

Editorial

JMG Online: exploiting the potential of electronic publication and manuscript submission

Since the introduction of the full text online version of JMG,¹ the number of people accessing JMG Online at www.jmedgenet.com has increased progressively. It appears, therefore, that the advantages of electronic publishing are appreciated by the JMG readership. While JMG Online has been an undoubted success, there are many ways in which the potential of electronic publishing can be exploited further. The introduction of online only Electronic Letters has enabled us to increase the content of JMG and expedite publication. However, with a few exceptions,^{2,3} the potential for publishing supplementary material in an electronic form has been used infrequently. Publishing additional clinical images in an electronic only format will often increase the value of clinical reports and is encouraged (specific permission for publishing patient photographs on the internet is, of course, required). A further advantage of electronic publishing is the ability to promote discussion of JMG articles through the *eComment* facility. Thus, readers may email comments on articles they have read and (after editorial screening) see them published as an *eComment* (attached to the original article) within 24 hours of submission!

In addition, I am pleased to inform authors and reviewers of the new online submission and review system at JMG. Developed by Highwire Press (CA, USA), *Bench>Press* is a fully integrated electronic system which uses the web to allow rapid and efficient submission of manuscripts. It also allows the peer review process to be conducted entirely online. Authors can submit their manuscript in any standard word processing software. Standard graphic formats acceptable include .jpg, .tiff, .gif, .eps, etc. The text and graphic files are automatically converted to PDF for ease of distribution and reviewing purposes. Authors are asked to approve

their submission before it formally enters the reviewing process. On approval by the authors, the submission is passed to the editor and/or reviewers via the web. All transactions are secure. The new system will be accessible through the JMG home page at <http://www.jmedgenet.com>, or you can access *Bench>Press* directly at <http://submit-jmg.bmjournals.com>. This exciting development should expedite the frequently frustrating progress from submission to publication! Further information will be available from Natalie Davies, Project Manager, ndavies@bmjgroup.com.

Finally, I would like to welcome a new initiative from the BMJ Publishing Group to improve access to specialist journals for readers in the developing world. Access to JMG Online will be provided free automatically to those from countries defined as poor under the human development index by the United Nations and the World Bank (www.worldbank.org/data/datatopic/class.htm). This is achieved by the installation of Digital Island on the JMG web site. This clever piece of software recognises where the user is coming from and will give unrestricted access to the whole web site to users from designated developing countries.

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EDITOR

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- 2 Lynch HT, de la Chapelle A. Genetic susceptibility to non-polyposis colorectal cancer. *J Med Genet* 1999;36:801-18.
- 3 Hodgson SV, Haites NE, Caligo M, Chang-Claude J, Eccles D, Evans G, Moller P, Morrison P, Steel CM, Stoppa-Lyonnet D, Vasen H. A survey of the current clinical facilities for the management of familial cancer in Europe. European Union BIOMED II Demonstration Project. Familial breast cancer: audit of a new development in medical practice in European centres. *J Med Genet* 2000;37:605-7.