

Journal of Clinical Pathology on the move

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New look, new contents, new electronic submission and review!

Design for journals as for the fashion industry is an essential requisite, needing ongoing change.¹ The emphasis is to make our journals more visually interesting and accessible to readers. So, we hope you approve of the new design and layout, both outside and in.

The cover changes will be immediately obvious and we hope popular. Internal changes affect the format of papers. They include the introduction of summary boxes, which authors will be encouraged to supply and use liberally. Editorials and commentaries have shorter snappy titles with greater detail given in subtitles. Reviews will have short abstracts or summary paragraphs, enabling them to appear in Medline. Technical changes involve the inclusion of banners, the provision of boxing and shading for tables, and the production of abbreviation lists on the first page of articles, giving the definitions of terms used.

A major development for the journals in December 2000 was to go online.^{2,3} This was via HighWire, a division of Stanford University's Green Library, which now hosts 284 journals including those of the BMJ Publishing Group. We anticipated that the introduction of e-journals might result in a drop in print subscriptions, but hoped that any fall would soon be offset by an increase in revenue from Internet subscriptions. Certainly, this seems to be the case. Furthermore, a recent review of online statistics for Hits and Hosts for *JCP* and *MP* is very encouraging, showing rises in both categories—for example, individual linking computers (hosts) increasing from 3371 to 6764 and 1973 to 2441 for *JCP* and *MP*, respectively, between Nov/Dec 2000 and Oct 2001, with a total number of monthly hits on our websites exceeding 80 000. In line with these changes we are shortly to introduce a cross-specialty lighthearted topical last page for *JCP*. Furthermore, a rapid

response box is present for letters and correspondence so we hope this encourages online dialogue.

Following the appointment of a Syndication Editor for the BMJ Special Publishing Group, we are now able to republish articles in *JCP* that were initially published in one of the other specialist journals and flagged as likely to be of interest to *JCP* readers. Such articles are referred to the appropriate *JCP* editor and if accepted will appear as short paraphrased versions placed as fillers. This will bring interesting articles from other journals to the attention of *JCP* readers in a convenient way, without affecting our impact factor.⁴

More added value is derived from a new series of historical fillers that we recently started.⁵ We are currently getting these from a fixed source; however, we would like to encourage anyone interested in producing such fillers to forward them to the editors of this journal.

However, we are well aware that one of the most important factors in improving journal submissions is a rapid and efficient turnaround time from date of submission of articles to that of publication. With this in mind, the Publishing Director investigated a variety of products for online submission and review of manuscripts. Having evaluated a range of such systems, *Bench>Press* (part of HighWire Press) was chosen. It has been developed here during the past year by the Special Project Group's manager, Natalie Davies, together with American colleagues in Stanford, California.

We must remind you that *JCP* went live with this system on 14 January. We feel sure that authors, editors, and reviewers alike will benefit from the resulting time saving. Authors may submit their manuscript in any standard word processing software and this also applies to standard graphic formats. As a practical point, text and graphic files are automatically converted to PDF. Before

entering the review process formally, authors are asked to approve their submissions. Following this, submissions are passed to appropriate editors and reviewers via the web, again saving time required for the entire process. Not least we should emphasise that all such transactions are secure.

Full instructions may be found at *JCP* on line at <http://www.jclinpath.com> or via *Bench>Press* directly (<http://submit-jcp.bmjournals/>).

The system is new to us all but is very logical and easy to use. We certainly hope that authors and reviewers will readily appreciate the benefits and use the system whenever possible. Certainly, other developments should rapidly follow. Examples of these are the establishment of a cross-journal reviewer database. This will also hasten the review process, by finding specialist reviewers who are available without delay. Furthermore, during the next few months, Pathology Interactive^{6,7} will be integrated by HighWire within the webpage as a readily accessible CPD program online. The editorial staff are extremely enthusiastic about these changes, which we feel will be of benefit to the readers, authors, and reviewers of *JCP*.

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