Editorial

Circulation: New Opportunities
When all is considered, what matters most is opportunity

James T. Willerson, MD

Beginning with this issue, Circulation will be published on a weekly basis for 50 weeks of the year. This has been the present Editor’s goal since the Circulation Editorial offices moved to Houston in 1993, and now with the blessing and full support of the Scientific Publishing Committee of the American Heart Association led previously by Dr. Valentin Fuster and presently by Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, Circulation has this bright new opportunity to further serve the world-wide community interested in cardiovascular medicine.

H. H. Marvin, President of the American Heart Association in 1950 and writing for the Founding Fathers of Circulation, indicated in an Editorial written in its first issue that Circulation would be a vehicle for communicating the best clinical and basic research related to human cardiovascular diseases. He wrote, “Circulation, then, is addressed to all those interested in the cardiovascular system in health and disease—the research scientist, the specialist, the practicing physician. Its intention is to include articles in the basic sciences relating to this field and papers representing the finest type of clinical research, as well as those which are mainly “practical” in their application. Recent years have witnessed a remarkable widening of interest in the physiologic and biochemical aspects of the circulation. The journal would fail in one of its most important functions if it did not encourage publication of articles in these and other basic fields. It is the firm purpose of the Editor, the Editorial Board and the Publisher to avoid making it on the one hand a journal so exalted in its aims that only a handful of scientists could read it intelligently and, on the other hand, a purely practical journal which would be a vehicle for communicating the best clinical and basic research related to human cardiovascular diseases. It is clearly impossible to create a journal as the original source for important publications related to cardiovascular disease.

The present Editor has been asked frequently why there is a need to publish Circulation on a weekly basis. The same questions were asked concerning the advisability of publishing Circulation twice a month, which was initiated in January of 1995. I believe there should be a journal of cardiovascular medicine available to the world-wide community of cardiovascular physicians and scientists on a weekly basis communicating breakthrough observations of critical importance that will influence the care of patients and provide new insights into mechanisms responsible for human disease. The journal should report important advances rapidly and broadly.

There are many potential advantages of a weekly publication, including an ability to rapidly disseminate important information related to cardiovascular medicine in a format easily read and interactive with its readership. There should be information of interest and importance to all who work in cardiovascular medicine and such information should have great relevance to the care of patients with cardiovascular diseases. Dr. Marvin concluded the first Editorial written in Circulation by saying, “It is clearly impossible to create a journal that will please everyone; such a goal, however, may be kept in view. It is our intention to publish in Circulation papers, abstracts, reviews and special articles of such high caliber that they will receive the unqualified approval of those most competent to judge them.”

In publishing Circulation on a weekly basis, we shall be continuing the Founding Fathers’ expectations of what Circulation should be, broadened by our own very strong desires and those of the American Heart Association to have it communicate major advances in cardiovascular medicine. We ask the readership to help us constantly move forward toward these goals and to provide all the assistance that it can in making the journey productive and rewarding for all of us.

References

The opinions expressed in this editorial are not necessarily those of the editors or of the American Heart Association. Correspondence to James T. Willerson, MD, Circulation Editorial Office, St Luke’s Episcopal Hospital/Texas Heart Institute, 6720 Bertner Ave, Room B524 (MC1-267), Houston, TX 77030-2697.

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