Editor's page

2012 Annual Summary and New Projects in Revista Española de Cardiología

Resumen anual y novedades del año 2012 en Revista Española de Cardiología

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In recent years, the present article offering data on the activity of Revista Española de Cardiología (REC) has been published in the journal’s December issue. However, due to the editorial production schedule, we cannot collate final data for the calendar year in December; therefore, to date the figures given have been a pro-rata estimate for 12 months based on the first 9 months of the year. The editors believe we can offer a more precise review if we use real end-of-year figures, and so our review of 2012 is being published in the March 2013 issue. We will continue this practice in the coming years. As is customery, REC activity, bibliometric indexes, and new projects were presented and fully debated at the annual meeting of the Editorial Committee and, more briefly, at the Spanish Society of Cardiology (SEC) Annual General Meeting held in October 2012 in Seville on the occasion of the society’s National Congress on Cardiovascular Diseases.

In our review of 2012, we must also report changes REC has introduced so that despite the grave economic crisis affecting Spain, which has affected SEC too, the journal remains nationally and internationally competitive despite budget cuts of nearly 25%, publishing contents of scientific interest, and advancing on the electronic front—the direction in which all scientific journals are moving.

NEW PROJECTS IN 2012

New Editorial Projects

Ahead of Print

Our new initiatives for 2012, announced in 2011, were to change “Brief reports” to “Scientific letters” and start “ahead of print” (AOP) publication, which began in the final quarter of 2011. Changing the 3 “Brief reports” we used to publish into 6 “Scientific letters” has meant we can publish more, in a format that differs from the scientific article as it has a limitation on the number of words and references, and there is no abstract. This shorter format enables authors to communicate more directly on series and initial research findings that will probably lead to more detailed future studies. Other prestigious publications in the cardiovascular field also have adopted the publication of “Scientific letters” and we are convinced this initiative favors authors.

AOP publication may perhaps be the most important initiative REC has undertaken in recent years. The changes in the production of REC begun in 2011, and the modernization of the website, mean articles accepted for publication appear in electronic format long before they can be included in a regular issue of the journal. These publications, now used by most journals of prestige, are accompanied by a DOI (digital object identifier). This identification number for each article means it can be cited from the moment it is published online. The backlog of articles accepted but pending publication has now disappeared. Since this initiative began, REC has published 140 AOP original articles and the time lapse from acceptance to AOP publication is 67 working days; approximately 2 months pass between online publication and appearing in a regular issue.

Moreover, our online publications are now fully bilingual, so the presence of articles in Spanish and English 2 months after receiving pdf approval from PubMed is now a reality. This constitutes one of the best services REC has initiated to improve its attention to authors. The impact of AOP article citability and the repercussion of these publications on the impact factor (IF) are a bibliometric issue that we are studying. They should produce positive results as AOP publication substantially raises the number of “citable” articles and lengthens the life of an article prior to its appearance in paper format.

Simultaneous Journal in English. Bilingual Journal

As we announced in 2011, the bilingual edition of REC is a fully established reality. This represents another landmark for the journal that ensures the internationalization of its scheduled, simultaneous publication in Spanish and English, meticulously revised in both languages. This was reflected spontaneously by PubMed, which now classifies REC as a bilingual journal, an uncommon recognition among scientific journals in Spanish. We are working to be recognized and classified as a bilingual journal in other databases, such as in ScienceDirect. In this respect, we would like to highlight the good work of the translators and the commitment of copy editors Elaine Lilly, Dominick Angiolillo, and Gail Craigie, who have managed to produce an excellent English-language edition.

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Editor's Pick

In each issue, the editor chooses to comment on one original article on the basis of its scientific or practical relevance. In 2012, this article has been highlighted on the website and commented in the editor’s blog. From 2013, with the proposed boost to the REC website as a documentary and educational platform, these articles will be accompanied by a video and be freely available during the 6-month embargo (see details below).

Innovations in Production

As we said initially, REC’s budget has been cut and this has forced us to make a series of changes which we now detail.

• Reduced print run (Spanish edition; English publication is electronic only). Those members and subscribers who, when given the opportunity to do so, asked to receive REC in paper format will continue to do so. However, interns who receive REC free of charge will only have access to the electronic edition (they are, after all, “digital natives” par excellence), as will new subscribers. We would like to take this opportunity to ask all members and subscribers who no longer wish to receive REC in paper format to please notify us.

