Five Years (and Counting) of Expanding Access to Kidney Disease Research

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We are undergoing an unprecedented technology revolution, often referred to as the “fourth industrial revolution,” defined by an exponential growth in data available at our fingertips via digital and other newly emerging platforms. This ever-increasing access to information is reflected in the rapid growth of scientific publications in the past 40 years. In PubMed, the number of indexed articles has doubled since 1980, and more than 800,000 new citations are now being added each year, as seen in PubMed Resources Detailed Indexing Statistics: 1965–2017 (https://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/index_stats_comp.html).¹

In the field of kidney disease and related conditions, Kidney International Reports (KI Reports) has played no small part in disseminating valuable research. The consistent increase in our content speaks for itself: from publishing 6 articles in our first issue (May 2016), we now include 30 to 40 articles in every issue. Overall, KI Reports has published more than 1000 articles to date, including approximately 300 original research studies.

As mentioned in our previous editorials,²,³ the open-access model of KI Reports has perhaps been our strongest asset. By adopting this new publishing paradigm that provides all content to be available to everyone everywhere, we are offering greater access to information in a more democratic manner. KI Reports is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. Our success so far is reflected in our continually expanding readership, which now extends to many regions of the world (Figure 1). We received our first impact factor of 3.374 in 2020, which both reflects our initial success and serves as a reminder of opportunities for growth as well.

The first half of 2021 has been marked by substantial recent developments. Our submissions have spiked far above the number of submissions received during the same time last year. Our editorial team has expanded this year to include Associate Editor Anna Francis (Queensland Children’s Hospital, South Brisbane, Queensland, Australia) and Graphical Abstract and Social Media Editor Sophia Ambruso (University of Colorado, Aurora, CO, USA).

Changing readership patterns are pushing us to test new approaches using visual abstracts and social media, including MedTwitter, which attracts an engaged group of nephrologists from around the world. Social media is a fantastic tool to make good science more accessible to students and trainees.

We have expanded publication of our Research Letter articles, which allows authors to publish focused studies in a condensed format. We have also introduced a new article type, “Regional Reports,” which spotlights findings from specific geographic areas.

This year, we have shed light on the epidemiology and treatment of patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 who also have acute kidney injury and end-stage renal disease, with the publication of numerous research articles, clinical trials, systematic reviews, and commentaries discussing their clinical relevance.

Finally, our narrative reviews continue to rate among our most read articles, the most popular among them being the report on management of dialysis patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Brescia, Italy, and management of hyperkalemia in patients on dialysis.⁴

We continue to set our sights to the future of the journal: how we can push the boundaries of the status quo and perhaps surpass it?

Inherent in our success is the thankless generosity of our peer reviewers and editorial board members who push both editors and authors to make our publications meet the highest standards.
Thank you to our readers and authors as well who, as always, are the barometers of our achievements.

DISCLOSURES
JR is the editor-in-chief of *KI Reports*, is on the data and safety monitoring board of Novartis, is a consultant for and has received research funding from Otsuka, is a consultant for Equillium, is on the steering committee and advisory board of Traverse, and is on the advisory board of Reata. SM is the deputy editor of *KI Reports* and is a consultant for and has received grant support from Angion BioMedica. RM is the executive editor of *KI Reports*.

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**Figure 1.** Worldwide usage of *KI Reports* articles at the country/region level during the past 5 years. Size of circle indicates number of downloaded full-text articles from ScienceDirect during past 5 years.