New Times for *Fetal Diagnosis and Therapy*

As of November 2008, *Fetal Diagnosis and Therapy* has restructured its editorial board. After 10 dedicated and successful years as editor-in-chief, Prof. Wolfgang Holzgreve has found that the time is right to hand over the post to a new generation of editors. It is my duty to acknowledge and express my gratitude to the founders of this journal for their vision, almost 25 years ago, of creating a space to publish academic work on fetal medicine and therapy, and to Wolfgang Holzgreve and all former editors for their efforts in maintaining this journal as a competitive alternative to the increasing number of international publications in the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

In order to maintain the successful path of the journal while preparing ourselves for the challenges of the future, some changes have been made to the editorial team. With the intention of achieving the right balance between experience and new energy, the former editors have been nominated *emeritus* editors so that they will continue to contribute their visions and experience in this new period in the life of the journal. At the same time the editorial board has been joined by a new team of associate editors, made up of experts covering the main research and clinical areas around fetal medicine. Finally, a few new members have joined the editorial board.

Certainly, scientific journals have always been subject to the rules of natural evolution, and surviving in an era of global information is a further challenge. The new editorial team is convinced that *Fetal Diagnosis and Therapy* has a place in the field of fetal medicine publications. Scientific production in fetal medicine is ever increasing and there is room for several journals. The journal's name was perfectly chosen, and it definitely and appropriately reflects our scope and audience. Our editorial board is made up of a substantial number of renowned international researchers in the field. However, we also believe that a clear editorial strategy is required to succeed amidst the fierce competition of the present.

It is our belief that to achieve this aim we must make a firm commitment to maintaining or even improving the average quality of the material published in the journal. The scope of this journal has been and will be fetal medicine in its broadest

sense, from basic science to clinical research. However, our priority is to produce a journal that provides useful guidance in the practice of fetal medicine. These goals will underlie our editorial decisions in the future. As further actions to increase the interest of readers, new sections have been created and, as of issue 3 in 2009, we will have a new mini-review section in which an expert will address a well-defined topic of pathophysiological or clinical interest in a concise and practical format. A new section, called 'Images in Fetal Medicine', has also been introduced in order to publish well-documented cases, particularly those containing combinations of various imaging techniques and/or pre- and postnatal images. In addition, the journal will introduce fast-track papers and editor's choice, so papers considered as outstanding by reviewers and/or the editorial team will be published more rapidly and be properly highlighted in the journal.

Another aspect that authors and readers appreciate from a journal is a rapid submission to publication time. Thus, a further main quality objective of the editorial team is to be particularly fast in the process of peer review and publication. We aim to achieve a submission to publication time of about 10 months for regular papers, and about 3–4 months for papers selected for fast-track. Overall, we believe that it is only by assuring high quality and bringing the submitted work to publication rapidly that we will remain a competitive journal. We are convinced that there is space to increase the journal's impact factor over the next years, placing the journal in a more prominent position in the ranking of obstetrics and gynecology.

In summary, our vision is to become one of the few reference journals in the field over the next years. We hope to convince an increasing number of researchers that this journal is the appropriate place to disseminate their results, and that the impact of their work published here will increase in the near future. We therefore encourage all research groups in the field of fetal medicine to submit their clinical and experimental work to a journal that will raise its average impact and competitive position over the next few years.

Eduard Gratacós, Editor-in-Chief