it has maintained for many years. The Journal's impact results from its regular array of high-quality, informative reviews, case reports, and articles based on original research studies, and I am pleased and grateful to the thousands of authors who had sufficient regard for and confidence in the Journal to submit their articles for publication over the past 20 years.

I am also very pleased to have played a role in the successful evolution of the Journal as a primary source for original research material, as well as for reviews and case reports. However, I hasten to point out that it was a real team effort. As a consequence, I am grateful to many colleagues who have helped ensure the Journal's high quality and contributed to its achievements. These include the four recent Associate Editors (Ilana Eli, Greg Murray, Sandro Palla, and Christian Stohler) and past Associate Editors (Antoon De Laat, Ken Hargreaves, Linda LeResche, and Alain Woda), and I thank them very much for their advice, cooperation, and efforts on behalf of the Journal over the many years. I also thank Drs. Balasubramaniam, Baad-Hansen, De Boever, Eli, Greene, Iwata, Macfarlane, Nixdorf, Smith, and Velly for serving as Literature Abstract contributors. I am especially grateful to my editorial assistant in Toronto, Fong Yuen, for always providing excellent administrative support for the Journal and myself. I am also appreciative of the activities of the publication and administrative staff at Quintessence Publishing, in particular Lori Bateman and Hallie Koontz and the website system manager Andy Beare, who have provided valuable support and advice to Fong and me. In addition, I also thank Jeff Okeson and the Journal Committee that he chairs and the American Academy of Orofacial Pain and its sister academies for their support and, indeed, for their confidence in selecting me in the first place and giving me the great opportunity to steer the Journal on its recent 20-year journey.

Now a new "captain" has taken the helm, and I extend my best wishes to Dr. Rafael Benoliel and his new team of Associate Editors for a successful and enjoyable journey that will take the Journal to even greater heights.



Barry J. Sessle
Editor-in-Chief