The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice—Its Purpose

The primary purpose of this journal is to publish original papers pertaining to clinical investigations, case reports, review articles pertinent to the specialty of family practice, editorial comments, and book reviews. The articles published are intended to provide new and valuable information for reference by the entire medical community.

The journal also is intended to serve as an important forum for the specialty of family practice, to serve as a source of clinical information, and to serve as a medium for timely information concerning the activities of the American Board of Family Practice.

Consistent with its past history, the American Board of Family Practice (ABFP) took another innovative step when it decided to publish its own journal. To my knowledge, no other American board has independently sponsored its own journal. ABFP felt that there was a need for another quality peer-reviewed publication in our specialty. This decision was based on the observation that the number of Board-certified, residency-trained family physicians will continue to increase at a steady rate. Further, the Board sensed that an increasing number of colleagues will be actively engaged in scholarly investigations, and they will have need of peer-reviewed specialty journals in which to publish.

The most important characteristic of the journal, demanded by the Board, is that it must maintain high-quality standards. In order to achieve this, there exists an outstanding Editorial Board and an active and effective Advisory Board. In addition, the reviewers represent a very impressive cadre of some of the most highly respected clinicians in the world.

This journal, along with other similar journals, bears the responsibility to establish and maintain the quality of investigation and publication for the specialty. Journals can, by encouraging or discouraging investigators, impact heavily on the direction and quality of research in the discipline. Accumulated investigation shapes the discipline and defines its content over time.

The journals within a medical discipline also reflect the state of the art for that discipline to other disciplines as well as to society in general. Journals reflect the value systems within the discipline represented. It is the responsibility of journals to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of the discipline and to serve as a reliable communication device among professionals.

For the discipline of family medicine, it is especially important at this time to make important contributions to medical knowledge. The discipline has long been largely dependent for new information upon investigators in other disciplines. If our discipline is to survive and manifest its destiny in society, it must make important contributions. The journals that represent the discipline must effectively communicate those contributions to its own disciplines as well as to the professions and society in general.

The editorial staff of this journal is sensitive to these responsibilities and accepts them soberly. The quality of performance remains to be judged. Our intent is to encourage quality investigations and professional writing. Our criticisms of manuscripts are sincerely intended to be constructive. It is inevitable that more manuscripts will be rejected than accepted. It is also recognized that the editors are not flawless in their judgments of quality and that some criticisms of manuscripts may be misinterpreted as being personal in nature. This also is probably inevitable but must be minimized.

Finally, we feel very fortunate to be able to utilize the vast experience and time-proven excellence of the publisher. The Massachusetts Medical Society has achieved levels of quality in medical publishing that are virtually unmatched in the world. The staff members of the publisher are truly professional in every sense. We sincerely hope this is the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship.

Paul R. Young, M.D.
Galveston, TX
Information for Authors

These guidelines are in accordance with the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals." (The complete document is available in the June 12, 1982, issue of the British Medical Journal and the June 1982 issue of the Annals of Internal Medicine.)

Manuscripts
Manuscripts containing original material are accepted for consideration with the understanding that neither the article nor any part of its essential substance, tables, or figures has been or will be published or submitted for publication elsewhere before appearing in the Journal. This restriction does not apply to abstracts or press reports published in connection with scientific meetings. Copies of any possibly duplicative manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor along with the manuscript that is to be considered by the Journal. The Journal strongly discourages the submission of more than one article dealing with related aspects of the same study. In almost all cases, a single study is best reported in a single paper.

Submit an original and one copy of the complete manuscript, including text pages, legends, tables, references, and glossy prints of figures. Only typed copy, on standard-sized typewriter paper and double-spaced throughout, with margins of at least 2.5 cm, is acceptable. Address all submissions to the Editor, The Journal of the American Board of Family Practice, 2228 Young Drive, Lexington, KY 40508. A covering letter should identify the person (with the address and telephone number) responsible for negotiations concerning the manuscript; the letter should make it clear that the final manuscript has been seen and approved by all authors.

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The Journal will print measurements in Système International (SI) and conventional units (this practice applies only to clinical investigation and review articles). Authors may use either as their preference. Units of measurement will be consistent throughout, with conventional units used when SI units are not applicable.

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Except for units of measurement, abbreviations are discouraged. Abbreviations for units of measurement should be identified or their pictures must be accompanied by written explanations. Abbreviations should be preceded by the words for which it stands. Abbreviations for units of measurement should be identifiable or their pictures must be accompanied by written explanations. Abbreviations for units of measurement should be consistent throughout, with SI units used when conventional units are not applicable.

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With the manuscript, provide a page giving the title of the paper; an author's contribution; and the names of the authors (including the first names and academic degrees), the name of the department and institution in which the work was done; and the name and address of the author to whom reprint requests should be addressed. Any grant support that requires acknowledgment should be mentioned on this page.

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