Dear readers,

Wish you a very happy New Year. I thank you for giving me an opportunity to serve this journal as its Chief Editor. I thank all the outgoing editorial team members for their excellent work, and I am fortunate to inherit such a position from my predecessor Dr. Raveendran, who has taken care of this journal for a long time and elevated this journal to a great level of quality and content. Dr. Raveendran deserves great appreciation from one and all, and on behalf of all the members of the society, I thank him for his contribution and service to this journal. We hope to take this journal along the path he has paved so well.

We have constituted a new editorial team and International Advisory Board for the journal. The new team is young and experienced and has been chosen from all fields of pharmacology. There is good representation of experimental pharmacologists, clinical pharmacologists, veterinary pharmacologists, pharmacokineticians, pharmacovigilance experts, ethno-pharmacologists. They are able researchers from academia, industry, national and international institutes and regulatory bodies. The Editorial Board will be proactive and will strive to promote research publications through this journal.

My first priority is to apprise the readers about the importance of learning pharmacology and the newer opportunities emerging out of pharmaceutical research in the academic field and industry.

Information about the mechanism by which drug works has expanded enormously, and the pace of expansion continues to accelerate. The number of receptors, the nature of transduction mechanisms, the vascular endothelium and cytokines are the examples of areas where new information has emerged in recent years. The explosion of knowledge and techniques applicable to the subject of pharmacology has been breathtaking.

Along with this expansion of information, we have come to the realization that learning does not stop at college and that it is important to equip students for ‘lifelong learning.’ This ensures that students can manage their own learning when the knowledge base advances or career moves demand acquisition of new competencies. The role of professionals, academic societies, scientific journals and the employers in disseminating information beyond the confines of the institutions has been increasing in importance by the day.

The discipline of pharmacology exists solely as a result of the existence of drugs. Pharmacology is therefore driven by technological needs for new and better drugs and has underlying driving forces different from, for example, biochemistry, which seeks to understand living chemistry or physiology which studies mechanisms in living organisms.

Pharmacology needs to produce pharmacologists – that is, those skilled and knowledgeable in procedures used to analyze how, when and by what mechanisms, a drug produces actions in living organisms. Such analyses have to be performed at all levels – from populations of animals, to single whole animals, to organs, to cells of those organs, to components of those cells, down to the molecular level.

In an attempt to span this spectrum, the discipline has been subdivided into topics such as biochemical, electro and molecular pharmacology. Within this context, it is important that in India we maintain pharmacologists’ perspective with a global view with respect to drugs and appreciate the fact that it is a discipline which, of necessity, requires understanding all of the techniques and procedures available to biomedical sciences.

Pharmacologists continue to play an important role in the search for, and development of, new medicines; and many can be found working in a wide variety of areas in pharmaceutical companies: drug discovery, drug development, clinical research, regulatory affairs, patents, manufacturing, sales and marketing and laboratory animal sciences.

Although there is a significant move towards the use of molecular biology and biochemical assays to screen for new molecular targets, a thorough appreciation of the consequences of drug action in the intact organism still remains very important in the discovery of new medicines.

The pharmaceutical industry is indeed in need of good pharmacologists who, in addition to subject-based skills, have proficiency in the areas of information technology, data handling and interpretation, written and verbal communication, interpersonal skills and basic animal handling.

Postgraduate pharmacologists entering the pharmaceutical industry are expected to be fully trained in the appropriate management techniques necessary for their position. An ability to develop contacts and mastery of the subject should remain the goal of pharmacologists at the postgraduate level. Clinical pharmacologists also play a key role in the development of new medicines, and there are many career opportunities for such suitably trained pharmacologists within the industry.

So far, for pharmacologists in India, industry has offered very less opportunities. Only a few professionals have remained to carry on research in industry. Most of them have worked in medical teams to promote drugs or to train medical representatives. In the past, only few major industries have had pharmacology departments in their R&D centers. With the changing trends of industry investing enormous amounts of money for new drug discovery programs, the scope for pharmacology in research is immensely widening.

The future is bright and waiting for pharmacologists who
intend to start their careers in industry and academia. Shortage of well-trained pharmacologists will become acute in the coming years. Demand continues to grow, but there has been little improvement in the course contents of pharmacology at the graduate and postgraduate levels in our universities and pharmacy colleges. The core curriculum in pharmacology should put great emphasis on the role of research in pharmacology, and the programs in our colleges should offer students a chance to test their skills in real-life situations via industrial internships or collaborative research (or both).

With a note that we will continue to highlight the importance of pharmacology and its development in both academia and industry so as to enhance Indian pharmacologists’ capabilities to the global level, I conclude and thank you all for giving me an opportunity and voice to share my views on the subject I love the most by appointing me as Chief Editor of this respected and prestigious journal.

Shivprakash
Chief Editor

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**Announcement**

Clinical Pharmacology Section, Indian Pharmacological Society

**National Symposium on**

Current Perspectives and Future Trends in Clinical Pharmacology in India

May 5-6, 2007
at Department of Pharmacology, NRS Medical College, Kolkata

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