



The second year of *EFORT Open Reviews*...

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EFORT Open Reviews (EOR) is now in its second year of activity. The reviews published have been well received by our readers and every month more hits are being recorded on the Journal's web site. The other good tidings are that the indexing process is well underway. This tends to demonstrate that there is a need for a journal dedicated to review articles. Some of the reviews are designed to be very basic but offer high educational value while others, more sophisticated and specialized, contribute to the understanding of complex issues. The editors have strived to obtain high-quality material and have been rewarded by our authors providing EOR with well-researched, informative and insightful articles. Reviews in EOR are not, and should not, be aimed at providing ongoing and original results of scientific research, but rather the reviews are expected to aggregate and compile original research in a particular field so as to produce a descriptive and informative state-of-the-art paper with the goal of updating readers as completely as possible in specific areas of our vast orthopaedic and musculoskeletal domain. EOR reviews are also not construed to be formal meta-analysis type papers using complex methodology with an end-point of attempting to provide a specific answer to a particular query.

To be instructive and valuable, reviews need to contain as many high-quality and clearly comprehensible illustrations as possible. The editors are most grateful to authors when they provide quality line drawings, clear schemata and sharp photographs that highlight the points made in their article. In the future, we will be looking for more photographic and video material to illustrate clinical findings, operative techniques and interventions. Tables are also a great way of summarizing vast amounts of information and are highly useful for condensing complex ideas, concepts or techniques. A major part of any review is the list of references. These lists are especially useful to readers wishing to delve deeper into a topic and very often the provided list of references is the starting point for readers wishing to acquire a fuller grasp of a particular topic or a fine point raised in a review article. It is important that the reference list contains the most pertinent and contemporary

articles and studies while avoiding a surfeit of citations of works marginal to the topic at hand or largely only of historical importance.

To be accepted for publication the reviews must go through a rigorous vetting process which includes review by peers. The associate editor in charge of a specific domain will look at the article and mandate two or more reviewers to analyse the paper. The reviewers will suggest changes or improvements and formulate an opinion as to the acceptability of the work for publication. This is major and pivotal work and, as editors, we put a great burden on the shoulders of our dedicated reviewers. The reviewer has to be cognizant of the pertinent literature and he/she must carefully read the text through so as to pick up inaccuracies or imprecisions. At times, the reviewer may suggest altering the structure of the review so that the flow of information is clearer and smoother. The paper is then sent back to the authors for revisions, corrections or addenda. After receiving the corrected version it is then resubmitted to the reviewers for their final approval and the associate editors send on their recommendations. As outlined above, to meaningfully review and analyse a review paper is indeed painstaking work. Reviewing is quite often accomplished during "off-time" or during weekends and holidays when the reviewer finally finds some quiet time away from the distractions and excitements that the average working day (or night) imposes upon the busy surgeon or researcher. Well aware of this commitment, the editors are therefore all the more grateful to the individuals willing to take on this essential duty of reviewing. Indeed, it is only after this arduous process, that publication will be definitively considered. In case of acceptance, the paper is then sent to the scientific and language editor for the final version. This is also a major step in the editorial process because it ensures clarity of language, unity of style and optimal readability. The last version is then submitted to the authors for their final approval before publication.

The reviewing process plays a major role in ensuring the success of academic and scientific publications, and

therefore efforts are undertaken to make this indispensable activity more visible and rewarding for the reviewers. It is imperative that reviewing soon becomes a recognised continuing medical education (CME) activity so that those individuals engaged in this difficult and so essential task be allowed to obtain officially recognised credits.

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