

Introductory Editorial

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I am pleased to announce the launch of *Rehabilitation Process and Outcome*—a new peer reviewed open access journal published by Libertas Academica.

The journal invites contributions from a variety of scientific disciplines that seek to develop the evidence base for rehabilitation. *Rehabilitation Process and Outcome* covers all aspects of the rehabilitation process, and examines conceptual and classification issues, as well as interventions, and measurement related to rehabilitation outcomes research. The journal's broad scope addresses research about impairments related to injury and long term conditions. It covers a wide range of impairment groups, including those related to emotional, learning and social development, hearing, vision, speech and language, physical trauma, and chronic illness. The measurement of change and progress indicators as well as outcomes are addressed. The journal further seek to stimulate critical debates about the conceptualisation and scope of rehabilitation and classification topics such as the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF, World Health Organisation (WHO), 2001). *Rehabilitation Process and Outcome* is well positioned to reflect scientific developments at the intersection of disability, health and rehabilitation. The journal is interdisciplinary in nature and invites scientific contributions from basic scientists, applied clinical and non-clinical researchers if their work is clearly related to rehabilitation. Advances in bioengineering and neuroscience with relevance to rehabilitation are also considered.

The journal will be complementing existing subscription based journals as it crosses disciplinary boundaries in exciting new ways, thus promoting interdisciplinary communication and collaboration. All journal articles will be accessible without any access boundaries to all internet users throughout the world. Another major benefit of open access online journals is that anyone can contribute, and not only those in major institutions. These freedoms are coupled with rigorous, fair and prompt standards of peer review.

Rehabilitation Process and Outcome is published exclusively online. Articles will follow a consistent format so that the visual impact will be high and equal to that of the best hard-copy publications. In contrast to paper-based journals, however, the electronic format allows the full use of digital technologies and permits the inclusion of large data sets, from field and laboratory studies, links to other web pages, animations, slide shows, video clips and unlimited colour, all at no additional charge. Open access means that all articles are freely available to all, worldwide, and at no cost to the reader. Authors retain copyright of their work and can grant anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate it, provided that it is correctly cited and no errors are introduced, under the Creative Commons "CC-BY" licence.

In hard-copy journals, the costs of publication are met by subscriptions, paid by the reader. In *Rehabilitation Process and Outcome*, as in other open access journals, these costs are borne by the author in the form of a publication processing fee. Many grant-awarding bodies recognise the value of open access publishing by allowing their funds to be used for PPFs. Fee waivers and discounts are available on a case-by-case basis, and we shall make every effort to ensure that lack of funds does not impede the overall objective of publishing the best science, irrespective of authorship or country of origin.

I do not foresee that open access, online journals will totally replace the traditional print format in the immediate future, although this may be an increasing trend with time. I am certain, however, that the benefits of online publication, and the extra opportunities that digital technologies give to authors,

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will be increasingly recognised. Open access is of huge benefit to the researchers working in institutions around the world where institutional libraries are unable to afford subscription fees for a full range of journals.

I expect that *Rehabilitation Process and Outcome* will attract manuscripts of the highest quality

which are of the greatest possible benefit to readers. Peer review is undertaken by at least two leading experts in the area of the manuscript.

For further information on what we hope will be an exciting and highly useful new journal, please click on the “about this journal” link on the journal’s web page.