

Avoiding Publication Delays

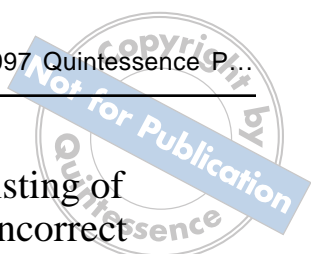
William D. Laney, DMD, MS, Editorial Chairman

The life blood of any periodic publication is the manuscript contributions of the potential authors. The JOMI has been fortunate to receive growing support from those in the implant field seeking recognition of their work in the pages of our journal. As growth occurred during the past decade, publication frequency has been increased from quarterly to bimonthly distribution in response to improved manuscript volume. Along with increased article traffic are, of course, management problems associated with peer review, priority selection, editing, and operational budgets that must be addressed.

Frequently, questions are raised regarding the time required to have a potential paper published in the JOMI. Along with a successful product comes the demand to be a part of it, and so growth in article submissions has resulted in a welcomed moderate backlog. Our objective is to get as many quality articles into print as soon as possible. While we may not always succeed in achieving this goal, internally our dedicated Editorial Staff devotes itself to the pursuit of excellence in producing a professional journal of which we can all be proud. Our readers' support to date suggests that we are at least moving in the right direction.

There are decisions that have been made and ongoing concerns to be considered for enhancing the handling and evaluation of a growing number of manuscript submissions. To respond in a timely fashion to papers received for consideration of publication, the cooperation of all potential authors is needed. This assistance must begin with following the instructions provided in the "Notice to Contributors" page (henceforth to be found among the front pages of each issue), which appears in nearly all issues of the JOMI. The processing of submitted papers can be delayed for as long as 2 to 3 months because of failure to adhere to the appropriate format outlined for acceptable articles or other details related to required documentation or illustrative material.

As noted in the "Notice," all original submissions must be sent to the Quintessence office in Carol Stream, IL, USA. To send them directly to me or elsewhere only delays handling. If the manuscript is incomplete, for example, in not including the appropriate number of text copies, an abstract, the required number of copies of illustrations, legends for illustrations, and a copyright statement signed by all authors, either the paper must be returned to the author or communication must be established to generate the missing material. These omissions create particular problems and delay, especially when the manuscript is received from outside the United States. More than 50% of current manuscript submissions originate from international sources, so these oversights do pose a significant problem that directly



results in paper-processing and, ultimately, publication delays.

One of the most important components of a scientific paper is the listing of references that document the citation of previously published articles. Incorrect reference presentation is probably the single most common error occurring in new manuscripts. Not only may the reference listing style fail to meet journal criteria, but also the manner of citation. All references must be cited in numerical order as they appear in the text. Alphabetical listing is not appropriate in the JOMI. Only references actually cited in the text should be listed in the roster at the conclusion of the article. Each listed reference should be complete in all aspects. The use of personal communications and professional meeting lectures as resources should be limited to a parenthetical citation in the text but should not be numbered or included in the reference list.

Other publication requirements that may delay processing when not met are the provision of copyright statements and written permission or waivers. The copyright statement found in the "Notice" must be accompanied by the signatures of all contributing authors. Material under copyright that is not the submitting author's must have the written permission of the original author and publisher. Photographs identifying patients require permission of the individual under consideration unless the face is masked. Oftentimes the procurement of these entities is time consuming, and if not sought until after manuscript submission, undo delays can result.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the editorial management of submitted articles is predicated upon the receipt of papers that are complete in all respects. The Editorial Staff is as anxious to facilitate the publication of accepted quality manuscripts as the author is to see them in print. Prompt publication and the circumvention of aggravating backlogs are indeed possible if the submission and review processes function as planned. Author cooperation is absolutely essential to the achievement of these goals.