New Year, Historical Mission, New Responsibility

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Chinese Medical Journal (CMJ), founded in 1887 and the oldest medical journal in China, is one of our beloved journals. We began to read the journal from the days when we were medical students.

We remembered Prof. Chuan-Han Feng, the former Editor-in-Chief’s words: “The journal is mainly devoted to international communication, reporting the recent progress and achievements in preventive and clinical medicine and biomedical sciences, with experience characteristic of China in particular, to be shared by the world medical family.” What Prof. Feng said 10 years ago is still the main mission of the journal today.

When we have to obtain the information of “Cause-specific mortality for 240 causes in China during 1990–2013” from Lancet,[2] when we have to get the results of “National survey of drug-resistant tuberculosis in China” from New England Journal of Medicine,[3] we feel a great pressure.

There is competition between international and local journals. Meanwhile, it is also a strong motivation for us to step forward.

In the coming year, what is our main task?

We should first realize that CMJ is of readers and authors. Our editorial office should identify our faithful readers and their needs through surveys done in hospitals, institutes, as well as scientific conferences. The interaction between readers and editorial office via our website is not always active. Mutual communication should be encouraged, and comments from readers should be collected and responded timely.

Second, it is important for CMJ editorial office to gather our good authors with high citations. Reviewing the top cited article list in CMJ website, we were astonished that the top cited article is a case report titled “Bilateral papilloedema associated with lumbo-sacral intraspinal tumor.”[4] Case reports are indeed important for studying and teaching in rare diseases, but what we need more are high-qualified clinical studies such as randomized controlled trials and prospective cohort studies, which can be applied into recommendations for clinical practice. We feel happy to find that we have published a number of clinical studies of high quality: “Normative values of pulmonary function testing in Chinese adults,”[5] “A 5-year follow-up study on the pathological changes of gastric mucosa after Helicobacter pylori eradication,”[6] and “A randomized control trial on interruption of hepatitis B virus transmission in uterus.”[7] However, it is still far from enough.

We understand that authors are more likely to publish their good work on more influential international journals such as Lancet or New Engl J Med. However, such journals can only publish a minority of them after all. As the top local journal, CMJ still has grand space to publish promising studies from a large amount of Chinese clinicians and scientists. Our editorial office can also get to know the authors, research teams, and their working progress through academic websites (ClinicalTrial.gov, Chinese Clinical Trial Registry, Cochrane, and PubMed) and invite the authors to submit their recent work to our journal.

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Authors may ask: Why should we submit our important work to CMJ? What is the difference of CMJ from other journals with higher impact factors? The answer is exactly what we are making our efforts to do so. Though we are living in a time that our work is evaluated by the impact factor of the journal where it is published, valuable work will never fade. CMJ has already earned the reputation in China by high quality, integrity, and novelty. CMJ not only tries to publish valuable work but also has the responsibility to help the studies known by readers and let their work cited by researchers throughout China and worldwide.

We took the responsibility to help CMJ to earn reputation what it deserves. We will be successful when respected doctors and researchers are happy to publish their novel findings and thoughtful viewpoints on CMJ. It is our mission and responsibility.

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