

EDITORIAL

The Journal Is Going Electronic

On July 1, the manuscript submission and review process for the *Journal of Adolescent Health* will be moving to a Web-based system developed by our publisher, Elsevier. For the past 24 years, the *Journal* has processed its manuscripts—from submission through publication—using a paper and pencil process assisted by computer-based tracking systems and databases. Now, the fully electronic and globally available Elsevier Editorial System (EES) will help us to efficiently manage over 600 manuscript submissions that the *Journal* receives each year. We are fortunate to be among the first generation of the Elsevier journals to be adopting this new and exciting tool. You can access EES at <http://www.ees.elsevier.com/jah/>.

EES will allow our authors to submit their manuscripts electronically from any computer using just a Web browser. Authors are guided through a step-by-step process that requests and transmits all the requisite parts of a completed manuscript. After authors submit their manuscripts, the Editorial Office is notified of the submission, and the review process begins. Authors will have the ability to track their manuscripts throughout the review process, obtaining instant and on-demand updates.

Similarly, reviewers will be contacted and assigned electronically. At the request of the Editorial Office, EES will send an individual reviewer an e-mail asking that they review a particular manuscript. Upon acceptance of the review assignment, the reviewer logs on to the system and downloads the manuscript as a PDF file. After evaluating the manuscript, reviewers can respond to the Editorial Office online through a simple Web-based form. EES will enable those of us in the Editorial Office to track all manuscripts and will tell us instantly where a given manuscript is in the process.

Several questions arise when a Journal goes to an electronic system:

First, will the manuscripts still be double-blinded for their review? The answer is an unequivocal yes!

The *Journal* wants to make certain that the submission and reviewing process is fair and unbiased for all of our authors and reviewers. We have worked with Elsevier to assure that EES is capable of accommodating this important and distinctive aspect of our Journal.

Second, how will security be maintained? Access to manuscripts, reviews, and personal information is strictly controlled by the Editorial Office. Only the Editor-in-Chief and the Managing Editor have unrestricted access to the entire system. Authors are able to access only their own manuscripts and personal information. Reviewers are able to access only blinded manuscripts that have been specifically assigned to them, as well as their own personal information and areas of expertise.

Third, will the EES speed up the process of publication? By applying the latest database and communication technology to the *Journal's* review process, the Editorial Office will be able to receive, evaluate, and respond to manuscripts and reviews much more quickly. EES allows us to assign reviewers and provide feedback to our authors in a more timely fashion. But the time we save will all be on the editorial management end. We will continue to give our reviewers an adequate amount time to fully consider each manuscript. Our authors will continue to have 4 weeks in which to revise and resubmit their manuscripts if requested.

Fourth, will the system preferentially favor manuscripts from certain areas of the world? Given that the Internet and computers are pervasive throughout the world, we anticipate that EES will, in fact, encourage our international colleagues to submit more manuscripts. In addition, the cost and time of submitting manuscripts through the "paper and pencil" route may have, in the past, discouraged investigators and clinicians with limited resources. We hope that the ease and efficiency of submitting manuscripts through EES will attract these authors.

Fifth, will authors without access to a computer still be able to submit their manuscripts? In a word,

yes. The Editorial Office will work with these authors on a case-by-case basis, processing their manuscripts with EES by proxy and communicating with them by traditional means. But again, we believe that the ubiquity of Internet-enabled computers will actually increase access to the *Journal*. It is not our intention to lock out those authors who lack this technology.

Sixth, how will authors track their manuscripts through the final stages of page proofing? Once the *Journal* accepts a manuscript for publication, page proofs are delivered to the author as a PDF document through a second Web-based system, called Rapid Proof. Our printer, Cadmus Professional Communications, has developed this system and has used it effectively with many of its other clients.

As we adopt technology-based solutions, problems will arise that the Editorial Office and Elsevier may not have anticipated. We have worked with Elsevier for the past 6 months to streamline and customize EES for the *Journal*, but with all new technological systems there will be unexpected glitches that will need to be addressed. We need the help of our authors and reviewers to make this transition a smooth one. The Editorial Office is only a phone call or e-mail away. We are available to hear what is working well and what needs to be fixed.

Welcome aboard.

Tor Berg, Managing Editor
Charles E. Irwin, Jr., M.D., Editor-in-Chief
San Francisco, California

Welcome to the New Editorial Board of the *Journal of* *Adolescent Health*

As the Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the Associate Editors, I would like to welcome the new Editorial Board to the *Journal*. The 27 members of the Editorial Board represent a breadth of disciplines from the United States and the International Community. As I stated in the April 2004 issue of the *Journal*, "The *Journal* has an opportunity to continue to build a bridge between the worlds of medicine and health and the other disciplines essential for improving the well-being of adolescents and young adults" [1]. I am convinced that the Editorial Board will enable the *Journal* to continue to build that bridge.

Charles E. Irwin, Jr., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

San Francisco, California

Reference

1. Irwin CE, Jr. Transitions (editorial). *J Adolesc Health* 2004;34:257.