

NDT on the move: an editorial note by the Editor-in-Chief for Portuguese nephrologists

Carmine Zoccali

Editor-in-Chief

Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation

Received for publication: 15/05/2012

Accepted: 29/05/2012

The first issue of *NDT* was published in 1986. In that issue, there were two reports by the ERA-EDTA Registry, five original articles, one technical report and one case report. It was a slow start, but with time, the first Editor of the Journal, Professor Alexander (Sandy) Davison, fully succeeded in transforming the Proceedings of the ERA-EDTA into a successful nephrology journal. When he passed the torch to Professor Eberhard Ritz in 1992, *NDT* was a much-read journal, respected by all European nephrologists and the strongest competitor to *Kidney International* for the leadership among nephrology journals. Professor Ritz enriched the Journal with novel educational features, editorials, agile reviews and other features which made it the most enjoyable renal journal of its time. The subsequent Editors, Professor Tilman Drueke and Professor Norbert Lameire, further improved the international standing of the Journal. Both refined the personality of *NDT*, making it a versatile repository of a wide range of scientific contents that were directly or indirectly relevant to the research of kidney diseases and the care of renal patients. Ritz's mantra, that *NDT* should aim for the best scientific and educational quality rather than being governed by the IF-chasing Pavlovian reflex which dominated other journals remained a distinctive trait of *NDT*, whose Impact Factor (IF) nonetheless has gradually ascended to 3.6 under Lameire's lead. Thanks to the talents and efforts of these four Editors Emeriti, *NDT* is now a robust editorial enterprise and one of the main assets of the ERA-EDTA.

Matching the achievements of past editors demands connectivity to medical research at large, the capacity to discern how renal science evolves, and the talent to attract the best scientists to contribute to the Journal as well as absolute dedication. I am dedicating all my energy to the Journal, and I hope that this will compensate for any deficiencies that I may have in any other areas. *NDT* has a strong editorial team, with two Co-editors (David Wheeler and Jürgen Floege) who served *NDT* as Deputies under Norbert Lameire's editorship, and who are ensuring continuity within the Journal. We have two new Associated Editors, Rajiv Agarwal, a world-renowned clinician-scientist much appreciated for his rigorous approach to clinical research, and Adrian Covic, a prominent fixture of nephrology in Eastern Europe. The Board has an exceptional group of 16 Theme Editors, including nine North Americans, one Australian and top-ranking Japanese physicians and scientists. This group of distinguished editors, with their diverse expertise, is managing the selection of manuscripts submitted to our Journal. The Theme Editors are enriching the Journal with their viewpoints and equilibrium and guaranteeing a high degree of alertness to novelty in all areas of research covered by the Journal. I am sure that the standing of this team is such that the Journal is ideally poised for further growth and success in the renal community worldwide. *NDT* has three Continental Editors who are further developing the perspective and strengthening the links between *NDT* and North and South America, Asia, Australia and Africa. Last but not

least, *NDT* has a small but efficient and very competent management team composed of Caroline Vinck (Senior Editorial Assistant) and three Editorial Assistants, Daniela Amodeo, Claudia Bruegmann and Winnie Han. This group of dedicated persons ensures a smooth editorial process and maintains stable links with the publisher Oxford University Press.

NDT strives to attract high-quality reviews both in basic and clinical science. In 2012, our Journal has undergone a reframing of reviews and editorials. These features are being published under the heading “Cutting Edge – Renal Science” and have been grouped into three distinct sections: “Clinical Science and Outcome Research in Nephrology”, “Basic Science and Translational Nephrology” and “In Focus”, a section dedicated to commentaries on original papers published in our Journal. An important mission of *NDT* is to promote education in clinical science, and in the scope of this goal, we have inaugurated a new series entitled “Educational Series on Clinical Epidemiology and Public Health”. The Editors of this series are Friedo Dekker and Kitty Jager, two renowned renal epidemiologists and talented teachers, who have been running a most successful itinerant course on epidemiology and biostatistics throughout many European countries. We also have another new section, “*NDT* Perspectives”, which includes position statements, commentaries and recommendations for clinical practice issued by the European Renal Best Practice (ERBP) commission of the ERA-EDTA. This is an important novel area, in which well-conceived documents, produced by clinicians and methodologists of this commission, are streamlined to reach *NDT* readership in a timely and effective manner. In this section we also publish reviews produced by the working groups of the ERA-EDTA, including the European Renal and Cardiovascular medicine (EURECA-m) working group (WG), the Immunonephrology WG, the WG on Inherited Kidney Disorders (WGIKD), and the European Dialysis WG (EUDIAL). The Editor for *NDT* Perspectives is Wim van Biesen, the Chair of the ERBP committee. I envisage that *NDT* Perspectives will become the showcase of the most solid documents produced by European nephrology.

We are, from time to time, stimulating open scientific debate in a novel format. In “Polar Views in Nephrology”, experts defend opposite theories or

hypotheses in full reviews and will then have the chance to reply to the opponent’s arguments, while a moderator will provide a final comment to the scientific debate.

NDT is now a rich but ponderous journal with over 4000 pages/year and about 50 original papers per issue. Several prominent colleagues, including the Editor Emeritus Norbert Lameire, have recommended that the Journal should reduce the number of original papers by reducing the number of papers accepted for publication. This is not an easy task, considering that, as of June 2010, the rejection rate of *NDT* was 75%. The new Board believes that the number of original articles should be limited to 20-25 per issue. Limiting the number of original articles is not purely an “Impact-Factor-chasing” manoeuvre but a reasonable attempt to refine the editorial selection process, aiming at truly worthy papers. We are striving to serve our authors in every possible way, and therefore we are making a major effort to provide rapid replies to authors who submit to our Journal.

As a part of the Journal restyling, we are introducing improvements to *NDT*’s eToCs and now include Editor’s Choice articles, accompanied by a short note by me or by other members of the Board.

Starting with the January issue, our Journal underwent an aesthetic cover renewal. We now alternate full images of European Nephrology Masters with other pictures taken during our annual congress (young awardees, plenary sessions, etc.). With the January 2012 issue we honoured Stanley Shaldon, ERA-EDTA awardee in Prague and a towering figure of modern nephrology.

I am keen to receive input from all *NDT* readers, and I exhort you to contact me directly at zoccali.ndt.editor@era-edta.org. In late 2012, we plan to perform a survey in an effort to better understand your needs and to improve the way the Journal may serve you all.

This is a slightly edited version of Professor Zoccali’s January 2012 editorial that appeared in *NDT* and is reproduced here with permission from Oxford University Press on behalf of ERA-EDTA. *Nephrol Dial Transplant* 2012;27(1):4-5
doi: 10.1093/ndt/gfr781