

Noble father, I know the stranger's name! His name . . . is Love!
TURNADOT

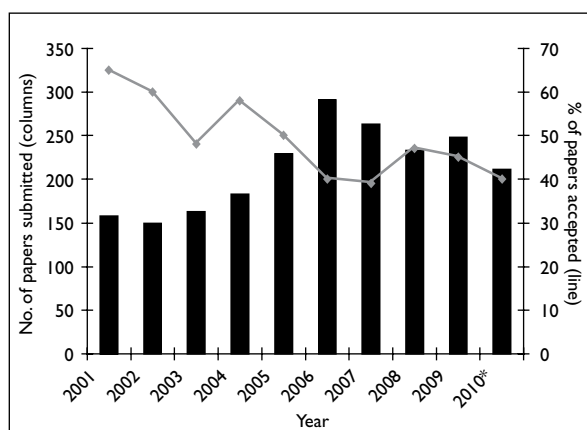
In their Inaugural Editorial, the founding editors of this journal asked two questions¹:

In this age of 'information explosion', with more than 15 000 medical serials in print in 1994, is there room for another journal?

Will it survive in the present atmosphere of cost consciousness and financial constraints in the healthcare sector?

Sixteen years have passed, are these questions answered?

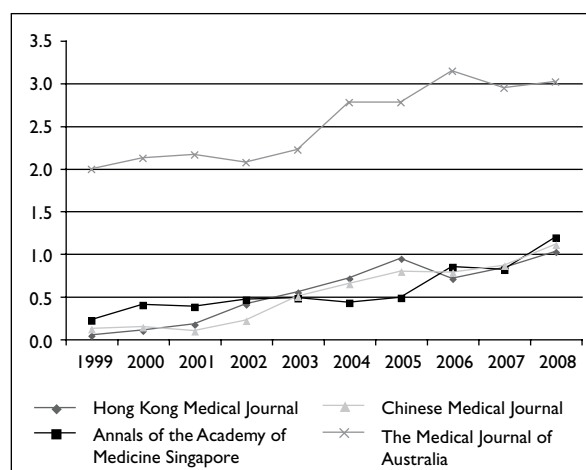
To examine the first question, let's see the first chart. It reflects our popularity in the community. The number of papers submitted for publication rose from about 150 a year at the beginning of the decade to a steady 250 in the last five years. Even with an increase in the number of issues per year from four to six since 2002, our acceptance rate came steadily down to around 40% today. Clearly the Journal is serving a burgeoning need, and perhaps quality has risen as a result of the competition.



Hong Kong Medical Journal—papers processed from 2001 to 2010* (up to October)

The quality of a journal is often measured in terms of the Impact Factor or its equivalent. It is the average number of times an article in a given journal is cited by another article in the same or different journal in the previous two years. Let's see the second chart. Here, the 'regional trio' (*Hong Kong Medical Journal*, *Annals of the Academy of Medicine Singapore* and

Chinese Medical Journal) have been neck-to-neck for the best part of the last decade, while our Australian counterpart (*The Medical Journal of Australia*) stands ahead unchallenged. Will we ever catch up? Not until our local talents start sending us their showpieces. We are already MEDLINE-indexed and accessible freely on the Internet.



Comparison of Impact Factors among four 'national' medical journals (source: SCImago. (2007). SJR — SCImago Journal & Country Rank. Retrieved November 08, 2010, from <http://www.scimagojr.com>)

Will it survive? Peer-reviewed journals generally do not make money. They are financially dependent on their sponsoring bodies and many do fold up even after years of publication. Back in the heady days of 1995, the name "Hong Kong Medical Journal" was conceived as a demonstration of professional unity between the venerable Hong Kong Medical Association and the emergent powerhouse, the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine.² Fortunately both have healthy reserves, and as long as the original sense of purpose is maintained, this journal will not face bankruptcy.

But survival is not all about money. It's about being loved—loved by the readers, authors, reviewers and staff. If you love what your journal is doing, it will thrive.

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References

1. Lee JC, Yu YL. Inaugural editorial. *Hong Kong Med J* 1995;1:4.
2. Lee KH. Inaugural message from the president of the Hong Kong Medical Association. *Hong Kong Med J* 1995;1:7.