

Features Section

Editorial

Changes to the Format of the *Journal of Orthodontics*

Over the past few months the editorial team of the journal have been considering changes that we would like to make to the format of the papers that we publish in the Journal. This has been driven by our desire to make the Journal more 'user' friendly and make the papers more readable. As a result, I have decided to use this editorial to inform the readership and potential authors of these changes. These are also presented in more detail in the guidelines to authors that are effective from this edition.

The greatest change that you will notice is to the style of references. After much discussion, we have decided to adopt the 'Vancouver' style as it offers several advantages over our original format. Most of these are due to our feeling that when the authors' names are not embedded in the text in brackets, the flow of the paper is improved. Secondly, this is the format used by most orthodontic journals and allows a degree of uniformity in the literature.

The other main change is a result of a new editorial policy, and our wish to reduce the size and complexity of cephalometric tables that are a feature of so many orthodontic publications. When we consider the nature of cephalometrics, it is so easy for us to press the 'analyse all' button and generate tables of almost every cephalometric measurement under the sun! These mega tables, arguably, do not add to the interpretation of the paper and may simply make readers lose interest. I am not suggesting that we reduce the scientific content of our papers, but that we confine our cephalometric tables to only those variables

that are of direct relevance to the research project. If readers wish to see all the cephalometric data from these papers, they will be available on the journal website as an appendix to the papers.

We have also taken the step of removing authors' qualifications from the authors' lists to fit in with other international publications. We will also add acceptance and submission dates as we feel that this provides useful information for potential authors. We are aware, however, that this may lead to conflict, as authors realize that their paper's publication date has not been as rapid as others.

Our final, major change to the research section is the introduction of commentaries on each of the papers. These will be provided by experts in the relevant fields and will serve to provide information on each paper. This should lead to easier interpretation and may encourage readers to read the paper in full. These sections will also include a statement on the level of scientific evidence that the paper provides and will aid in the understanding of the data that has been presented. As all of these papers have been through the reviewing process, it is not our intention that the commentaries will be an aggressive critique of the paper; they should simply provide a viewpoint on the paper.

You can be assured that we will continue to publish high quality clinical research that is relevant to orthodontic practice.

KEVIN O'BRIEN