• Publication of the special issues “Relevant problems in cardiology” and “Current topics” will cease. However, publication of “Current topics” articles has been converted into 6 special articles to appear in the first semester of each year, 2 in each issue. We have commissioned these 6 articles from the individuals responsible for the 6 fields of interest defined in the SEC Strategic Plan, which brings together the different scientific sections.

• Special issue on the Congress on Cardiovascular Diseases will only be published in electronic format (pdf and html), which will facilitate searching for abstracts by author or title using the website’s advanced search engine. Our objective is to publish this online in advance of the SEC National Congress. We are also considering whether or not to digitalize earlier issues so they can appear in the new format. This issue will appear in CD format if specific financial support becomes available.

• Black and white publication. Since September 2012, the paper format journal is published in black and white only, although the electronic version is in full color. Figures will be printed in color if authors wish to bear the cost.

• Embargo on the paper format publication. To raise income, and like almost all scientific society journals, in the first 6 months after publication in paper format, articles will only be available to non-subscribers upon payment. In no way will this affect members of SEC or non-member subscribers, who will have an access code to enable download of articles in electronic format at no extra cost. This measure will come into effect in the first quarter of 2013. However, these articles will have been available without any limitation from their AOP appearance until they form part of an issue of REC. Moreover, each issue will include one original article (the “Editor’s pick” article) and the accompanying editorial that will be freely available during the 6-month embargo. In addition, “Scientific letters” and “Images in cardiology” will be freely available.

MANUSCRIPT MANAGEMENT, PUBLICATION TIMES, AND BIBLIOMETRIC INDICES

In 2012 we received a total of 670 articles. Of these, 26% were submitted in English and 16% were sent in by non-Spanish authors, most of whom were European. Of the 278 original articles, 15% were accepted for publication; a further 222 manuscripts were scientific letters and 21% were accepted. In 2012, in paper format, we published 67 original articles, 72 scientific letters, and 12 images in cardiology.

Publication Times

The entire editorial team is convinced that REC publication times represent an index of quality and a factor that is highly valued by authors. Since we took office, we have striven to reduce them and are pleased to share this year’s results, which appear in Figure 1. Each column is divided into 3 components: the lower segment is the time the REC office takes to assign an article to an associate editor; the middle segment is the time the editor takes to decide if the article is of interest to REC and assign it to external reviewers; the upper part indicates how long reviewers take to send in their comments and the editor takes to make a decision. These good results are the sum of excellent work on the part of the REC administration, editorial team, and reviewers. Without the commitment of each of these groups, we would not have been able to cut the editorial decision-making process by 9 days in only 3 years. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone who has made this possible. We are convinced that authors are grateful for this agility in managing their manuscripts and consider it a sign of our respect for their research, which takes so much effort. Of course, these times are competitive and are similar to those of the most prestigious cardiovascular journals. To ensure authors are fully informed about the publication process affecting their articles, since June 2012 we have been sending follow-up letters to the corresponding authors to inform them in real-time about the production process and approximate publication dates for their articles.

Bibliometric Indices

As is customary, in June 2012 the ISI (Institute of Scientific Information), through the JCR (Journal of Citation Reports), awarded REC its IF, which this year was 2.530. This figure reflects the citations received in 2011 of articles published in 2009 and 2010. This year, the IF for REC improved notably after the indexation problems of the previous year, which we duly reported in the corresponding “Editor’s page”. This IF means REC remains comfortably placed in the second quartile of IF-rated cardiovascular journals, despite the fact that the number of these journals never ceases to grow. The IF list for 2011 included 117 journals, vs 114 in the list for 2010 and 95 in the list for 2009. Much of this growth is due to the appearance of new journals as offshoots of major cardiovascular journals like Circulation,7 the Journal of the American College of Cardiology,8 or the European Heart Journal.9

One important aspect of citations quality is the number of citations in external journals. In this respect too, the evolution of REC is positive as the IF has increased in parallel with the number of external citations—a measure of the interest generated by the articles we publish. Figure 2 shows how external citations have progressed over time, and year-on-year growth is clearly significant. In this sense, at REC we have a proactive approach to SEC members who cite relevant articles in REC when they publish in other journals. At the SEC National Congress we reminded scientific section members of the importance of external citations when these are relevant.

In addition to the IF, other bibliometric indices are used to measure and compare scientific journals. One of these is the SCImago index, which bases its analysis on publications included in Scopus, the Elsevier B.V. database that includes both publications indexed in PubMed and others that are not. According to SCImago, REC has an index of 0.489 and is ranked first among Spanish cardiovascular journals, in the second quartile. Finally, REC is the Spanish journal with the highest IF in the Web of Knowledge.

REVIEWERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

As we said in the previous section, the work of our reviewers is fundamental in assessing manuscripts and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their dedication, enthusiasm,
effort, and loyalty. Their contribution continues to be rewarded in the form of SEC continuous education credit hours. When we began our term as editors, we committed ourselves to sending every reviewer their personal statistics in January of each year. These include the number of articles reviewed, their mean review time, and for comparison the overall mean for the journal. Figure 1 shows that review times have fallen and that we have achieved the objective we set the editorial committee of reviewing articles in under 2 weeks. However, some reviewers’ work-rates always stand out above the mean and we recognize this by designating them as elite reviewers (Table 1). This takes account of the number of articles reviewed in a year, the types of article, and their mean review time. Special mention is due to Juan Quiles, who has been the top elite reviewer since the start of this initiative. Congratulations on your excellent work!

Figure 1. Mean times from article submission to first editorial decision during 2012 and a comparison with data from previous years.

Figure 2. Trend in the number of external citations received by Revista Española de Cardiología. The values given express the number of external citations received each year by articles published in the previous 2 years.
Another special mention is due to those contributors who occasionally help review articles, without actually being members of the editorial committee. We are grateful for the time and effort dedicated to REC by all those named in Table 2. Some of these, for their dedication, scientific knowledge, and the interest shown, have been elected as members of the editorial committee for the next 3 years (Table 3), leading to a partial renewal of the committee. Contributors who join the editorial committee are elected on the basis of the number, quality, and response time of the reviews they undertake. We hope to continue to be able to rely on their invaluable help now that they will enjoy some much-deserved recognition.

WEB PAGE

The REC website (www.revespcardiol.org) was completely redesigned in 2011, is fully bilingual and has functioned perfectly throughout 2012. On the website we list AOP articles in html and pdf format. It is the electronic repository of the journal, all supplements, and special issues. One innovation in 2012 was the extension of author and keyword searches to the special issue with abstracts of the presentations made at the SEC National Congress (in Seville). Subsequently, this information and that of future conferences will be transferred to the website’s general search engine. This will help users locate abstracts—especially after 2012 when publication in paper format will cease. We send out a monthly electronic index in Spanish and English that reaches approximately 100,000 users. This is well-received and is on a par with other similar indexes.

The website blog (http://blog.revespcardiol.org/) has been very active. Each month we comment on the article picked by the editor responsible (Pablo Avanzas). We also upload comments on articles by Spanish authors published in other prestigious journals and on preliminary abstracts from 3 international conferences (the American College of Cardiology, European Cardiology Society, and American Heart Association). Measures of activity in terms of site visits and pdf downloads, both in Spanish and English, indicate the page is dynamic and generates interest, and that specific activities such as conferences generate peaks of activity.

The website home page also hosts information on all those additional activities we conduct together with other groups of editors. Users can consult all the national Ibero-American cardiology journals and the journals of the national societies of the European Cardiology Society group of editors, with first class teaching materials in the form of ALMANAC, which Heart cedes to all journals in the group. Finally, but of great importance, the website also hosts the “Update” section and a link for users to obtain credits for this educational activity (see below).

The projected iPad application has been put on hold but we hope it will come into being in 2013.

PRIZES FOR BEST ARTICLES

This year, for the first time, the SEC prizes for the best articles received no financial reward due to the aforementioned budget adjustments. They did however receive recognition in the form of a diploma whereas the scientific sections’ prizes continued to receive a financial reward.

Table 4 shows the full list of prize-winning articles in each category. We want to stress that this year the first prize for articles published in REC was awarded ex aequo to Rodríguez-Mañero et al. and Falces et al.; the second prize for the article with most mid-term citations was shared by Bertomeu et al., Miró et al., and Gonzalo et al.; and the second prize awarded by Izasa for publications in interventional cardiology was also shared.

SUPPLEMENTS, SPECIAL ISSUES, SPECIAL ARTICLES, AND REGISTRIES

Under the title Revista Española de Cardiología – Suplementos, 7 supplements have been produced in 2012. Four of these were published in 2012 and contained 11 articles. It reviews innovations from the previous year and was commissioned from the SEC scientific sections.

In May, we published the 5 articles that correspond to presentations made at the American Heart Association conference held in November 2011 in Orlando (Florida, United States), in the SEC/Inter-American Society of Cardiology joint session. As in previous years, but for the last time (see “Innovations in Production”), 2 special issues were published: “Current Topics” and “Relevant Problems in Cardiology”. “Current Topics” was published in January 2012 and contained 11 articles. It reviews innovations from the previous year and was commissioned from the SEC scientific sections.

