



Editorial

Int Surg 2011;96:i



The Importance of Peer Review and Constant Improvement

In my initial letter to you, with the first quarterly Issue 96(1), I indicated that journals are making constant improvements to disseminate the latest research and development findings. An investigation is presently under way to adopt the best technologies and services available to reinvigorate *International Surgery*. In this process, we are seeking advice and input from several knowledgeable and experienced persons, whose years of great experience with scientific and medical journals will serve us well. We are doing this with emphasis on peer-reviewed original scientific articles covering important clinical observations, surgical techniques, experimental surgery, research, and cultural and historical topics pertinent to surgery and related fields. We wish to stimulate readership and increased manuscript submission by making *International Surgery* articles more accessible, with significant emphasis on the increasing prevalence of electronic publishing.

In this editorial, I focus on manuscript submission and peer review. We must provide better guidelines on the submission process—and we are working to do so. Once the articles are received, then we must give more quality and efficient attention to the peer review process. We believe that a large percentage of researchers rate peer-reviewed articles as very important in their respective research endeavors. As Editor-in-Chief, I have significantly expanded the peer review process by sending manuscripts to those individuals within the International College of Surgeons who have an interest in improving *International Surgery* and who are willing to promptly give their attention not only to reviewing submitted articles but also to making suggestions, as appropriate, to authors for improving their respective manuscripts for publication and, most importantly, for advancing the field of surgery. We are tracking this process and

ultimately we will be able to determine who are best suited for an eventual, formally designated Editorial Review Board.

To assist the peer review process and to make this process more efficient, we are now giving consideration to electronic peer review systems and to which systems will better serve us. The purpose is to give fair, objective, and ethical consideration to all submitted manuscripts, an increasing number, that are submitted for initial processing and evaluation. Clearly, as we progress, those persons who participate in the electronic peer review process will need to have the information technology capacity to enable participation and timely responses.

We are beginning to invite authoritative commentaries from internationally renowned leaders on articles to add perspective and enhance the quality of the scientific and educational content. Additionally, a greater effort will be made to publish more articles on topical, innovative areas, with invitations targeted at researchers to publish in *International Surgery*.

Overall quality and timeliness in the publication process are critically important, not only to increasing the importance of *International Surgery*, but also to advancing the education and communications process, which are critical in improving global surgery. Our goal is to be in the vanguard of scientific, technical, and medical publishing, and the foregoing are some of the initial considerations and actions that we now have under way.

I ask for your continued support and for your ongoing suggestions as we proceed.

Thank you.

Professor Christopher Chen
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International Surgery