

EDITORIAL

Impact factor 0.85 – The ultimate goal or the next step forward? (II)



Fator de impacto de 0,85- um objetivo ou apenas uma etapa? (II)

In the last week of July, a month later than usual, Thomson Reuters-ISI Web of Knowledge published the impact factors for all the medical journals included in its listing. This is the fourth consecutive year that has been attributed an impact factor to Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology (PJP); the most recent is an IF of 0.85, which means an increase for the second consecutive year (Fig. 1). This is the result of 71 citations in 2013, strictly speaking, 31 citations from articles published in 2011 and 40 from articles published in 2012, based on a total of 83 articles published in PJP in those 2 years. When this data is analyzed, we can note that we had a very small number of self-citations, in fact only 12% of the total cites, which is certainly one of the lowest self-citation rates of all international medical journals. This, of course, shows that the improved citation level comes mainly from other medical journals and reflects the increasing visibility of material published in our journal, adding substance to this evolution in IFs. Following on from these results and including all the PJP editions, there were a total of 194 cites last year, all of which constitutes a clear demonstration of the growing stature of the PJP in the field of respiratory publishing. So, we as editors want to thank all those who have contributed so much to this evolution. First to the previous editor-in-chief, Prof. João Carlos Winck who structured the entire strategic plan for the journal 4 years ago in close cooperation with the Board of the Pulmonology Portuguese Society, which in name of its President Prof. Carlos Robalo Cordeiro I want to thank all the support given in these last years. I want also to express my gratitude to the associate editors and to all the editorial council members for their cooperation and expert advice. Our deep gratitude goes also to all the reviewers for their time and effort, which has led to higher scientific quality of the published data, and to the authors who trusted in PJP as a suitable vehicle for promulgating their scientific work. Many thanks, of course, to all involved in the PJP publishing process, to our English

language advisor Dr. Jessica Jones and to all the Elsevier staff, whose hard work has not only ensured keeping to PJP schedules but also to maintaining the high quality of the editions.

However, this has also to be a moment for reflection. As I stated 1 year ago,¹ we have now reached the journal's natural IF, given the present editorial make-up of the PJP. It would be fair to say that with the present IF we have achieved what we set out to do in 2011 when we joined the Elsevier platform, this has included a significant number of changes planned and carried out in the PJP edition over recent years.^{2,3} Having come so far we, as a society, have now to decide if what has been achieved is our ultimate goal or just an interim stage, because if we keep to present editorial structure, the IF will plateau at around its present value.

If the IF is the primary aim of our journal, we have to consider what this value really means, i.e. the number of citations which reflects the visibility and the quality of the published data. Consequently we can only achieve a sustainable increase in IF by making the editions of PJP more visible and appealing to international readers and authors

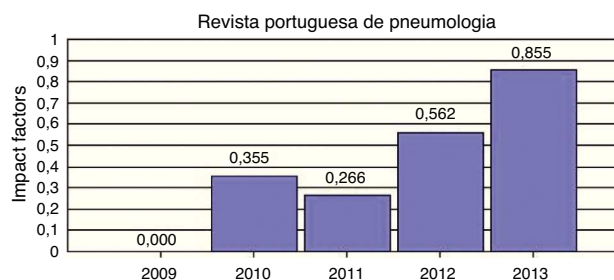


Figure 1 Impact factor Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology.

which can only be done by constant internationalization of the journal, using the tools available of the medical international edition. In this context, we have to discuss whether English does not have to become the first language, whether PJP has to have an international group of editors that can be identified by everyone in contact with the journal and whether we have to change the name PJP to something which better reflects an respiratory journal with a Portuguese basis but essentially open to the world as opposed to being a regional official organ. There are, indeed, difficult decisions to be taken, but as the old adage says 'fortune favours the brave'.

References

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