



CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA

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Editorial

Cirugía Española Increases Its Impact Factor: Reflections on the Necessary Evolution of the Journal[☆]



Cirugía Española incrementa su factor de impacto: reflexiones sobre la necesaria evolución de la revista

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man.

Francis Bacon

Escribir es como la segregación de las resinas; no es acto sino lenta formación natural.

José Ángel Valente

Last June, CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA was able to raise its impact factor to 1, which is an important achievement that has been the objective of the Editorial Committee of the Journal. This accomplishment is the result of our many efforts throughout the years. We believe that now is the time to look back and analyze the recent evolution of our Journal, while reflecting on its future.

CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA receives some 500 article submissions per year, and this volume has remained stable since 2012. Around 55% of these articles are *Case Reports* or *Images of the Month*, 30% are *Original Articles* and just 9% are *Review* or *Special Articles*. Journals of the top quartile, such as *BJS*, receive around 1400 articles each year, but all are original or review articles.

It is evident that the proportions of article types published in our Journal should be more balanced and have a predominance of quality original and review articles over simple case descriptions. Nevertheless, we are aware that it is best to maintain a space (although much more limited) for case reports, as they are often the first stimulus for young surgeons to become initiated in the methodology of bibliographic searches and scientific writing based on observations of interest with educational value.

The process of reviewing and selecting the articles submitted for publication is complex and difficult. Years

ago, this Committee established a series of criteria required for manuscript acceptance, including originality, clinical relevance, possible usefulness of the findings, methodological quality and the interest in the article of the Journal's readers. Throughout this entire process, we have relied on the assistance of more than 700 reviewers, including a group that, because of their dedication and skill, have made it easier for the Editorial Committee to make informed final decisions. For the last year, we have also worked with an adviser, who has enabled us to more precisely evaluate the methodology of the articles (which has become more and more complex) and assist the authors to improve their papers in certain aspects.

The higher level of quality required by the Journal has affected the number of articles that are accepted. The rejection rate for *Original Articles* has evolved from 48% in 2012 to 67 and 85% in 2013 and 2015, respectively. As for the *Case Reports*, the rejection rate has gone from 59% in 2012 to 78% in 2015. Overall, with an acceptance rate of 15%–20%, we have been able to identify and select for the Journal what we consider the most relevant articles. The recent increase in the *impact factor*—which has gone from 0.743 in 2014 to 1.000 in 2015—is due to the increased citation of our articles (113 vs 157), even in a less favorable scenario caused by a decline (20.4%) in the percentage of citations of our Journal.

It should be mentioned that 15% of the articles that are received for publication in CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA come from other countries and, among these, 85% are from Latin America. In order to improve these data, it will be necessary to persistently work towards increasing the level of quality of our journal in order to also make it attractive to authors of other countries.

Recent data confirm the increased visibility of the Journal on internet in both Spanish and English. In 2013, we received 330 014 visits with 678 357 pages visited, compared to 600 695

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visits in 2015 with 1 705 081 pages visited. In the English version, a significant increase has also been observed.

As for our publishing times (from submission of the manuscript until production), these have been reduced in recent years and have gone from 21 weeks in 2012 to 14 weeks in 2015.

Moving forwards, our challenge should be to continue improving the quality of our journal, especially in this era of rapid and profound change in communication technologies. It will be necessary to quickly adapt to this new scenario so that our journal can participate in a lively exchange of knowledge with the participation of our readers in real time. To this end, the new website for our Journal, which is underway, will be fundamental.

An exciting future is in store for our Journal – one that will most certainly be full of challenges. The time has come for the members of the Editorial Committee who have shouldered this responsibility since 2002 to make way for new committee members who will accept the

honor and responsibility of leading CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA into this new era.

We are grateful for the support received over the years, which were especially difficult at the outset because of the responsibilities and many uncertainties, with a very special mention to the editorial team at Elsevier. We believe we have fulfilled our mission, and personally feel satisfied with the work we have accomplished.

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