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European Journal of General Practice - Update for Wonca Europe, June 2013.
Maastricht, 5th of June, Jelle Stoffers, Editor-in-Chief

I have informed the Wonca Europe Executive Board and Council personally in July 2012 during the Vienna conference (see: http://www.slideshare.net/JelleStoffers/european-journal-of-general-practice-wonca-europe-2012-conference-vienna?from_search=4). Job has my report, made after WE Vienna (24-10-2012), which provides a detailed overview of discussion and action points, including action points to be taken up by the WE Executive Board (JM). You also have received a report from me in January of this year. Hakan Parup (the publisher), Job and Anna (WE) and I have corresponded on the issue of 'subscriptions' and 'open access' since then, resulting in an offer of a free trial period for the members of WE's member organisations. Thirteen countries have accepted the offer.

An update.

1. Impact factor

- In June 2012, EJGP received its first ever impact factor (2011): 1.130. With this result, the EJGP ranks 10/16 in the category Primary Health Care (median IF 1.275). We are waiting for the JCRs of this year (expected end of June 2013).

2. 2012, Volume 18 (details in my January report)

- The format of the article-pdf's and the printed cover were redesigned to give the journal a more fresh and modern look; furthermore, the website was further developed (impact factor, Twitter, presentations, most read articles, free articles).
- Content: see <http://informahealthcare.com/loi/gen> Research papers came from a variety of countries: Greece, Germany, Spain, Poland, UK, Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Norway and France. The December 2012 issue was the first in which we could collect a few papers on one topic, i.e. 'education'.
- The 'Communication and Information' section received contributions from Wonca Europe, EGPRN, Euract, VDGM, IPCRG, EFPC, Euripa, and Others.
- All issues were published online in time. The paper copies arrived one or two weeks later.

3. 2012, Input (details in my January 2013 report)

- Submitted: 298 manuscripts, including 169 'Original papers', 18 'Research letters', 7 'Systematic reviews' and 21 'Clinical lessons'. Average monthly number of submissions: 25;
- Decisions in 2012: on 269 manuscripts; final decisions on 177 manuscripts: 34.5% were accepted.
- The top-20 of countries of origin of submitting authors was: Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Turkey, France, Spain, Israel, Belgium, Germany, Finland, Slovenia, Norway, Denmark, Poland, Switzerland, United States, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Greece.

4. 2013, Volume 19, issues 1 and 2, early online

- The format of the article-pdfs was slightly adapted. New instructions for authors were published.
- The 'Communication & Information' section was renamed 'News and Agenda' and its lay-out was adapted to distinguish it more from the scientific part of the journal. We communicate well with 'Wonca News'. Authors are asked to write more concise and in a more newspaper like style. Contributions came from EGPRN, Euract, VdGM, Europrev, Euripa, IPCRG and EFPC. Its content is freely accessible.

- Due to illness of the production editor during the finalisation phase of issue 2 (correcting issue proof), the publication of issue 2 was a bit delayed. However, all papers were published 'early online'. The printed version probably will be a bit delayed as well due to arrangements that needed to be made with Wonca Prague.
 - Scientific content: see: <http://informahealthcare.com/loi/gen> . The first two issues include 2 Editorials, 10 original articles and research letters, 4 background/opinion papers incl. keynote lectures and EGPRN abstracts (Antwerp Oct. 2012). Issue 1 mainly contains 'cardiometabolic' papers and issue 2 focusses on the 'respiratory tract'. The first paper of our new Series on European international collaborative research projects was published (ICT solutions in remote areas).
5. 2013, Input, until 5th of June 2013
- Editorial process: See table
 - Submissions: see Table
 - Decisions: see Table
6. Editorial team is working hard
- Editorial (Skype) meetings were held every 3 months, incl. WE Vienna; we reached consensus on 'more informative titles' and 'key words'; we had a fruitful discussion on the 'publisher's checklist to increase the impact factor'. Editorial procedures were improved and adapted to the increasing workflow. We started a new Series, on 'European international collaborative research projects'. We will continue these discussions in Prague.
 - More and more different papers are being submitted to the EJGP. However, the average quality is not higher, implying that it is a challenge for the editorial team to continue delivering good service to authors (good quality reviews, in time) but also to publish papers of increasing relevance and quality ('impact'). Editors report increasing difficulty in finding good reviewers who are willing to write a report. Currently we recruit peer reviewers from our database of authors and we have sent a request through WE network organisations and others means, incl. Wonca News and the Wonca website. Personally, I manage to keep 'on track', but it is a challenge to find the time to reflect on and discuss the course of the Journal.
 - The editors shared their concern on the financial health of the journal in the near future. We put a lot of effort in the peer-review process and would like to see the journal to be able to adapt to the growing workflow as well as to the demands of the modern (medical publication) world.
 - We all have the dream to develop the EJGP into a leading journal for family medicine, read by researchers in the field as well as practising colleagues. The website could be developed further into an interactive medium. For the moment however, we 'just' try to make an interesting journal for our colleagues in Europe.
 - Editorial expenses: in January you have received an overview of our expenses during the Vienna conference and the overview of the editorial allowances over 2012 (€8550).
 - Anneke Germeraad, the Editorial Assistant of EJGP, has had a positive assessment at Maastricht University and now is ranked as 'redacteur' ('managing editor').
 - After the successful Wonca Vienna workshop on 'Writing for publication', I have given a similar workshop at the TAHUD conference in May 2013 in Kusadasi (Turkey) and will do this again at Wonca Prague (June 2013; with VdGM) and EGPRN Malta (Oct. 2013, with Sc J Prim Health Care editor Hans Thulesius)) See: <http://www.slideshare.net/vdgm/writing-for-publication-a-vdgm-egprn-ejgp-joint-workshop>
 - We will continue to persuade keynote speakers of EGPRN and Wonca (Europe) conferences to write background or opinion papers for the EJGP.
 - We hope we will receive more photographs by authors, readers and editors.
7. Advisory Board: collaboration with 11 national journals of Family Medicine
- I have reached agreements with the following 11 national journals of Family Medicine on 'double publications' of selected papers (European relevance, good quality) in the EJGP: Belgium (Huisarts Nu), Bosnia & Herzegovina (Porodična /obiteljska medicina Bosne i Hercegovine), Bulgaria (General Medicine), Finland (Yleislääkäri), France (Exercer), Israel (Harefuah), The Netherlands (Huisarts en Wetenschap), Norway (Utposten), Portugal (Revista Portuguesa de Medicina Gerale Familiar), Serbia (Opsta Medicina) and Turkey (Türkiye Aile Hekimligi Dergisi). The Editors of these journals

