



On Refining Certain IJTMB Features

KEYWORDS: Publication frequency, electronic encyclopedias, blind review, journal content coverage, massage research, massage education, massage practice

In the process of publishing the first two issues of the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork* (IJTMB), needed refinements of four features of the journal became apparent. These are now reflected in the appropriate sectors of the journal's website. What follows is a synopsis of those refinements.

The first refinement bearing on journal policy and procedure is that of **publication frequency**. The journal's inaugural year of 2008 has obviously seen the publication of issues in August and December. Beginning in 2009, the IJTMB will publish articles (a) collectively on a quarterly basis and (b) individually as they become available for immediate release. In the former case, the quarterly issues will appear—as originally planned—in March, June, September and December. In the latter instance, immediately-released-upon-availability articles will appear in a designated "Immediate Release/In Press" issue to be published in the interim period between the most recent and the next scheduled quarterly issues. (The "In Press" reference here is obviously to the next scheduled quarterly issue in which the previously released-upon-availability individual articles will appear collectively.) This "hybrid" model of sorts for publishing the journal's entries accommodates the obvious need for individual scholarly contributions to be released as soon as they become available. It still maintains, however, the integrity of collective quarterly issues that provides an anticipated publication schedule with the periodic option of theme-specific issues of the journal.

The second refinement necessitating further clarification relates to the obvious availability of **electronic encyclopedias and online knowledge-sharing tools** as possible literature review citations^(cf. 1–3). The IJTMB strongly encourages authors to use professional literature citations from recognized genres of scholarly publications such as peer-reviewed journal articles in print or electronic format and authored or edited books. In so doing, the journal emphasizes that reliance on reputable primary rather than secondary sources is obviously a standard procedure that is certainly preferred. The appeal to electronic encyclopedias and online knowledge-sharing tools should be made only in those circumstances in which more generally

recognized scholarly sources are unavailable or incompatible with the author's intent. When such is the case, these citations must be embedded parenthetically in the manuscript's narrative as opposed to their being included as entries in the References section.

A third recently re-visited journal feature concerns one aspect of the guidelines for ensuring a **double-blind review process**^(cf. 4–8). Previously, the Author Guidelines sector of the journal's website required that, in the context of a submitted manuscript, the term "Author" be used in the bibliographic citations and footnotes instead of the author's name. In this regard, the aforementioned refinement no longer mandates this substitution of "Author" in place of the author's surname in designated locations. However, the relaxing of this earlier demand on contributing authors makes it even more imperative that authors refrain from using the first person singular or plural in the manuscript's narrative.

The fourth feature of the journal requiring further elaboration relates to the intended **scope of coverage** of the various journal sections. The Editorial and News/Announcements sections are self-explanatory and certainly do not necessitate the extent of narrative description most needed by the remaining sections—specifically, the Research, Education, Practice, and Commentaries sections. These scope of coverage descriptions are now provided in detail in the Focus and Scope sector of the journal's website. The assumption here is that readers and prospective authors stand to benefit from these narrative characterizations that provide specificity of intent regarding the journal's broad-based coverage.

These four refinements are expected to enhance the effectiveness of the journal with respect to both its content and process. Reactions are encouraged from the readership as further adjustments to the journal are recognized as potentially helpful to its development.

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The author declares that there are no competing interests.

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