

Not just another journal

John W Griffin

Welcome to *Nature Clinical Practice Neurology*. I am delighted that *Nature*, one of the premier publishers in biomedical research and medicine, has chosen neurology as one of the many clinical subspecialties covered by the *Nature Clinical Practice* series. This journal will complement and complete *Nature's* already authoritative presence in basic neuroscience, represented by *Nature Neuroscience* and *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*. The *Nature Clinical Practice* journals are an innovative approach by *Nature* to address the disparity between the wealth of neurological knowledge and the diminishing time that is available for practitioners to incorporate that knowledge into their practices.

As neurologists, we recognize that understanding the nervous system is set to be one of the greatest intellectual and research challenges of the next few decades, comparable to the challenge of molecular biology over the past 30 years. We see the excitement that is experienced by students as they learn how the brain works and what goes wrong in disease, as reflected in the popularity of brain science majors on undergraduate campuses. The brain also features prominently in lay science shows on television. In addition, neurologists are in the best position to understand the stake that society holds in improving the prevention and treatment of neurological disease in an aging population.

The shrinkage in the amount of time that we are able to devote to learning, combined with increased demands on our time from administrative activities, are worldwide issues in the field of neurology, and the increasing subspecialization of the field compounds the challenge of keeping abreast of current knowledge. How will this journal help? This journal has several innovative approaches and unique editorial content.

***Nature Clinical Practice Neurology* is an all-review journal with an international scope. Its principal aim is to present—in a succinct and accessible format—information that is relevant to practice or practice enhancement.**

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Competing interests

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The content will be timely, putting the newest data into a clinical context. We will make a point of dealing with prevalent diseases that are not well served by other neurology journals but are important in practice. The journal will tackle issues such as the neurological effects of exercise, the neurology of diabetes, spine disease, infectious diseases (including AIDS), aging and pain.

The journal will provide basic science information that truly enhances practice. For example, many heritable central and peripheral nervous system 'dying back' axonal degenerations have recently been shown to reflect defects in the axonal transport systems. Understanding the basic science and pathophysiology behind such phenomena will make consultations with patients with these conditions more satisfying. I intend to make such presentations truly authoritative by combining expert opinions from basic scientists and clinicians in the authorship of review articles.

Finally, the journal will touch on the political and economic issues that affect neurology practice. For example, why is there a worldwide shortage of human gamma globulin for infusion? What determines when procedures such as cerebrovascular stenting move out of the experimental domain to become procedures that are paid for by health insurance, and how does the policy for making such decisions differ around the world?

In the past, I have resisted invitations to edit new or existing journals. I am excited about this undertaking, about the enthusiastic response of the Advisory Board, and by the opportunity to work with the superb *Nature* staff. This will not be 'just another journal'.