



EDITORIAL

Privilege, honor and service[☆]

Privilégio, honra e serviço

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Editor Principal da Revista Portuguesa de Cardiologia (2016-2019)

Available online 18 March 2020

It has been an enormous privilege and an honor to be able to serve the Portuguese Society of Cardiology once more, this time as Editor-in-Chief of the *Portuguese Journal of Cardiology* for the four-year period 2016-2019. The position was a heavy responsibility, but one that was considerably lightened by the extraordinary contributions of my colleagues and friends who accompanied me with dedication and commitment in this undertaking. This great team, whom I thank from the bottom of my heart for their hard work and unconditional support, consisted of the Deputy Editors, Associate Editors, Supplements Editors, Statistics Editor, Ethics Editor, Multimedia Editor, and Editorial and Bibliographical Consultant, as well as the entire Editorial Board and the *Journal's* peer reviewers. A special word of thanks must also go to the *Journal's* secretariat for their peerless dedication and professionalism.

This journey has been an amazing experience in personal learning and highly intellectually stimulating, due in no small part to the interactions that it has involved over the years with countless individuals, both Portuguese and foreign. Our editorial team has never been complacent, but has striven at all times to innovate and to improve. Indeed, over the past four years, in addition to the day-to-day editorial tasks required to produce the *Journal*, a series of new initiatives have been put in place:

1. The Guide for Authors has been updated with the valuable help of our Editorial and Bibliographical Consultant, Dr. Helena Donato.
2. A checklist to assist the work of our peer reviewers has been developed in order to maintain consistency in their work and to ensure that the most important elements of this task are appropriately covered.
3. In 2017, for the first time, and under the supervision of the sorely missed Deputy Editor Prof. Seabra Gomes, we published an editorial dedicated to the ten best articles published in the *Journal* during the previous year. This initiative was further developed in the following year, with a similar article published jointly by the *Journal* and its Brazilian counterpart, *ABC Cardiol*, presenting the best cardiology articles published in Portuguese in the previous year on both sides of the Atlantic.
4. The *Journal* moved from publishing eleven issues a year to twelve, in order to accommodate the growing number of high-quality articles accepted for publication.
5. Electronic summaries of the *Journal* have been developed and are now sent to over 7000 health professionals in Portugal and to all members of the Brazilian Society of Cardiology.
6. A smartphone app has been developed for the *Journal* to provide quick and easy access to its published articles.
7. Like most modern scientific journals, the *Journal* is now an established presence on Twitter, and will be on Facebook and LinkedIn in 2020.
8. The Recommended Article of the Month is no longer published in paper form, but has been turned into a dynamic and interactive video interview. This has been a notable success, as demonstrated by the hundreds of views it receives every month.

[☆] Please cite this article as: Gonçalves L. Privilégio, honra e serviço. Rev Port Cardiol. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.repc.2020.02.001>

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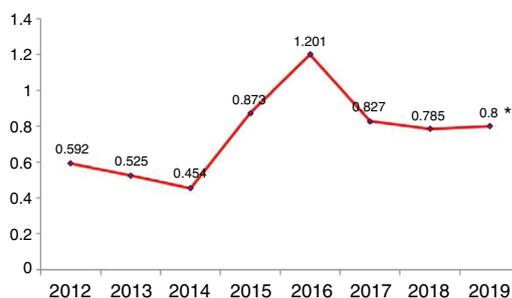


Figure 1 Changes in the impact factor of the Portuguese Journal of Cardiology. * predicted by Elsevier on 29/09/2019.

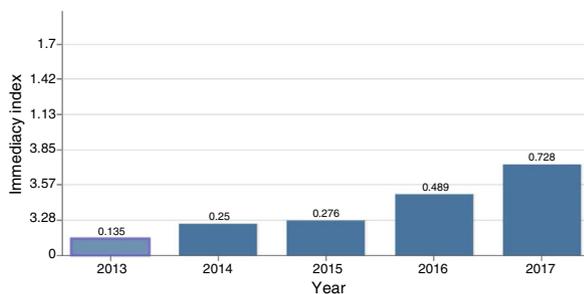


Figure 2 Changes in the immediacy index of the Portuguese Journal of Cardiology.

9. PlumX from Plum Analytics was made available on our new website. This online tool enables authors to track the number of views and citations of articles published in the *Journal*.
10. Dr. Adriana Belo took on the new position of Statistics Editor, and will review the statistical analysis of all original articles potentially accepted for publication in the *Journal*.
11. In 2017, the *Journal* won the prestigious Magda Heras Prize, awarded to the best work published in that year in an Iberoamerican cardiovascular journal.
12. Finally, the standards of reviewing of submissions to the *Journal* have risen steadily in the last four years, and our rejection rate in 2019 was over 85%.

The *Journal's* impact factor has increased over the last five years, reaching a historical maximum of 1.2 in 2016¹ and then stabilizing at around 0.8 (Figure 1). There is clearly potential for this figure to rise further, given the indications that the quality of articles published arouse the interest of readers around the world. Further evidence comes in the form of changes in our immediacy index, defined as the average number of times an article is cited in the year it is published, and thus a measure of the speed with which a specific article is cited after its publication. As seen in Figure 2, our immediacy index has risen over the years, and

almost doubled from 2015 to 2016, when it reached 0.489. It has since continued to climb, and in the last year for which data are available (2017), it ranked just below *Clinical Cardiology*, the *American Heart Journal* and *Circulation Journal* among international cardiovascular journals.

But the question arises, if there is so much interest in articles published in the *Journal*, why is our impact factor not greater? There are certainly various reasons for this, but the main problem is the excessive time between acceptance of submissions and their publication. This delay is essentially the result of the length of time taken to translate articles submitted in Portuguese and to correct those submitted in English. We have made two attempts over the past four years to provide extra support to our official translator: the first by hiring a Spanish translation agency to translate some articles, and the second by contracting a Portuguese agency to do the same. Unfortunately the results in both cases were unsatisfactory, as the quality of their work did not meet the *Journal's* high standards. In 2019 contact was made with a native English-speaking translator currently teaching in a Portuguese university who may constitute a solution to the problem. Time will tell.

Many of the goals set out at the beginning of my term as Editor-in-Chief² have been achieved or nearly so, but some important challenges still remain. However, I have every confidence that these challenges will be overcome by the *Journal's* new Editor-in-Chief, Prof. Nuno Cardim, together with our experienced editorial team, and am sure that the future will be bright and that the *Journal* will continue to grow.

My final words are of deep gratitude to all those who believed in our editorial team and have supported it over the last four years. None of our achievements would have been possible without the unstinting support of the three Executive Boards of the Portuguese Society of Cardiology with whom we have had the privilege of working, or without all the structural improvements put in place by those who managed the *Journal* before me. Well done everybody!

Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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2. Gonçalves L. Change in the editorial team of the *Revista Portuguesa de Cardiologia*. *Rev Port Cardiol*. 2016;35:3-4.