

Stepping Down, Looking Forward

Bruce A. Chabner, MD

Editor-in-Chief

I will retire as editor-in-chief of *The Oncologist* on June 30, 2022, completing 27 years of service in that capacity. I had hardly a notion of what I was getting into, when Marty and Ann Murphy offered me this opportunity in 1994. At first glance, it was not clear that there would be a place for another clinical cancer journal, given the overwhelming presence of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, but we felt that a publication specifically tailored to the informational needs of the practicing oncologist might have a special place in the broad spectrum of cancer journals. We had no organizational sponsorship (AACR, ASCO, and ASH all had their premier journals), and our intention was not to charge for subscription. Yet, somehow, we survived, grew, attracted a loyal readership internationally, and became a leading source of online information for the practitioner. Nearly one million new readers viewed our website with each publication. While our original intent was to focus on timely review articles, the field of clinical cancer therapeutics grew rapidly over this quarter century and with that growth came the submission of many original research articles from the US, Europe, Latin America, and Asia. We strived to anticipate the important new direction of the cancer therapeutics field and initiated a number of innovative sections and special topics. The first of these, Schwartz Center Rounds, a series of discussions of stressful patient-staff interactions edited by Richard Penson, resonated with our readership and was soon copied by other cancer journals. Other notable innovations include the remarkable Clinical Trial Results (CTR), with its quick online format and commitment to publish the many trials languishing in academic and industry data banks. Under the watchful eyes of our senior editors, Susan Bates and Tito Fojo, CTR has published more than 270 early trials. Other notable additions to the standard menu included a Global Oncology Section; the Molecular Tumor Board directed by Aditya Bardia; a series on Racism and Cancer under the guidance of Michele Evans; and a series of articles and editorials on the remarkable transitions in FDA approval strategy under Rick Pazdur's leadership and the EMA under Francesco Pignatti's patronage. All of this would have been impossible without the dedicated and diligent management of the editorial office by our publisher Ann Murphy and her AlphaMed Press staff. Lending us his sage advice and sharp editorial eye has been Marty Murphy, who has so generously served as my personal editor. Marty has always supported my inclination to write controversial editorials regarding politically sensitive topics,

particularly during the past five years and during the COVID epidemic. Marty and Ann have compiled these and other editorials from the past 27 years as a keepsake volume that I treasure; these articles present quite an interesting history of the evolution of cancer care during the past 27 years. These editorials are, of course, freely available on *The Oncologist* web site.

Throughout this quarter century, the Journal has been indeed fortunate to have the support of its editorial board and its senior editors. I wish to thank each of them and hereby acknowledge the essential contribution of the Senior Editors: Bob Pinedo, Gabe Hortobagyi, Susan Bates, Tito Fojo, Oliver Sartor, Lecia Sequist, and Frank Balis, as well as three fine members of this august group, Eli Glatstein, Greg Curt, and Paddy Johnston, who died in recent years and were all special friends of this writer. Without their support, we would not have kept pace with and, at times, anticipated the remarkable advances in the cancer field, and for the Journal, achieved a useful place in the cancer world. We are mindful that our many sponsors became long-time benefactors that enabled us to publish practice-enhancing peer-accepted papers monthly without ever asking our physician-readers to pay for these contributions. Neither did we ever charge for the more than 95,000 CME hours of continuing medical education credits that our physician-learners freely received in partnership with the ACCME-accredited Society for Translational Oncology.

On June 30, I will proudly hand over the Journal's reins to Susan Bates, Professor of Medicine at Columbia Physicians and Surgeons and a dear friend and longtime colleague from the prized time we shared at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Susan and her husband, Tito Fojo, were fellows in what was the premier group of clinical associates at the NCI 42 years ago. They both became outstanding physician-scientists and clinical investigators at NCI. Susan's special interest has been epigenetic modifying drugs and T-cell lymphoid neoplasms, while Tito's work focused on multi-drug resistance and tumor growth kinetics. With the support and strong allegiance of our editorial board, I have the utmost confidence that Susan will provide the strongest dedicated leadership to the Journal as its new editor-in-chief in partnership with our new publisher, the fabled Oxford University Press. Marty and Ann Murphy share this confidence as we hand our beloved Journal, once an infant with an uncertain future, but now a mature adult, to its new Editor-in-Chief. Godspeed!

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