

BJR

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An important message to BIR members

The British Journal of Radiology (BJR) has always attracted and published radiological research articles of the highest quality. *BJR* has also maintained its unique positioning as a multidisciplinary journal, covering all clinical and technical aspects of diagnostic imaging, radiotherapy and oncology, medical physics and radiobiology. The multidisciplinary approach of the journal enables readers to keep up-to-date with developments in their own fields and related areas. Since its founding in 1896, the publication has been at the heart of the UK and European radiological communities, while its stature and importance to the world at large has also grown. Currently, more than 65% of submissions to the journal now originate outside the UK.

Its publisher, The British Institute of Radiology (BIR), and its editors are especially proud of the improvement in the *BJR*'s impact factor over the past three years, where annual increases in actual citations indicate improved quality of articles and increased readership of the publication. The *BJR* is currently the highest ranked (by impact factor - 2.366 in 2008*) radiological journal published in the UK, thus offering BIR members and institutional subscribers a unique and valuable resource.

Online-only publishing

Over the past three years the BIR has surveyed library subscribers, BIR members and *BJR* authors, and held focus groups with BIR members, in order to explore how they use the journal and to assess their expectations. There was also a parallel requirement for the BIR, which is first and foremost a charity, to make adjustments which will ensure that the Institute continues to thrive and deliver public benefit, and to better serve the needs of its members and the radiological community.

Taking these issues into account the BIR will modify its journal distribution model in order to meet changing subscriber needs and to remain strongly placed within this fast-evolving industry. From 2011, *BJR* will be distributed as an online service.

Although we know that most BIR members use *BJR* online more than its print component, BIR members will continue to receive a new format printed magazine. This will contain the abstracts of full papers appearing in the online journal, while highly read article categories, such as reviews, Hounsfield reviews, short communications and commentaries will be included in full. The publication will also feature news about the BIR's activities and charitable mission, news from the radiological community, radiological history, training and management perspectives, technology updates and other topics of interest to the BIR readership. The first issue will be published in February 2011.

Long-term electronic availability

One of the main areas of concern for libraries is long-term electronic availability. As the world's longest-established radiological journal the *BJR* is the BIR's most important intellectual asset and subscribers can be assured that the BIR is fully committed to long-term digital preservation of the journal. This commitment was made tangible in 2009 when the BIR made a significant financial investment in digitising *BJR* content dating back to 1928. BIR members will find that they now have access to all of this incredible content. In the coming year, the entire archive, 1896 to present, will also become available online to members.

Furthermore, the online journal is the journal of record. It is the version that is used for indexing (e.g. Pubmed/Medline) as, since 2006, there is content that can only be found online.

Throughout the next few months, we will provide updates on the BIR's new journal distribution model. We look forward to sharing the improvements and new user features that subscribers will see next year at <http://bjr.birjournals.org>.

Sincerely,

The editors and publisher

Email: publications@bir.org.uk

* ISI, Journal Citation Report 2008