Editorial

Towards a higher impact factor for the Journal of the Chinese Medical Association

The Journal of the Chinese Medical Association (JCMA) has been included in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) since 2008. More than 8,000 scientific journals are registered in the SCIE, and the JCMA is one of the few journals in Taiwan to have achieved this goal. Now, after serving for 9 years as the Journal’s editor-in-Chief, I am happy to announce that it has a new impact factor of 0.678, and is ranked at 62% (94/151) in the SCIE category “Medicine, General and Internal”. This achievement is not only exciting for myself, but also reflects the commitment and dedication of our editorial team to the community of biomedical science.

Since online submission became available 3 years ago, submissions to the Journal have continued to increase. This trend has lowered the Journal’s acceptance rate of submitted papers to approximately 60% this year. With this growing influx of submissions, we are fortunate to have many experienced reviewers on whom we can rely, and whose critiques assist the Associate Editors in selecting high-quality scientific papers. Special thanks should go to these experts, because without their contributions the JCMA would not have achieved its success. On behalf of the Journal, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the reviewers who have dedicated their efforts to it.

An impact factor of 0.678 is not high enough in this intensely competitive academic environment, and we should never be satisfied; this is just the beginning of new adventures for the JCMA. A journal’s impact factor is mainly determined by how often papers published in it are cited within a certain time period. Although it is widely believed that a higher impact factor indicates a stronger scientific influence, it has been recently reported that, in clinical medicine, the distribution of citations received by articles published in high, moderate, and low impact factor journals is similar; this suggests that articles published in journals with a low or moderate impact factor can still be frequently cited. It is the JCMA’s policy to be timely in publishing crucial information on the threats from new human diseases. An example is a paper that was published in the Journal’s February 2010 issue, during the H1N1 viral influenza pandemic. In this article, which has become one of the Journal’s top-cited papers, the authors looked at the seroprevalence rate of H1N1 influenza virus infection among hospital staff. Another highly cited paper reported the first case in Taiwan of infection with Klebsiella pneumoniae carrying the NDM-1 (New Delhi metallo-β-lactamase-1) mutation, and raised concerns about how this disease might change current clinical practice.

We hope to play a part in publishing important scientific findings in all related fields of biomedical science, thus ensuring that the JCMA will be consistently considered as an important source of new information, and widely quoted by researchers and scientists of different biomedical disciplines. The strategies to accomplish this have been long in the incubation period but are now about to prosper and bear fruit.

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References