

From the New Editor

IT is an exciting yet challenging task to become the new Editor-in-Chief one year after the retitling of the journal from IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN BIOMEDICINE (T-ITB) to IEEE JOURNAL OF BIOMEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATICS (J-BHI). As a reader and contributor, I have been following the growth of the journal since its early years. Back in 1997 when Dr. S. Laxminarayan first initiated T-ITB, it was set on a course of increasing influence and popularity within the informatics community. In 2002, when Prof. N. Saranummi took over as the Editor-in-Chief, the journal grew considerably, in terms of both submission rate and impact factor. The upward trend was maintained by Prof. Y.-T. Zhang, the third Editor-in-Chief of T-ITB. By 2012, the impact factor of the journal reached 1.978 with well over 500 annual submissions each year. To me, it is a tremendous honor and privilege to be the new Editor-in-Chief and it is a hard act to follow the achievements of my predecessors.

In January 2013, T-ITB was retitled as J-BHI. This has brought both opportunities and challenges. The focus on health in the journal title echoes the general trend in medicine toward early detection of diseases before they become symptomatic, with an increased emphasis on prevention and prediction. In this regard, the effort of this community in developing sensors, imaging devices, and monitoring platforms that are pervasive, smart, and context-aware offers unique solutions to a range of healthcare problems. In fact, the myriad of devices available, either as consumer products or wearable medical devices for activity, lifestyle, behavior, and chronic disease monitoring, are direct outcomes of the work by this community. These also provide tangible solutions to participatory and personalized management of health and disease as a part of the future healthcare provisions.

The scope of the journal has thus far been broad, covering the entire pathway of acquiring, transmitting, processing, and managing biomedical and health information. It also addresses biological informatics such as neuroinformatics, modeling, bio-inspired design, and information coding and transmission at molecular and cellular levels. It further includes topics related to technologies and translational studies on medical information systems such as *e*-health and *m*-health, as well as ambient-assisted living and community/home-based healthcare solutions.

After years of steady growth, the future of the journal is faced with many new challenges, including open access of publications and rapid expansion of other on-line journals. To help highlight the unique strength of the topics covered by J-BHI and differentiate it from other bioinformatics journals, papers pub-

lished from January 2014 will be organized under the section headings of *Bioinformatics*, *Imaging Informatics*, *Sensor Informatics*, *Medical Informatics*, and *Public Health Informatics*. These will be complemented by managed special issues/sections covering topics that are of strategic importance to the journal, coordinated by Guest Editors who are leading experts in these fields.

We particularly encourage large cohort studies with clearly demonstrated clinical translational values supplemented by on-line data sets or algorithms that can be shared by the research community. This will help reproduce your results and apply the methods developed to new clinical studies, thus enhancing the impact of your work, as well as the journal.

In the last few months, I had the opportunity to work with Prof. Zhang and his team in managing the handover process of the journal. During this period, we have also dealt with many administrative and logistic issues due to the retitling of the journal. We are delighted that J-BHI is now indexed in major databases such as PubMed, ISI Web of Knowledge, Scopus and DBLP Computer Science Bibliography.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Prof. Zhang for his vision and leadership in shaping up the journal in the last six years. We are very grateful to those who have served as Associated Editors and whose term ended in December 2013. The success of the journal would not have been possible without their dedication and support; we count on their continuing contribution to J-BHI in future years.

A new editorial board has now been formed and we have also appointed a group of senior scientists to form the Scientific Advisory Board. They will provide strategic advices and directions for the future development of the journal. I am delighted that Dr. M. Wang, Cochair of IEEE Biomedical and Health Informatics Technical Committee (BHI-TC), has agreed to serve as a Senior Editor of the J-BHI editorial office. This will help align the journal with BHI related activities across IEEE.

I am also very grateful that Dr. B. Lo, Dr. C. Poon, and Dr. S. Thiemjarus have agreed to serve as the managing editors of the journal. They are all upcoming young stars of our community and I look forward to working with them and the entire editorial board in ensuring the future success of the journal.

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