

EDITORIAL

Mission and Vision of the Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine

Objectives of Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine

The objectives of *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* are to contribute to scientific exchange, stimulate new research questions, translate research into practice and foster evidence-based professional action in the field of human functioning and rehabilitation. The journal aims to contribute to the terminological and methodological coherence of this subject area and to foster a common understanding in research.

Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine achieves these goals by publishing original scientific papers on relevant topics from all parts of the world and by publishing at least one review or special report on a pertinent topic in each issue. In addition, special issues and supplements are usually published once or twice a year. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* also publishes the proceedings of associated societies; for example, in 2008 we will publish the abstract book from the 1st Asian Oceanic Congress in Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine as supplement.

The journal ensures a high quality of publications by involving an international Editorial Board and reviewers who comprehensively cover all aspects of human functioning and rehabilitation research.

Topics

As a journal committed to rehabilitation medicine, the main focus of *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is on integrative human functioning and rehabilitation research and on the translation of basic and applied research into professional practice. The journal also encourages submissions in the biomedical rehabilitation sciences and engineering, including, for example, the use of various physical modalities. Regarding health conditions, *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* accepts publications on all subject areas and all ages. It currently wishes to encourage more submissions on chronic pain conditions; studies on neurological conditions already being relatively well represented.

A particular strength of the journal is the publication of methodological papers on the measurement of functioning and rehabilitation outcomes including, for example, item response theory (IRT) techniques, such as Rasch analysis. It explicitly welcomes both quantitative and qualitative study designs.

A topic of current interest is research on the application and further development of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), including the mapping of various current instruments to the ICF, the development of international standards, such as the ICF Core Sets, and of new ICF-based measures. In addition, *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is currently developing an approach for the ICF-based reporting and planning of studies, including the description of the functioning status of study subjects.

With the aim of contributing to scientific exchange, the journal welcomes more Letters to the Editor. In connection with the publication of a special issue on “ICF: a unifying model

for the conceptualization, organization and development of human functioning and rehabilitation research” in May 2007, the journal invited Letters to the Editor reacting to the suggestions and ideas published in that issue with the intention of stimulating valuable and constructive discussion on these topics, including viewpoints critical to the ideas presented.

In order to strengthen clinical practice, *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* encourages the submission of more clinical case reports. “Educational reviews” with emphasis on clinical practice, based on current scientific knowledge in different key areas, will be introduced, as suggested by the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine. These should also be followed by questions and aim to support the education of clinical trainees.

Impact factor

We are pleased to announce that the impact factor of *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* has increased further, to 2.168 for 2006 compared with 1.799 for 2005. While the impact factor has also increased for some other journals within the rehabilitation field, *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is still in the lead among the general clinical journals in rehabilitation medicine and, as for last year, is in second place overall. An impact factor above 2 is, in some situations, taken as a special indicator of the quality of the journal. However, we are well aware of the limitations of the impact factor, especially for relatively small journals, as it may vary with the material published in a specific year. It has also been shown that most citations of papers from clinical journals occur not during the first 1 or 2 years after publication, as used for calculating the impact factor, but in subsequent years. We hope to receive interesting high-quality papers also in the future to maintain or increase the impact factor. In addition, other measures of the impact of scientific publications, such as the cited half-life and the number of hits on an article on the internet, may be just as important indicators of interest in what is published in a journal. Regarding cited half-life, this is relatively low for *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* because it changed its name in 2001 and papers published earlier, in *Scandinavian Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*, when the half-life was high, are not counted.

Vision for research

Our vision for research in rehabilitation medicine is that it should be based more on an integrative approach with the participation of different rehabilitation professionals. Research should thus be carried out in multi-professional or inter-professional teams as well as in clinical work. There is also a need for a closer link between basic research in, for example, neurobiology, neuropsychology, biomechanics and movement analysis, and clinical research in order to integrate new knowledge in these and other fields. There is a need for more

studies to enhance evidence-based knowledge in our specialty. We are well aware of the problems of organizing randomized controlled studies in clinical research, where problems with blinding and ethics may be limitations in studies of various rehabilitation interventions. Other means should then be taken to reach a higher level of evidenced-based knowledge, and single case studies may, for certain rehabilitation questions, be a first approach. Clinicians in physical and rehabilitation medicine should be research trained to a greater extent and academics may need to be more directly engaged in practical clinical work.

