

Onwards and upwards

The endeavors of my predecessor, Professor Jan Lotz, a committed visionary who served the *South African Journal of Radiology (SAJR)* in a permanent capacity for 5 years (2008 - 2012), are gratefully acknowledged. Under his stewardship, the *SAJR* benefited from a consistent editorial policy. The journal grew in size to an average of 40 pages per issue, with broader editorial variety accordingly. The online manuscript management system revolutionised the submission and review process. The promised CPD programme was delivered and the journal took major steps toward international recognition, being invited to join GO RAD (Global Outreach - Radiology), a global outreach programme of the International Society of Radiology.

On the eve of assuming the mantle as Editor-in-Chief of the *SAJR*, there are challenges ahead to be considered. The ultimate ambition is for the *SAJR* to achieve international indexing. This is possible, providing *inter alia* that 3 - 5 original articles are published quarterly. The exiting requirements of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) now include the completion of original research. Currently there are 2 accepted pathways to meet this exit requirement: (i) submission of a full research dissertation that must pass a university grading process, and (ii) publication of an original research article by a reputable, peer-reviewed journal. Which pathway would academic radiologists be capable of sustaining, and which should we advocate? It is envisaged that the latter will be the preferred conduit; but how is an appropriate academic standard to be maintained?

The international advisory board has made a number of critical observations and valuable suggestions for strengthening the journal. It is essential that the *SAJR*, and its contributors, work towards defining

the focus and content of the journal. Publishing research related to pathologies endemic to sub-Saharan Africa would have both regional and international appeal. I encourage specialist societies to work in conjunction with the *SAJR* towards producing special issues devoted to such topics. A further recommendation is to publish practical content, including articles related to best practices, protocols and guidelines. By including content related to appropriate imaging in a resource-limited environment, the South African radiological community could serve as a guide to our more affluent international counterparts. The advisory board advocates a transition to an online-only version of the journal. Although this appears to have overwhelming support from members of the RSSA, as polled at a recent congress, there are technical and financial considerations.

The *SAJR* reaffirms its commitment to South African and African researchers, providing those taking their first tentative steps into research and publication with an accessible platform. The *SAJR* has enjoyed heartening support from researchers, both local and foreign, and contributions from the private sector have been steady. These are further encouraged.

So, onwards and upwards we go. With the support of an inspired new era of radiologists, mentored by experienced colleagues, the *SAJR* will find direction, define its focus and make its mark as proudly South African.

Razaan Davis
Editor-in-Chief