The scientific sections that have registries of activity again published their data in the October through December issues. These publications are extremely important because they are a faithful reflection of healthcare reality and one of the few reliable sources on this activity. One example that demonstrates their importance is the fact that based on the number of primary angioplasty procedures conducted in each autonomous region of Spain, substantial changes have been made in attending myocardial infarction. The inexplicable difference between the number of primary angioplasty procedures per million inhabitants, together with clinical practice guidelines, led regional healthcare authorities to rethink their strategies and create regional networks to attend myocardial infarction, partly thanks to data from these registries.

Also in 2012, summaries of the “Late Breaking Clinical Trials” and “Hot Sessions” from the 3 major international cardiology conferences—the American Heart Association, American College of Cardiology, and European Cardiology Society—have been published. As in the previous year, all data and figures are published on the website and in the editor’s blog almost at the same time as the conference presentation. Hard-copy publication is delayed by the normal 3 months—the time needed to produce a paper edition.

A further innovation in 2012 was the publication of SEC commentaries on each of the European Cardiology Society guidelines.

Finally, we must mention REC's 2 annual educational series: "Update", in 2012 dedicated to arrhythmias with contributions from major authorities of worldwide renown; and "Focus", a series of
**Table 3**

List of Contributors who Have now Joined the *Revista Española de Cardiología* Editorial Committee

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<td>Juan M. Ruiz-Nodar</td>
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4 articles dedicated this past year to approaching more theoretical aspects of healthcare management,\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^0\) a highly important issue that few professionals have had the opportunity to learn about, and one which is currently much needed. The series was directed and written by lecturers from the ESADE Business and Law School and we wish to take this opportunity to thank them for their excellent work.

Credit hours will be awarded for “Update” 2012 and can be obtained by using the form available on the website from March 2013.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE Revista Española de Cardiología**

As is customary, in 2012 the following training events took place:

* **Casa del Corazón Course**

The fourth edition of “The scientific article: from the author to the reader” was held on 13 April at the Casa del Corazón, in Madrid. As in previous years, it included theoretical sessions and ended with a workshop on ethical issues in publication. Attendance was outstanding and the course was highly appreciated by the participants. It will be repeated in 2013 but as an extramural course organized together with the Societat Catalana de Cardiologia and held in Barcelona. The editors wish to thank Astra Zeneca for the unconditional grants they have offered for all editions of the course and Bayer for that provided in 2012. Their support has enabled us to establish this course as a tradition in SEC’s continuous education program.

* **Workshop at the Spanish Society of Cardiology Conference**

At the conference in Seville a second edition of the workshop “What you should know before writing a scientific article” took place, attended by a total of 26 people and receiving a mean feedback score of 8.93, indicating it continues to be of great interest to conference participants.

* **“Best Articles in Revista Española de Cardiología” Session**

For the third consecutive year we presented the editors’ choice of the 4 best articles published in 2011: Azocar et al.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^1\) commented by Dr. Ángel Moya, Rodríguez-Palomares et al.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^2\) commented by Dr. Jordi Estornell, Rodríguez-Leo et al.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^3\) commented by Dr. Román Lezáun, and Baena-Díez et al.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^4\) commented by Dr. Ignacio Ferreira. This session is public recognition of the authors’ work and a forum in which to disseminate the articles and REC to conference participants. As in previous sessions, attendance was noteworthy. This year, the authors had the opportunity to respond to the experts’ comments.

For 2013, we are planning to collaborate in this session with the European Heart Journal. Hence, it will be a meeting point between 2 journals from different contexts bringing excellent published research from both journals to conference participants.

**OTHER INITIATIVES**

We are pleased to be able to inform readers that the document on Conflicts of Interest we presented on the “Editor’s page” last year is now in general use, as occurs in all cardiovascular journals.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^5\) The advantage is that it can be saved in electronic format and updated whenever necessary. This means we can keep it up to date and it can be used as a model by other journals. As editors, we limit ourselves to passing on to readers the information authors submit; the author’s integrity and the reader’s criteria should be sufficient to establish whether a given publication contains any bias that might detract from its credibility.

