

A Bright Future for *Hormones and Cancer*: Farewell Comments of Dr. Carol A. Lange, Recent Past Editor-in-Chief

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Hormones and Cancer (HOCA) began in 2009 as a unique addition to the distinguished ENDO portfolio of publications. Inspired by Endocrine Society (ES) leadership, HOCA was originally led by Dr. Jonathan Li, who served as its founding Editor-in-Chief (EIC). After serving under Jonathan as a Board Member and co-Associate Editor, my tenure as EIC began in August of 2011. Beginning on January 1st, 2015, I will happily “retire” to the position of Editorial Board Member as I fully assume my new role as Vice President of Basic Science of the ES.

When I started my job as EIC of HOCA, my goal was to further shape this still relatively unknown journal. In the early days, the rate of manuscript rejection was high (two of three papers rejected without review), and the journal lacked identity (individual case studies were commonly submitted). I have focused primarily on (1) further defining our scope as a new *research* journal in a highly competitive yet broad focus area and (2) spreading the word that HOCA is a high-quality peer-reviewed venue for publication of research related to hormones and cancer that is both affordable (HOCA has no page charges) and timely (HOCA offers rapid review). I believe that during my tenure, the journal has enjoyed a steady stream of higher-quality submissions (see our listing of the most highly cited papers at <http://www.springer.com/medicine/oncology/journal/12672?hideChart=1#realtime>). By inviting “hot topics” as special features or series articles, such as our collections on androgen receptor variants in prostate cancer and recent translational research topics in thyroid cancer, we have firmly established our identity as a journal publishing the full range of basic, translational, and

clinical research (an ENDO tenant!) relevant to the broad topic of hormones and cancer (see our scope statement at <http://www.springer.com/medicine/oncology/journal/12672>). We are also fully indexed on PubMed and eagerly await our first impact factor, predicted to appear in 2015.

As with all developing projects, challenges remain. Many endocrinologists (scientists and clinician scholars most interested in hormone action!) still do not know about HOCA. We must strive to more fully engage the endocrine research community interested in the topic of hormones and cancer. As the only ES journal that models the society’s tripartite format by publishing basic, translational, and clinical work, our audience is indeed broad. We have an opportunity to bridge the “translation gap” by bringing diverse groups together as we build HOCA. Frankly stated, we must continue to garner high-quality submissions focused on all aspects of hormones and cancer, including endocrine-related topics that touch on all aspects of cancer (cancer risk, development, progression, treatment, and outcomes). I believe that the realm of hormones and cancer as a highly complex and integrated field of diverse expertise should include, for example, the study of the impact of diabetes, obesity, metabolism, and lifestyle including exercise and nutrition, etc. on cancers of hormone-regulated and/or hormone-influenced tissues. Hormone receptor rapid actions and more recently receptor cross talk with other nuclear receptors (i.e., actions that require phosphorylation events) remain hot topics for HOCA content (i.e., estrogen and progesterone or androgen receptor cross talk in breast cancer). Participation of multiple steroid hormone receptors in the same signaling and transcriptional complexes [1,2] is likely a paradigm for many hormone-influenced cancers, such as prostate cancer (where ER-alpha may drive proliferation of advanced disease) [3] and even lung cancer, where progesterone receptor (PR) expression predicts poor outcome, while mineralocorticoid receptor (MR) expression appears to be protective [4].

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In matching our scope to the enormous complexity of hormones and cancer as a field of study, we must also consider new research that includes studies of the actions of hormones and their receptors in normal cells or tissues that are inappropriately (in timing, cell type or context, duration, or amplitude) enacted in cancer. I believe our field is frequently missing the insight brought to us by the study of normal cell biology—to paraphrase the renowned cancer biologist, Dr. Alvin M. Malkinson (my former mentor), “we cannot hope to understand cancer cell/tumor biology without a complete understanding of normal cell biology/organ physiology.” Our field suffers when we forget the hormone-dependent actions of nuclear receptors (NRs) as major “sensors” of signaling pathways in normal cells and developing tissues as an important reference for understanding their altered functions in cancers. Thus, I encourage our readers (and the new HOCA leadership) to consider the submission of papers covering hormone actions in normal cells and tissues as highly relevant to cancers that arise when these same hormones are deregulated in abnormal settings such as in the context of cancer or pre-cancer (i.e., where signaling inputs to NRs are altered, for example). Such studies shed light on early events in cancer development and modifiers of cancer risk as relevant to targeting hormone action for cancer prevention.

Finally, as I reflect upon the past 3 years at HOCA, I am proud to have continued Jonathan’s legacy. Today, the journal is firmly established and remains jointly held by Springer and the Endocrine Society (ES). I am grateful to the Li family, the numerous renowned scientists who have served and continue to serve as dedicated Editorial Board Members and Associate Editors, and the HOCA Editorial Staff at both Springer and ES. I am also grateful to our contributors who have enlivened HOCA content and to our growing readership that includes both ES members and non-members in the USA and abroad. I warmly welcome the incoming EIC of HOCA, Dr. Nancy Weigel (Baylor College of Medicine). Dr. Weigel is a truly exceptional leader in our field who has most recently served

on the Editorial Board of HOCA. I look forward to serving on the Editorial Board under her leadership and am excited to help the journal continue to develop and flourish alongside the other ES journals.



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