



## ■ EDITORIAL

# A solid and strong beginning

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Since launch, our lives and working practices have been shaken severely by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our working practices have evolved to become more virtual, and our research has also changed. Many of us have had the opportunity to reflect on our previous work and reignite projects that may have stagnated, and to write up and interrogate data sets and materials that we may not have had the time to consider carefully before. On the other hand, we have had to interrupt recruitment into extremely important studies and limit our access to laboratories and radiology, with other clinical evaluation techniques also curtailed by the impact of various lockdowns and restrictions.

Despite all these changes, *Bone & Joint Open* has had a tremendous start. We have published well over 100 papers so far, have been accepted into PubMed Central, and are indexed in PubMed and the Directory of Open Access Journals. It appears that *Bone & Joint Open* has gained popularity in terms of submissions and its online following far more quickly than we would have dared predict. It has become an outstanding repository for protocols and pilot studies,<sup>1-4</sup> for the rapid open publication of COVID-19-related studies,<sup>5-8</sup> and an area where methodologically sound work that does not fit into *The Bone & Joint Journal* can be redirected.<sup>9-11</sup>

We are grateful to all our authors and readers for having supported us, and it is heartening to reflect on the excellent quality of some of the material in *Bone & Joint Open*. We were particularly pleased that we were able to publish a number of protocols, and hope that we will see more randomized controlled studies and meta-analyses in trauma and orthopaedics, and that these will all be appropriately registered and have their protocols published in *Bone & Joint Open*.

Multiple aspects of infection prevention, orthopaedic, and trauma care and training

and research have been considered at various times this year.<sup>12-16</sup> Our changing practice in relation to COVID-19 has been chronicled month-by-month, from the shutdown of services<sup>17-20</sup> through to the introduction of telemedicine and remote working,<sup>21,22</sup> and onto a careful reintroduction of elective surgery and the ongoing impact of COVID-19.<sup>23-25</sup>

At the same time, a number of innovations and future directions have been profiled during 2020. I would highlight in particular MacDessi et al's<sup>26</sup> paper on the arithmetic hip-knee-ankle angle, and the work of Verstraete et al<sup>27</sup> on the application of machine learning to balance total knee arthroplasty.

I have no doubt that *Bone & Joint Open* will continue to go from strength-to-strength next year. We are also pleased that Alex Liddle has now joined as a Speciality Editor, who will help to streamline and improve our workflows.

We welcome you to submit directly to *Bone & Joint Open* and will, of course, also invite authors who have submitted methodologically sound work that cannot be fitted into *The Bone & Joint Journal*. We are particularly keen to see more protocols, pilot studies, and high-quality systematic reviews to enhance our offering to readers.

Thank you for your support during 2020, and we look forward to continued growth and excellence in 2021.

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