will collaborate in the 'EJGP Advisory Board'. I have invited them to an informal meeting at Wonca Prague.

8. Contact with the Publisher ('s Office), Informa, Stockholm

- The main topic of the contacts between EJGP (me), Wonca Europe EB (Job, Anna) and the Publisher (Hakan Parup) was the issue of financial health of the journal. Although from a scientific point of view the journal runs an optimistic course, the journal still is not successful from a commercial perspective, according to the Publisher. We discussed how to improve the 'number of subscriptions', 'free access' and 'society subscriptions' (implying open access for their members). This will be the main topic of our Skype 'EJGP Business meeting' on the 18th of June. Hakan will provide a financial overview and the results of the free trial.
- Anneke and I had a Skype meeting with Hakan Parup (publisher) and a few of his colleagues at the Stockholm office in May 2012. There is continuous e-mail communication and we have had occasional telephone conversations.
- Editors' choice: as long as the EJGP has no general 'open access, free access to selected papers will be offered; we are currently selecting the 'free access' papers of 2012.
- We will continue our efforts to persuade the publisher in improving the website further, incl. better use of social media like twitter and the publication of relevant supplemental material.

9. Other contacts

- I have met Peter Vedsted, Editor-in Chief of the Scandinavian Journal of Primary Health Care, Bohumil Seifert (on publication of Wonca Prague abstracts), and Kurt Stange, Editor-in-Chief of the Annals of Family Medicine, and Richard Roberts. Richard wrote a nice background paper. I also have met Okay Basak (TAHUD) and Editor in Chief of the Turkish FM journal.

10. EJGP and Wonca Europe, in 2013 and further

- Wonca Europe: most crucial issue is the support to increase the number of subscriptions and to organise 'open access' for as many as possible (all?) European GPs/family doctors. Job and Anna have been involved in the discussions with the publisher. The result of these discussions was a proposal for a trial offer of 'free access' to the EJGP from March-May 2013 for the members of the WE member organisations. Thirteen colleges have accepted the free trial offer: Italy, France, Greece, Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia, Belgium, Finland, Austria, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and Portugal. After that, the publisher will approach them with an offer for a permanent subscription, thus providing open access for their members. We really hope this will be the start of a process to increase the number of users of the EJGP as well as improve the financial conditions for future development of the EJGP. We will discuss the outcome and implications of the free trial experiment in our Business and Strategy meetings before/during Wonca Prague.
- In 2014 my first 5-year period as Editor-in-Chief will end. I am prepared to continue this function another period, but will wait for WE's proposal.

TABLES

1. Journal Statistics (2013-05-05)	Prior 12 Months
Avg. days from submission to first editorial decision	31.5
Avg. Time to Assign Reviewer (days) - Original submission	15.4
Avg. Reviewer turnaround time (days) - Original submission	15.6
Avg. days from submission to final editorial decision	36.1
Accept Ratio (prior 12 months) (%)	67: 225 (29.8%)

2. Submissions and Decisions	2010	2011	2012	2013 until 5th June
Total submissions	203	163	298	170
Submissions, monthly average	17	14	25	32
Submissions, Top 5 countries				
1	Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands	
2	Germany	Belgium	UK	
3	Belgium	UK	Germany	
4	Spain	Norway	Spain	
5	UK	Italy	Ireland	
		Slovenia	Norway	
		Israel	Poland	
Time to first editorial decision (days)	17	19	27	
Number of MS with final decisions	128	105	189	
- of which accepted	73	54	62	
- acceptance rate	57%	51%	33%	

Kind regards,
Jelle Stoffers, Editor-in-Chief EJGP