We remain highly attentive to the fulfillment of the ethical requirements of scientific publication.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^6\) As we said elsewhere, issues of authorship are increasingly relevant and have been a source of conflict in some recent cases. The use of electronic tools (eg, iThenticate) to determine the literal copying of whole paragraphs is of great help and is used in REC when feasible. The journal is a member of the COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics), an organization that studies the ethical issues of publication and research. As well as a forum for debate, COPE constitutes a source of learning for editors and reviewers as it establishes general guidelines to act in questions that are ethically problematic and even provides ad-hoc advice on managing specific cases of bad practice.

Unfortunately, despite all the information and education the editors receive about ethics, cases of malpractice continue to be described in prestigious journals.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^7\),\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^8\) Some have been extremely difficult to discern and falsified e-mail messages from reviewers at the request of authors and sent to the authors themselves have been identified.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^9\) Nonetheless, the process of publication continues to be based on mutual trust between editor and author. This, and “fair play”, should guide all authors. The editors believe that education on this issue is highly important and they dedicate their time to this task. The editors are available to authors to discuss any issues arising during the writing of manuscripts and at the time of their submission.

**Joint Initiatives With Other Editorial Groups**

- Editors network (European Cardiology Society). This group of editors meets annually during the European Cardiology Society conference. In 2012, the meeting was in Munich, Germany, and various agreements were reached: a) to continue publishing for one more year on our website the series of 5 continuous education articles published by Heart and written by authors of recognized prestige; b) a group of English-language content journals has been selected to be made accessible via the European Cardiology Society website search engine (http://www.escardio.org); REC is one of the first 5 in this group, which is excellent news as it will undoubtedly increase REC’s visibility, especially in the English-speaking world, since this portal has a high number of visits, and c) joint publication on ethical issues of publishing.\(^2\)\(^0\)\(^6\)
- HEART (Heart Editors Action Round Table) Group. With this editors group we have worked on a short article highlighting the importance of using vocabulary appropriate to the objectives and
results of the studies that are published. The editors wholeheartedly encourage authors to study this article to improve their descriptions of results.\textsuperscript{111}

- RCVIB (Revistas Cardiovasculares Iberoamericanas). The group of Ibero-American editors meets annually, coinciding with the American College of Cardiology meeting, and discusses issues of interest to their journals, most of which are not indexed. Several initiatives have arisen and these are described elsewhere.\textsuperscript{102,113} At the March 2012 meeting, Dr Héctor Luciardi of the Revista de la Federación Argentina de Cardiología was elected group coordinator in place of Manlio Márquez, of Archivos de Cardiología de México, who had served the previous 2-year term. In addition, participants were informed about the follow-up to collaboration agreements proposed in 2011, on which debate at the meeting was based: linguistic support for the Spanish language in RCVIB network publications, adherence to HEART Group ethical principles, use of the SCImago Journal Rank as IF, expansion of
reviewer lists, a second location for network meetings, collaboration within RVIB, and relations with the European Cardiology Society.

FUTURE PROJECTS

We are pleased that the SEC Executive Committee has seen fit to entrust us with a further 3-year term as editors and commit ourselves to continue to improve, as far as possible, the already high quality of REC and to battle on in these editorially complicated times due to the economic situation, the launch of huge numbers of new journals that compete for manuscripts and economic resources, and new models of publication, like the Open Access model in which authors pay to have their work published. Many national research institutions giving substantial grants to research already demand that access to grant-financed results should be free and commit authors to publishing in Open Access journals.

Let us now detail our ideas:

- Website changes will facilitate access to REC's educational resources. Briefly, the innovations we intend to introduce involve the following: a) videos of "Editor's pick" articles will be developed; b) "Update" will be more visible and the series from the last 3 years will be available; c) articles will be reorganized and grouped in an "Index by sections," so readers can consult them by topic, like the clinical practice guidelines; d) an "Image of the month" will be published and readers will have access to an appropriately classified REC image bank; e) the editor's blog will continue, and f) the search engine will give access to SEC national congress presentations.

- A new Twitter account will put us in direct contact with readers and, at the same time, follow other cardiovascular journals using this social network.

- Launch the iPad and smartphone application.

- Invitations have been accepted. However, over the next 3 years we are going to give priority to Spanish experts in the different fields of cardiology to write editorials for relevant articles while simultaneously maintaining contact with colleagues in other countries.

- Closer collaboration with some Ibero-American journals indexed by PubMed, seeking issues of mutual editorial benefit.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We cannot end this summary without expressing our sincere thanks for their excellent work, dedication, and initiative to Eva Cardenal, Iria del Río, María González and Pablo Lobato. Without them, Revista Española de Cardiología would not be possible.

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