Official journal of organizations

Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine is an official journal to several organizations. We are pleased to announce that the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM), for which *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is an official journal, will provide all individual members with the electronic version of the journal from 2008 as part of their membership. This will result in around 1800 new subscribers to the journal. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is also the official journal of the UEMS European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine and of the European Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine. For all members of those organizations we offer a greatly reduced subscription for the printed as well as the electronic versions (see <http://medicaljournals.se/jrm/subscribe> for information). Unfortunately, until now rather few people have taken advantage of this opportunity.

Policy on Open Access

Open access is an area of great debate among publishers and readers of scientific journals. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* is greatly in favour of progress towards more open access to published material, as this would be in the interest of authors, readers and the whole scientific community. As stated on our homepage, open access is in line with the worldwide trend of attempting to provide greater access to the results of scientific research, as shown by the Berlin Declaration in 2003, and perhaps best expressed in the new rules for National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Wellcome Trust grant holders. For instance, the Wellcome Trust, the world's largest research charity, now demands that the final manuscripts of all authors' research papers are deposited in PubMed Central, the free-to-access life sciences repository developed by the National Library of Medicine. Papers deposited in this repository must be made freely accessible no later than 6 months after publication. Furthermore, many universities have proposed that recipients of their research grants should place a copy of the published journal articles in an e-print repository on university or subject-based websites. This is in line with the intentions of *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* and, in this way, the research papers will be exposed to greater potential audiences; anyone with internet access will be able to read them without restriction. By adhering to these regulations, we believe that we will also further increase the impact of the research published in our journal.

There are successive steps to be taken. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* owned and published by a non-profit organization, Foundation for Rehabilitation Information, is presently dependent on subscription fees, as no commercial interests are involved and no major contribution is received from any other organization. We are reluctant to introduce page charges for all papers, which may be necessary in moving to full open access for publication, and have so far only provided the opportunity for authors to pay a moderate sum for immediate open access for a paper.

Our present policy to enable as open access as possible is:

- All authors may place their manuscripts submitted to *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* in the repository or homepage of their own institution or university.
- All authors may place a pdf file of their published article in the repository or homepage of their institution or university 6 months after publication of the electronic version of the paper in the journal.
- Open access is granted immediately on publication for reviews, newsletters from the organizations and some special reports.
- It is possible to obtain open access on publication at an extra cost to the authors.
- Open access is granted to all published articles 12 months after publication of the electronic version.

We also encourage authors to retain copyright of their work and instead sign a contract for license to publish with the journal.

Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine is a member of an international network on open access. Current debate on open access is followed carefully and in time we aim to move further towards this goal. We think that this will be an important step in distributing scientific information, not only to professionals but also to other members in the societies as to the general public.

Thank you!

In improving the quality of the journal we depend on important contributions from the Editorial Board and all other reviewers, as well as on the submission of high-quality, interesting manuscripts by authors. Without their contribution it would not have been possible to achieve the present increases in the quality of papers and the impact factor. Fruitful discussions have been held within the Editorial Committee, both in writing and at regular meetings, the most recent being in Rennes in March 2007. The present editorial is based partly on those discussions, and the members of the Editorial Committee have contributed to the final version.

Gunnar Grimby, Editor-in-Chief

In collaboration with the members of the Editorial Committee: Hannu Alaranta, Jörgen Borg, Jan Ekholm, Franco Franchignoni, Björn Gerdle, Kenneth Ottenbacher, Henk Stam, Gerold Stucki and Guy Vanderstraeten
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