

Swiss Medical Weekly – one year at sea after major overhaul

After the first year of our voyage with the English-language SMW, with readers, authors and referees on board, it is time to look back and – more significantly – look ahead to the route we have charted to reach our goals.

The goals remain the same:

- opening the journal towards Europe,
- providing a rapid, easily accessible no-cost platform for clinical science to readers throughout the world via the internet and MEDLINE,
- leaving behind the multifunctionality of our journal with its tradition of more than 130 years in science, continuous education and national aspects of health care,
- cutting down bureaucracy for contributors and referees, thus speeding up peer review while maintaining high-quality production and printing,
- increased support for authors by provision of statistical review and professional English copy editing.

So how successful has the opening towards Europe been? 70% of our manuscripts are still submitted by Swiss institutions or authors, the majority of the remainder from Europe and adjacent regions, and a few from overseas. The number of submissions from countries other than Switzerland is increasing and will allow us to become more selective in our choices and to create issues that are more balanced and therefore more attractive to our readership. Around half of the referees supporting our commitment to quality are chosen from non-Swiss centres in Europe and overseas. Half of spontaneously submitted papers cannot be published and are rejected. Most are improved by the process of peer review or statistical reanalysis. In selected instances we have suggested that authors transform a short report into a letter – sometimes offering peer review for these. We will continue to be tough on case reports and to demand genuinely new diagnostic, therapeutic or pathogenetic aspects to justify publication in our pages.

How are those prospering who remained behind when we left harbour a year ago? The overwhelming majority of readers have stayed on board, as have the advertisers: both continue to support the journal, an encouraging development that could not be taken for granted at the outset. Readers interested in continuous education have found a new dedicated platform (Swiss Medical Forum), written in two national languages (German and French) and also leaving room for selected case reports.

Where do we go from here? We are looking to attract more manuscripts from continental Europe by convincing authors of our strength and by spreading awareness of what we have to offer. Swiss Medical Weekly has been approved for electronic submission to NLM's MEDLINE/PubMed system. An important advance is the direct link (Link-Out) through Medline to all articles at no cost, promising rapid and unlimited dissemination of results; a link to the website <http://www.smw.ch> will be listed in the Linkout display of the MEDLINE records.

We know that the impact factor is a major lure for authors and also that authors tend to quote more liberally from papers in journals with a high impact factor, apparently because of their greater credibility. We know it will take time for our impact factor to rise. It takes some years before clinical papers affect the impact factor of a journal, but we are confident we have already logged one of those years. We will forge ahead on our route to becoming a major continental European platform for clinical scientists of every specialty; the first year has left us well and alive. It is at this point we would like to thank all the authors for joining our voyage, and in particular all the referees listed at the end of this edition (p. 21) for their own specific contribution to our journal.

Andreas Schaffner, Editor in chief

The many reasons why you should choose SMW to publish your research

What Swiss Medical Weekly has to offer:

- SMW's impact factor has been steadily rising, to the current 1.537
- Open access to the publication via the Internet, therefore wide audience and impact
- Rapid listing in Medline
- LinkOut-button from PubMed with link to the full text website <http://www.smw.ch> (direct link from each SMW record in PubMed)
- No-nonsense submission – you submit a single copy of your manuscript by e-mail attachment
- Peer review based on a broad spectrum of international academic referees
- Assistance of our professional statistician for every article with statistical analyses
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We evaluate manuscripts of broad clinical interest from all specialities, including experimental medicine and clinical investigation.

We look forward to receiving your paper!

Guidelines for authors:

http://www.smw.ch/set_authors.html

Impact factor Swiss Medical Weekly



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