EDITORIALS

Online Early and Other Changes in *JGIM*

We would like to describe some of the changes you will note in the *Journal* beginning with this issue, the first produced under our tenure as Co-Editors. The goals of these changes are to 1) decrease the time to publication of accepted manuscripts, 2) increase the number of manuscripts published in the *Journal* to maintain an acceptance rate of approximately 25%, and 3) improve the quality of the reporting and readability of articles.

The most exciting change is our move to an "Online Early" or "Online First" publication process to decrease the time between acceptance and publication of a manuscript. *JGIM* will post articles online before they appear in the print version of the *Journal*. This will remove some of the delays associated with print publication. Once manuscripts are accepted, they will be immediately copyedited and typeset. Once an author reviews the page proofs, the article will be published online. Electronic articles will be identified by a unique number, the document object identifier (DOI), and contain guidance on how to cite the online article. Besides being available on the *JGIM* web site, citations and abstracts for electronic articles can be found by searching PubMed and are identified as online early by [Epub ahead of print] in the citation.

To increase the number of manuscripts published, we are making several changes in the formatting of the *Journal*. You will note with this issue that the complete table of contents will appear on the front cover and continue to the back cover when needed. It will not appear again inside the cover. Appendices and supporting material (e.g., questionnaires, curricula, conceptual models, and additional qualitative data) for articles will only be published online. Finally, we are asking authors to decrease the length of their manuscripts and make efficient use of space in tables and figures. We realize that it is harder to write shorter articles and appreciate authors working with us to do so in order to keep *JGIM*'s acceptance rate at 25% without having to raise subscription prices to publish more pages.

Our final goal is to improve the quality of the reporting and readability of articles. To accomplish this goal, we are asking authors to use the following standard formats: the

Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT) statement¹ for reports of randomized controlled trials, the Meta-analysis of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (MOOSE) and Quality of Reporting of Meta-analyses (QUOROM) statements^{2,3} for systematic reviews, the Standards for Reporting of Diagnostic Accuracy (STARD) statement⁴ for studies of the accuracy and use of diagnostic tests, and the Transparent Reporting of Evaluations with Non-randomized Designs (TREND) statement⁵ for reports of nonrandomized educational, behavioral, and public health interventions. We also are asking authors to put more data in abstracts, in addition to using a structured abstract. In the review process, the Deputy Editors are providing constructive feedback to authors on ways to improve the quality and readability of the manuscript whether or not it is accepted for publication in the *Journal*.

We hope you, as our authors and readers, will provide us with feedback on how we do in meeting these goals, as well as any other suggestions for improvement. —**Martha S. Gerrity, MD, PhD**, *Portland VA Medical Center, Portland, OR*, and **William Tierney, MD**, *Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, IN*.

REFERENCES

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2. **Stroup DF, Berlin JA, Morton SC, et al.** Meta-analysis of observational studies in epidemiology: a proposal for reporting. *JAMA*. 2000;83:2008–12.
3. **Moher D for the QUORUM Group.** Quality of Reporting of Meta-analyses Statement. Available at: <http://www.consort-statement.org/QUOROM.pdf>. Accessed October 22, 2004.
4. **STARD Group.** The STARD Initiative—Towards Complete and Accurate Reporting of Studies on Diagnostic Accuracy. Available at: <http://www.consort-statement.org/stardstatement.htm>. Accessed October 22, 2004.
5. **TREND Group.** Transparent Reporting of Evaluations with Nonrandomized Designs. Available at: <http://www.trend-statement.org/>. Accessed October 22, 2004.