Hepatology Communications: Now in PubMed Central and Applying for Other Indices

With the launch of the first issue of Hepatology Communications in February 2017, the journal continues to publish monthly issues, is gaining recognition, and the number of new submissions is steadily increasing. While our new journal enjoys support from the community of hepatologists and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), we are frequently asked, “When will it be indexed in PubMed?” and “How soon will it receive an Impact Factor?”. These are important considerations by authors who have various choices on where to submit their work. In this editorial, we describe the process and timeline for Hepatology Communications to be indexed in PubMed Central (PMC), MEDLINE, and the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI [E]). The SCI (E) feeds into the Journal Citation Reports for Impact Factors; thus, it is important to the Hepatology Communications editorial team and to authors.

Standards and Requirements

Each one of these databases has their respective standards and requirements that Hepatology Communications will have to meet.

STEP 1: FULL PARTICIPATION IN PMC

PMC is a full text archive, and citations for articles deposited in PMC are available on PubMed. Attaining full participation in PMC for any new journal is the first milestone in the indexing process. The PMC application requires that the journal has published at least 25 peer-reviewed research articles. Hepatology Communications reached this milestone in June 2017, and we submitted our application shortly after. We are pleased to announce that the journal received full listing in PMC in December 2017. This means that our journal has met the scientific quality standards set by the National Institutes of Health and the National Library of Medicine (NLM). Points of consideration included the scientific and editorial scope and quality of the journal and the suitability of the journal for the NLM collection. Other elements included meeting the technical standards of the database, which included the need to provide high-quality digital files from our publisher, Wiley.

STEP 2: INDEXING IN MEDLINE

MEDLINE is the principal online bibliographic citation database of the NLM and provides the largest subset of PubMed articles. The minimum requirement for the MEDLINE application for a new journal is to have published for 12 months with at least 40 articles. Based on these criteria, Hepatology Communications will submit our MEDLINE listing application in March 2018. The MEDLINE evaluation team meets 3 times a year to...
Once Hepatology Communications is accepted in the SCI (E), the journal will be included in the Journal Citation Reports for an Impact Factor. Three years' worth of content is required for a journal to receive an Impact Factor, and based on this, the earliest date for Hepatology Communications to receive an Impact Factor would be in 2020. All Hepatology Communications articles will be included back to the first issue.

Immediate Plans

While we are waiting on these upcoming decisions, the editorial team is focusing on important next steps to measure success.

First, we aim to increase the number of submissions both in primary submissions to Hepatology Communications and in the number of cascaded manuscript submissions from Hepatology. We are tracking submission trends and attracting new authors and author groups.

Second, we are applying rigorous peer review to all submissions received. Our associate editors take pride in an objective and fair review process. Invitations were recently sent to the newly formed Editorial Board, and their participation in the peer review process will further help to set high standards for the journal.

Third, we enjoy the security and reputation of the AASLD brand. In the era of ever increasing numbers of online journals, readers and authors of Hepatology Communications should be confident about the future of this new AASLD journal and the resources the society has dedicated to it. We hope that the demonstrated initial success of Hepatology Communications will convince authors to submit their work to our journal and join our effort to build a strong journal that AASLD and the broader hepatology community can rely on for advances in basic, clinical, and translational research and knowledge in hepatology.

Gyongyi Szabo1
Emma Brink2
1Department of Medicine
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Worcester, MA
2Wiley, Medford, MA

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