

New publishing concept

Dear readers,

In recent years the Swiss Medical Weekly – in response to the far-reaching changes that have occurred in the field of scientific publishing – has already undergone not one but several changes. Developments in the Internet mean a previously undreamed of dissemination for journals. Adoption of open access, a major concern of academic medicine or universities, has always been in the forefront of this trend. We see open access not as a threat but as an opportunity. The huge number of hits on our website is ample proof that the scientific community fully appreciates this publishing philosophy. International awareness of the SMW is growing day by day, as reflected in the mounting impact factor and the steadily increasing number of visits to the SMW website.

Thanks to cooperation with our currently over 4000 international reviewers, scrutiny of each paper by a professional statistician and language editing by English-speaking doctors, SMW supports authors in publishing their research findings. Our ambitious goals are an increase in the impact factor to over 2.0 in the medium term and to over 3.0 in the long term, together with further optimisation of open access availability. The SMW's long-standing tradition of offering young researchers an important publishing platform and promoting new blood in the academic community are all measures that we intend to continue at the highest level.

We now wish to go a step further in this direction and make still better use of modern forms of publication for the SMW. From July 2010 we shall be switching to the “continuous publication” model. All newly accepted papers will be published once weekly online. For the authors the new model has the advantage that the online ver-

sion will become the mandatory referenced version; interim “epublication ahead of print” will no longer be necessary. Their papers will appear without further waiting time after acceptance for publication, and will be immediately listed in Medline.

The SMW's aim is likewise to reach all academically interested doctors as readers. The journal's print version will henceforth be published monthly; each individual issue will, however, contain several review articles. Six to eight publications from each of the fields of “medical intelligence”, “current opinion” and “medical technology” are planned per issue. The contents of original articles now transferred to the online version will appear in the print version as “extended abstracts” covering the most important information. Specialists and researchers wishing for more in-depth study of a paper will find this, as is already the practice, online via open access.

The preparatory work for all these innovations is in full swing. At the same time the SMW website will be completely redesigned and reorganised. Nothing will change for authors submitting original articles. However, if the paper is accepted for publication the authors of original articles will henceforth be requested to provide an “extended abstract” on a given model for the print version. This extra work is not time-consuming and serves not only as an improved summary for the general reader but as an “appetiser” for the reader of the whole article.

We are looking forward keenly to these new challenges, and are convinced that they will bring many advantages for our authors and readers.

André P. Perruchoud
Editor in chief Swiss Medical Weekly