



Achievements of the last biennium, projections for the coming years, and the impact of COVID-19

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At the beginning of 2019, the perspectives for the following four years of management of the *Jornal Brasileiro de Pneumologia* (JBP) and the *Sociedade Brasileira de Pneumologia e Tisiologia* (SBPT, Brazilian Thoracic Association) were presented.⁽¹⁾ However, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the need to adapt the SBPT plans dramatically in 2020; its employees, directors, and members deserve to be commended for their invaluable contributions to that process

The COVID-19 pandemic also undoubtedly had a significant impact on the JBP. There was an increase in submissions, many related to COVID-19, which necessitated the active participation of editors and reviewers in order to determine what should be considered pertinent. The significant number of COVID-19-related submissions resulted in a similar challenge for the various journals in the field of respiratory medicine. The rapid evolution over a short period of time that science provided in the management of COVID-19 was noteworthy and unprecedented. The participation of several Brazilian researchers in national and international collaborations, resulting in the publication of robust studies that certainly contributed to increasing knowledge and improving the management of COVID-19, is also of note.⁽²⁻⁵⁾ However, a colossal number of studies have been published on such subject, many of which have not employed the appropriate methodology or followed the principles of evidence-based medicine, producing results without sufficient novelty.

Six hundred articles were submitted to the JBP in 2020 (50% more than in 2019), of which 416 (69%) were related to studies conducted in Brazil. As a result, the rate of rejection increased and is currently 78%. In 2020, the journal received 90 COVID-19-related submissions, including editorials, letters to the editor, original articles, and review articles, only 20 (22%) of which were accepted for publication. One of the major challenges for editors and reviewers was to determine which COVID-19-related manuscripts would be relevant to JBP readers and were of adequate methodological quality. In addition, because of the urgency of the situation, we attempted to accelerate the evaluation, peer-review, and publication of articles regarding COVID-19. Once again, we must praise the work of the JBP editors and reviewers, not only because of the greater volume of articles to be evaluated but also (and primarily) because many of them work on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19.

In the last two years, a number of modifications have been implemented in the JBP, with the fundamental support of the SBPT: alignment with some SciELO proposals regarding the Open Science movement, such as the continuous publication of articles; a reduction in the time from submission to the response to authors, as well as in the time from approval to publication; discontinuation of the publication of the print version, which reduced the costs; dissemination of select articles via JBP social networks and on SBPT podcasts; creation of a continuing education series on respiratory physiology; expansion of the publication of consensus and guidelines on the main respiratory diseases, including the use of the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation methodology for the pharmacological approach⁽⁶⁾; prioritization of articles with a greater clinical applicability; expansion of the number of editorials written by international authors; updating instructions to the authors and reviewers; and management of the Digital Object Identifiers directly by the JBP, thus streamlining their registration in the CrossRef database. During this period, the impact factor of the JBP has increased in the main international databases, reaching 1.87 in *Journal Citation Reports* and 1.80 in the *Scimago Journal & Country Rank* database.^(7,8)

Some of the objectives and challenges for the next biennium include the following: to expand the role of the Vice-Editor in the JBP; to optimize the transition to the next board of directors; to establish rules for the SBPT guidelines, facilitating their uniformity and standardization with other international guidelines; to modernize the JBP website, increasing the speed of access; to further adapt to the measures recommended by the Open Science Collaboration, including allowing the submission of articles deposited on preprint servers⁽⁹⁾; to limit the submission of manuscripts exclusively to those in English, while still publishing all articles in English and Portuguese; to continue producing relevant, up-to-date material regarding COVID-19; to expand the group of reviewers and to improve the peer-review process, thus increasing the quality of the articles submitted; and to garner greater interest from international researchers who are looking to submit good quality manuscripts.

Honoring its mission to offer quality continuing education to its members and to the population, the SBPT has reconfigured its performance, with the necessary urgency, without sacrificing scientific quality. The channels of

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communication have been expanded, and new products have been created by using online resources to provide the best existing evidence for the management and treatment of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases. The SBPT has successfully organized innovative events such as the SBPT Virtual Conference. There were achievements related to professional practice, and the quality and security of the process of certifying new pulmonologists was guaranteed through the use of new formats. Member incorporation of and adherence to the new forms and products were quite gratifying to the SBPT Board of Directors.

As demonstrated above, the autonomy of the JBP revealed its efficiency. The 2021-22 administration, within the four-year plan initiated by the previous administration, will continue the projects initiated or scheduled, making the modifications necessary to adapt to the epidemiological context of the moment and to advances of scientific knowledge. Our proposals include the following: to meet the diversified demand in information technology to maintain and implement new activities that encourage the participation of members, which will be covered through the *Atualizar* ("Update") program; to continue to include new participants in SBPT events, guaranteeing the multiplicity and diversity of ideas regarding the scientific merit of each area (to that end, it is important to promote the activities of the New Leadership Commission); to strengthen relationships with medical institutions, such as the Brazilian Federal Medical Council, the Brazilian Medical Association, and state health care agencies, in order to coordinate measures related to the pandemic and to further the practice of respiratory medicine; and to promote activities to enable members to practice telemedicine activities and other new methods in

pulmonology. In addition, partnerships with national and international medical societies will be prioritized, according to the interests of SBPT members, such as training courses, participation in events, lecturer exchange, and the development of guidelines. We will also attempt to create opportunities to demonstrate the importance of disseminating complementary knowledge, of promoting transversality in health care, and of encouraging a multidisciplinary approach. We will seek to ensure that the activities defined as *atos médicos* ("physician-performed procedures") are always respected. Our goals also include maintaining transparency in all aspects, including the financial activities of the SBPT. Other major goals include developing campaigns to stimulate communication, opening spaces for receiving feedback from our associates and from other sectors of society.

Local (state) societies are fundamental for coordinating the practice of respiratory medicine at the national level. Therefore, it is essential to maintain continuously a close partnership with such societies.

We thank everyone who participated in the activities of the SBPT and JBP in the last biennium, especially in 2020, to face the challenges imposed by COVID-19. We must also exalt the hard work of pulmonologists and other professionals working in the area of respiratory medicine in the fight against COVID-19 throughout Brazil. We count on the support of the SBPT members, authors, and reviewers to face the challenges of the next biennium, during which they will certainly continue to make valuable contributions to improve the SBPT and JBP. We hope that the pandemic will be definitively controlled as soon as possible so that face-to-face or hybrid meetings will again be possible.

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