

A bold new future for the IJTLD

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In an Editorial in early 2020,¹ we described how we intended to increase the impact and visibility of the *International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease* (IJTLD), the flagship journal of The Union. However, this was at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has subsequently led to dramatic changes to health services, the global economy and society at large. It also led us to re-evaluate how we might adapt the Journal to these new circumstances. In this report, we highlight the progress made to date against our original plan, and also describe the exciting changes we have initiated to re-establish the Journal at the forefront of research into TB, lung disease and lung health.

Many of the milestones of the earlier Editorial plan have now been reached, including more selective evaluation of manuscripts by the Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors; a faster response time (time to first response has been reduced by 40%); and the launch of a new Forum section with Letters and Correspondence. We have also published a wider selection of Editorials and our non-TB coverage is consistently expanding, with articles on respiratory diseases such as COVID-19, asthma, COPD, child lung health, and the hazards of tobacco and air pollution. The 2020 impact factor (released in June 2021) has risen slightly to 2.4, but this was based on articles published in 2018 and 2019, prior to these editorial changes. Given the positive citation trend for articles published in 2020 and 2021, we anticipate a significantly higher impact factor in 2022.

In the changing context of COVID-19, we were one of the first journals to develop a fast-track process for peer review, editing and publishing preprints on COVID-19. Since April 2020, over 60 fast-track articles on COVID-19 have been made freely available to the community (see IJTLD fast-

track content: <https://theunion.org/news/fast-track-journal-articles>). Understandably, articles on COVID-19 have dominated download figures and citations throughout the pandemic. Selected highlights include articles on how to restrict the spread of COVID-19,² lessons to be learnt from TB management,³ the impact of COVID-19 on TB care,⁴ and the opportunities that this presents,⁵ along with the impact of comorbidities and risk factors on COVID-19.⁶ Other notable content includes a special Focus on bedaquiline (see Editorial by Cox and colleagues),⁷ and a supplement on TB and Ethics (see Editorial by Jaramillo and colleagues).⁸

These achievements would not have been possible without the remarkable work done by the IJTLD Associate Editors, and in particular we warmly thank C C Leung, (who has now completed his time as Editor-in-Chief), for his leadership and support.

TIME TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE

The pandemic focused our thoughts on how to further improve the Journal. In response, we have made changes to the structure of the Editorial team and designed new article types for greater impact. With G B Migliori as Editor-in-Chief, a team of Deputy Editors has been appointed to supplement the work of the Associate Editors.

DEPUTY EDITORS

The team consists of experts from different settings (i.e., Asia, Latin America, Europe, and with a strong interest in Africa) and complementary scientific interests outlined below.

Catherine Ong

Assistant Professor at the Department of Medicine, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, Consultant in Infectious Diseases and TB Visiting Consultant at the Singapore Tuberculosis Control Unit, Vice-President of the Society of Infectious Disease (Singapore), and Secretary of the Chapter of Infectious Disease Physicians in Academy of Medicine, Ong works on TB with a focus on host-pathogen interactions, biomarker discovery, rapid tests and TB host-directed therapies. She has extensive experience in Asia, and in working with the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office.

Simon Tiberi

Honorary reader and consultant in infectious diseases at Barts Health NHS Trust & Queen Mary University of London, having served as ERS (European Respiratory Society) Secretary of the Tuberculosis Group and now Scientific Liaison officer elect of the TB Section of The Union, Tiberi's

interests include drug-susceptible and -resistant TB, non-tuberculous mycobacteria, and other respiratory infections and health inequalities.

Anna Cristina Carvalho

Expert on infectious diseases, presently working as a Public Health Researcher at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, Fiocruz, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Carvalho has developed clinical and epidemiological studies on TB. With a strong background in Health International Cooperation projects focused on Africa and Latin America, she teaches postgraduate courses at The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and Fiocruz, and is one of Coordinators of the Paediatric Tuberculosis Area of the Brazilian Tuberculosis Research Network (REDE-TB).

Isabella Annesi-Maesano

Research Director at the French National Institutes of Health, Professor of Environmental Epidemiology, and Deputy Director of the Desbrest Institute of Epidemiology and Public Health (*Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale/Unité mixte*) in Montpellier, France, Annesi-Maesano is a key opinion leader in respiratory and environmental health with research on the role of air pollution, bio-contaminants, climate change, inequalities and the exposome in allergic and respiratory diseases and related prevention. She has previously led the Lung Diseases Section of The Union and The Epidemiology and Occupation Assembly of the ERS. Presently she is a member of the ATS (American Thoracic Society) Environmental Health Policy Committee and of the ERS Ethics and Integrity Committee.

In addition, Giovanni Sotgiu (Professor of Medical Statistics at the University of Sassari, Italy, a former Secretary of the ERS Infection Assembly and an expert in TB and lung disease) has kindly agreed to help coordinate the methodological aspects of peer-review and provide strategic support.

NEW ARTICLE TYPES

As a key part of our vision for the future, the IJTLD has launched an ambitious project, the IJTLD Clinical Standards in Lung Health. These are a series of articles on important lung health conditions, developed by a large panel of international experts representing the main societies, associations and groups active in each field. Each article prescribes a set of standards for diagnosis and care to guide healthcare providers and clinicians in achieving optimal management of patients with a given disease. The first of these, the Clinical standards for the assessment, management, and rehabilitation of post-TB lung disease, is included in this issue of the IJTLD,⁹ with an accompanying Editorial by Bauer et al.¹⁰ The IJTLD Clinical Standards in Lung Health will also be presented at a special session of the

World Conference on Lung Health later this month. Over time, the *IJTLD* Clinical Standards in Lung Health will build as a collection to help improve patient care for all respiratory diseases.

Also, to ensure we quickly capture new scientific developments and publish them in an accessible form, the Journal has initiated a new ‘mini-review’ article type. The first mini-review will appear in the December issue of the Journal, creating a template for the rapid synthesis of exciting advances in key areas of lung health.

References

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