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This is my first direct communication with you, our CUAJ readers. I am excited to be able to talk with you. For the past 7 years, I have been working on the journal – your journal! It's been an exciting time for Dr. Laurie Klotz, our Editor Emeritus, and now for Dr. Rob Siemens, our new Editor-in-Chief.

Although I am not a urologist, I've been working in medical publishing for the past 15 years. To say that the field has changed a lot is certainly an understatement. With digital publication and our online manuscript review and submission systems, CUAJ has become a journal of which we can be proud. Here at the editorial office, we're striving to continue to make sure we get to authors quickly with review comments.

Open Journal Systems has been a welcome addition to CUAJ. With OJS, authors can submit their articles online and reviewers can access articles to review 24/7. This process will eventually speed up the review process and ultimately the publication lag.

Also, starting in 2013, CUAJ will publish articles every month. It will no longer publish early releases. Every article will be identified by a DOI number (a digital object identifier, a unique number per article) PLUS its pagination (either a print page number OR an online-page number (an "e" number). Print issues will be published at the same schedule (February, April, June, August, October and December). Alternate months will be online-only.

We trust this new publication schedule will meet the publishing demands of our readers and that we'll be able to disseminate research to the community.

CUAJ has come a long way. We started out small, really small. Reading and editing a handful of manuscripts in our first month has led to a submission rate that is a testament to the support of the Canadian urologic community and the support of urology researchers worldwide. Last year, we received 360 papers – a far cry from 89 papers during our first year in 2007!

Our impact in the urological community began in the same manner – as did our impact factor. Our first rating didn't even hit 1 point (0.875). We gradually climbed to our current number of 1.237. Most of our papers come from Canadian researchers, urologists and related specialists, although we are proud to say that a growing number of international authors consider CUAJ their "home journal."

Why are medical journals so important? Journals play an important role in disseminating science, with 6 major roles:

1. Consolidating research
2. Allowing important research to be disseminated to the public – either through media releases or social media
3. Allowing associations to be visible to its members
4. Allowing researchers to build on past research and contribute to their credentials
5. Presenting up-to-date information
6. Ultimately, improving the level of patient care

At CUAJ, we work hard to fulfill these roles. Help us to help you by sending us your manuscripts and your feedback – you can email me directly at josephine.sciortino@cua.org.