



An appreciation from the out-going editor-in-chief

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Introduction

Annals of Nuclear Medicine (ANM), an official journal of the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine (JSNM), was launched in September, 1987 by the then board of directors with Professor Kinichi Hisada as the president. These predecessors endeavored to make ANM an international journal by eliminating all Japanese language from it. Now, ANM is recognized worldwide as an international platform for presenting top research results, highlighted by the fact that approximately 70% of submissions currently come from countries other than Japan. An impact factor of 0.503 was first assigned for ANM in 2001, and has steadily increased to 1.648 for the most recent one. I joined the editorial board in November 2006, was promoted to editor-in-chief in November 2009, and have held this position for the subsequent 10 years.

I had a pleasant surprise when I looked into the list of articles in 2018. A total of 63% of articles published in that year came from abroad in contrast to 31% in 2009. This particular fact made me realize that the editorial approach of my predecessors was well justified. For this and other reasons, I sincerely appreciate the key role assumed by Prof. Hisada in the very early stage of ANM and for yearly donating the best paper award of ANM, the Hisada Prize, for many years. I am very proud of being one of his former students at the Department of Nuclear Medicine, Kanazawa University.

Reflecting on the changes occurring in nuclear medicine throughout the world, the topics of the articles published in ANM have also been changing. Ten years ago, we had a considerable number of articles on conventional single-photon studies including $^{67}\text{Ga}/^{201}\text{Tl}/^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$ -sestamibi tumor scintigraphy, renal/bone/pulmonary scintigraphy, leukocyte scintigraphy, and so on. Many FDG studies were also published,

but it appeared to me as the dawn of a wide application of clinical PET. Against this background, reimbursement by health insurance of FDG PET for oncologic use was started in 2010 in Japan.

In 2018, close to 30% of articles focused on oncology PET, mostly on FDG and several on other relatively new tracers. In the era of theranostics, papers in this regard have become common in ANM, comprising 25% of the total including $^{68}\text{Ga}/^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}/^{90}\text{Y}/^{177}\text{Lu}$ -DOTATATE/DOTATOC/HYNIC-TOC [1–10], $^{18}\text{F}/^{68}\text{Ga}/^{177}\text{Lu}$ -PSMA [3, 4, 7–9], and a new target, CXCR-4 [11]. Phase I/IIa clinical trial of ^{89}Zr -anti-PSMA minibody was reported by a Japanese group [12]. To promote the proper uses of ^{177}Lu -DOTATATE, JSNM released a manual containing necessary guidelines [1]. Several Japanese institutions are keen to perform boron neutron-capture therapy [13, 14].

The data of most clinical articles were being obtained by dedicated PET or SPECT when I joined the editorial board. Development of hybrid instruments of PET/CT, PET/MR [8, 15] and SPECT/CT [16, 17] facilitates more precise localization of lesions. Furthermore, improvements in image quality have made possible the new concept of lesion characterization by radiomics approach such as texture analysis [18–20] which surely will contribute to better management of patients. A recent paper regarding artificial neural network in nuclear diagnosis may reflect one of the future directions of this field [21].

It was a really wonderful experience to be involved in the editorial board of ANM. Frankly, it was also very time-consuming. But, it was a very good opportunity to know what was going on in the nuclear medicine field all over the world as well. At the same time, I sadly experienced quite a few violations in publication ethics and unlawful submission/publication such as duplication, salami slicing, data fabrication, and plagiarism. I would like to ask all readers to keep in mind the truth that patients will be harmed when fairness dies in medical science.

Mutual collaboration with editors of other international journals like European Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging [22], Nuclear Medicine and Molecular

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Imaging, Japanese Journal of Radiology, Asia Oceania Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, and World Journal of Nuclear Medicine provided me with numerous insights useful in improving ANM. Thanks to my friends, Prof. Ignasi Carrio, Prof. June-Key Chung, Prof. Don Soo Lee, Prof. Nagara Tamaki, Prof. Rasoul Zakavi, and Dr. Qaisar Hussain Siraj. I would also like to express my long-term gratitude to my associate editors who have never shown any hesitation in participating in productive discussions during board meetings. Mr. John Gelblum, my old English teacher, has been serving as a language editor in ANM for a long time. Without his big time efforts, ANM could not have gotten its high reputation in international scientific publication.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those who contributed to ANM by submitting their work and taking on the vital role of reviewers. ANM surely owes them its success. Furthermore, I acknowledge readers for their enthusiastic interest in ANM. Finally, special thanks must be expressed to Ms. Kiyoko Kano, the managing editor of ANM, and Ms. Masako Kanda, the secretary-general of JSNM, at the Tokyo headquarters of JSNM for their unstinting support.

I am confident that ANM will keep contributing to the development of nuclear medicine practice for people everywhere in the world. And I hope to see ANM grow forever and ever.

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