

An Evolution in Peer Reviewed Journals

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Editor

Peer-reviewed management articles and other forms of scholarly discourse for EMS administrators, managers, medical directors, researchers, and policy / decision makers are severely limited in scope and availability. The few peer-reviewed journals that publish EMS papers are focused on clinically oriented research. EMS policy and decision makers have a broader need for high quality peer-reviewed literature that provides an analysis and synthesis of information related to administration, management, operations, and policymaking. There is also a need to expose the EMS community to literature from other healthcare disciplines and the mainstream business community. These needs are not limited to the U.S.—they are international in scope. The goal of the *EMS Management Journal (EMSMJ)* is to fill this niche.

The introduction of a new peer-reviewed journal is a significant milestone for any professional discipline. Peer-reviewed journals are the venues in which the art and science of professional disciplines are defined, debated, and evolved through the publication of research, scholarly papers, editorials and position papers. However, we hope the *EMS Management Journal (EMSMJ)* will be a new step in the evolution of the peer-reviewed journal format itself.

EMSMJ is published through a collaborative effort between HealthAnalytics, LLC, the National EMS Management Association and the National Association of State EMS Directors. Our vision for *EMSMJ* is quite unique in terms of its content, format and features.

Instead of limiting the format and language used in *EMSMJ* manuscripts to the conventions of standard biomedical research, *EMSMJ* will draw from the formats and language of quality and management sciences. We encourage our authors to use the six sigma DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) framework for their structured abstracts and articles in the Performance Reports section – our area for original research. You are likely to see problem statements and descriptions of experimental methods illustrated with tools such as Ishikawa diagrams, Pareto charts, and process maps. Analyses of results are likely to be illustrated with statistical process control charts. Conclusions are likely to feature metrics like ROI (return on investment), sigma levels, and DPMO (defects per million opportunities).

Because of our focus on management and performance issues, along with our unique incorporation of performance improvement oriented language and reporting formats, we see *EMSMJ* as something that is more complementary than competitive with other peer-reviewed EMS journals. Admittedly, many EMS professionals are not yet familiar with some of these tools, formats, and the associated language. We hope to change that—permanently. In the meantime, we will provide footnotes, references and hyperlinks to more detailed information to help readers learn more.

USING THE JOURNAL

EMSMJ is disseminated through email, PDF files and web pages. Readers will be notified of each new issue of the *Journal* through an email containing the annotated table of contents with links to the individual article files. Readers can also choose to download the entire issue as a single PDF file with ‘bookmarks’ to specific articles. Page numbering in *EMSMJ* starts with the cover and includes all types of pages, including advertisements, to conform to the way in which PDF files are structured.

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The articles themselves may contain links to file attachments for data, supplemental documents, sound, video, or demonstration files. The data file attachments are particularly intriguing from an academic perspective. In print, readers are limited to viewing summaries of investigational or project data as tables and graphs. *EMSMJ* envisions the authors of performance reports attaching their source data files, so that readers may scrutinize the information for themselves and even perform their own statistical analyses. This will take peer-review and scientific debate in EMS to an entirely new level.

EMSMJ has been designed to be read from your computer screen or by printing articles of interest on your own printer. If you read from your screen and are connected to the Internet, you will find a huge added benefit because the web addresses and internal references embedded in the articles and advertisements are fully functional links. These internal and external links are surrounded by light blue dotted lines (e.g. link to the *EMSMJ* website). If it is a link to a website or email address, the pointing hand cursor will have a 'W' on it (Windows) or a '+' (Mac OS) and show the web or email address. Clicking on a citation note in an article will take you to the endnote to see the full citation information at the top of the window. You can go back to the place you were reading in the article by using the 'back' button on the navigation bar of your Adobe Acrobat Reader. Clicking on the [link] information following an endnote will take you to an external resource if one is available, such as the abstract, journal, publisher or bookseller for the cited work via your web browser. Email links may also be included. Moving back and forth between reading the PDF and externally linked website will go much faster if you save the PDF file to your hard drive and then open it using Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader. Reading the PDF from within your browser often runs much slower.

There are innovations in the presentation of advertisements as well. Because some *EMSMJ* readers might choose to download only the articles they want to read, the ads in *EMSMJ* are located at the end of specific articles. This offers potential advantages for both readers and advertisers. A reader who downloads an article on a cardiac related process improvement project may have interest in an advertisement about a cardiac related product or service. This allows readers to see advertisements that are relevant to their interests and allows advertisers to precisely target ad placements. The ads themselves may contain text hyperlinks and/or graphic hyperlink 'hot spots.' Look for notes indicating the presence of hot spots and click on web addresses that might be included in the text of the ads.

We also will introduce a new innovation – sponsored access. An advertiser may choose to 'sponsor' access to a particular article or to an entire issue of *EMSMJ*. This will allow subscribers and non-subscribers alike to have full access to that particular article or issue. This is most likely to happen when an advertiser sees marketing value in having a particular article or issue become as widely read as possible.

On a more personal note, I can't help but feel a sense of déjà vu. In 1987, I was the editor / publisher of one of the very first peer-reviewed EMS journals. While still working 24/48 shifts as a paramedic/firefighter, I used a Macintosh Plus running Microsoft Word 1.0 and Aldus PageMaker 1.0 to produce the *Tampa Bay EMS Journal*, which subsequently became the *Journal of Prehospital Medicine*. Shortly thereafter, it merged with the *Journal of the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine* and combined with the efforts of the National Association of EMS Physicians to create *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*. Desktop publishing was seen as the 'bleeding-edge' of technology by most professional associations and publishers back then. With time, the innovations of desktop publishing became the accepted norm. I expect the same to happen again with electronic peer-reviewed journals like *EMSMJ* — for many of the reasons described above and more. *EMSMJ* has an extraordinary group of people serving on the editorial board. It was great to ride on the crest of a wave of innovation with a dedicated group of people back then and I'm sure it will be another great ride with this group and *EMSMJ*.

We hope you enjoy and benefit from having access to an innovative electronic peer-reviewed EMS management journal as much as we do in preparing it for you. We are looking forward to your feedback. Click on the link to email me at mic.gunderson@healthanalytics.net.