

Editorial

In 1982 we began discussions about the need for a new journal devoted to exploring the impact of technology on health care, and in 1984 we signed on with Cambridge University Press to launch the *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care*. The first issue appeared in 1985 in connection to the inaugural meeting that year of the International Society for Technology Assessment in Health Care (ISTAHC), which has held annual meetings for 18 years starting in Washington DC in 1986. The Society was later reformed as Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi) in 2003. The Journal has served as the official scientific publication of both ISTAHC and HTAi for 24 years, and its mission remains as it was stated in the introduction to the first issue: to serve as an international forum to explore the effects of health care technology, and to provide “a channel of communication among the diverse and world-wide audience of scholars, practitioners, policy makers, and administrators concerned with this issue . . . to nurture the discipline of technology assessment” (1).

The Journal has grown substantially and an online edition was added in 1999. It now has a worldwide distribution of close to 4,000, of which two thirds is via the Internet. An impressive number of scholarly articles in the field of health technology assessment has been published in the Journal over these years (to date more than 1,700 manuscripts, authored by about 5,000 people, covering more than 17,000 printed pages in ninety-six issues). The Journal has contributed greatly to the development of the field of HTA.

Besides the publication of scientific papers, we have always published letters to the editors, although these have been few and usually related to published manuscripts. Since HTA is evolving rapidly with an increased emphasis on for example incorporating context along with academic rigor in assessments, providing more rapid assessments, determining its role in coverage with evidence development, and many

other issues related to the expanding role and expectations on HTA, we would now like to encourage the submission of commentaries that concern the readership’s views of HTA in general, and which can become a focus of debate in the Journal. Accordingly, in this issue of the Journal, we have introduced a section called “Commentaries and Views.”

We encourage readers to submit their reflections on material published in the Journal and on different issues related to HTA. We also welcome information about the development in the field of HTA in different countries, views, and remarks about the past, present, and future of HTA, methodological issues, and public and industry perspectives on HTA.

This issue of the Journal contains an article by Drummond et al. on “Key Principles for the Improved Conduct of Health Technology Assessments for Resource Allocation Decisions.” We usually do not publish extensive manuscripts such as this. However, we have made an exception because of the significance of this contribution. A group of seven highly respected researchers has expended considerable time and effort to develop a set of principles to improve HTA from the perspective of resource allocation. Because this topic by its very nature invites commentaries, we hope it may be the starting point of a broad-based debate about HTA unfolding in the Journal. With this outcome in mind, we have asked three members of our Editorial Board to write commentaries on this article, to which its authors have responded.

Once again, we welcome submissions to the “Commentaries and Views” section of the Journal, which may be sent directly to <ejonsson@ihe.ca>.

Egon Jonsson and Stanley J. Reiser

REFERENCE

1. Jonsson E, Reiser SJ. Editors’ introduction. *Int J Technol Assess Health Care*. 1985;1:1-2.