

Open Publishing Effort Offers Free Access to Past Issues of *JNM* and *JNMT*

SNM announced on September 5 that *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine (JNM)* and the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology (JNMT)* have moved to an open access publishing model, providing free online access to full-text articles 12 months after initial publication.

“With digital open access, users are free to read, download, copy, distribute and print articles—with proper acknowledgement and citation,” said Heinrich R. Schelbert, MD, PhD, *JNM* editor-in-chief. “This action speeds the delivery of important developments and innovations that significantly impact disease recognition, staging, and management, thus expanding the journal’s audience to include medical researchers, physicians, technologists, other health care providers, patients and their advocates, students, and the global public.”

“This represents a significant step toward maximum dissemination of significant, scholarly, peer-reviewed research of interest to the nuclear medicine, molecular imaging, and therapy community,” said Martin P. Sandler, MD, SNM president and previous editor-in-chief of *JNM*. “*JNM*—with its worldwide circulation and its high impact and immediacy factors—is considered the most important and influential international journal in molecular imaging and therapy and nuclear medicine. Such unrestricted access to scientific knowledge is bound to have a major impact on medical practice and on promoting the benefits of molecular imaging and therapy. This move coincides with the society’s recent announcement of redefining its core mission ‘to improve health care by advancing molecular imaging and therapy’.”

The SNM Board of Directors approved the open access initiative at the society’s 53rd Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, in June. “With this action, SNM expands accessibility to the high quality research and clinical investigations that our journals feature,” commented Beth A. Harkness, MS, *JNMT* editor. “Digital open access provides an economical and efficient means for delivery of scientific information both within the nuclear medicine community and to other individuals not directly practicing nuclear medicine but interested in the current scientific research in this field,” noted Harkness, a physicist in the

radiology department of the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, Mich.

JNM articles are consistently ranked among the world’s most cited medical imaging research, and the journal is in the top 5% of publications in its category and in the more than 6,000 publications rated by the Thomson Institute for Scientific Information’s *Journal Citation Report*.

Like other scientific organizations that publish peer-reviewed journals in the United States, the SNM had been actively assessing new publication models in response to the May 2005 request from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for open access to publications resulting from NIH-sponsored research. NIH policy indicated that such access would be the individual investigator’s responsibility, noting that “Posting for public accessibility through [NIH research database] PubMed Central is requested and strongly encouraged as soon as possible (and within 12 months of the publisher’s official date of final publication).” According to Elias Zerhouni, MD, director of NIH, the goal is to make “a change in the landscape of how scientific information is made available to the public while preserving the viability of the peer-review process.”

The initial reaction to the NIH request on the part of many researchers and scientific publishers was confusion. Because the onus of the requirement for rapid, open access publication was on the investigator, what responsibility did the publisher have to facilitate such access? The result has been a variety of approaches, ranging from immediate free access to all articles to denial of access to all but subscribers. “We are confident that the open access approach we have chosen will ensure both the long-term scientific quality of *JNM* and *JNMT* and their sustained value to the SNM, while at the same time, their rich resources will be made available to the international research community,” said Conrad Nagle, MD, chair of the SNM Publications Committee.

JNM and *JNMT* open access articles are available on a Web site (<http://jnm.snmjournals.org>) hosted by HighWire Press, a division of the Stanford University Libraries and Academic Information Resources. *JNM* and *JNMT* will be among more than 800 scholarly journals posted on that site. ✧