

# Saudi Medical Journal

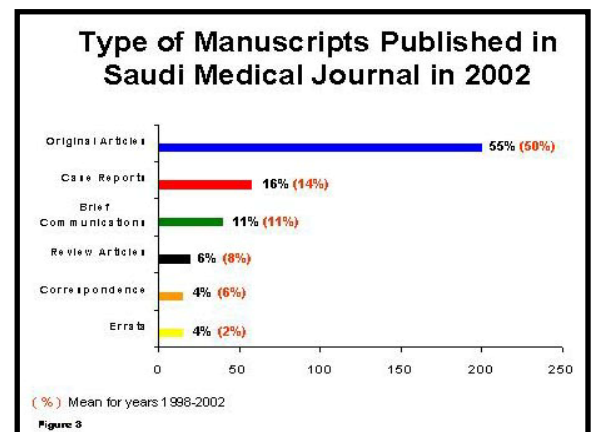
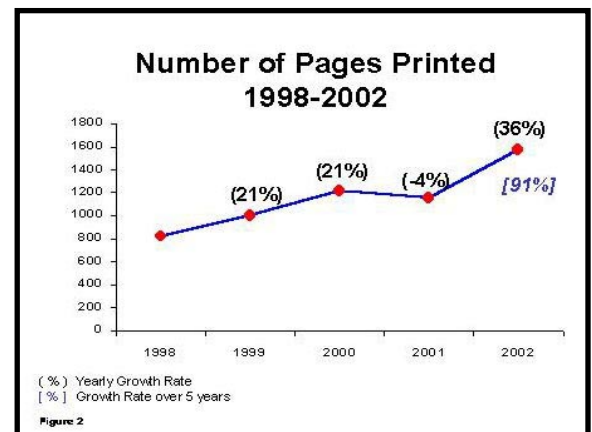
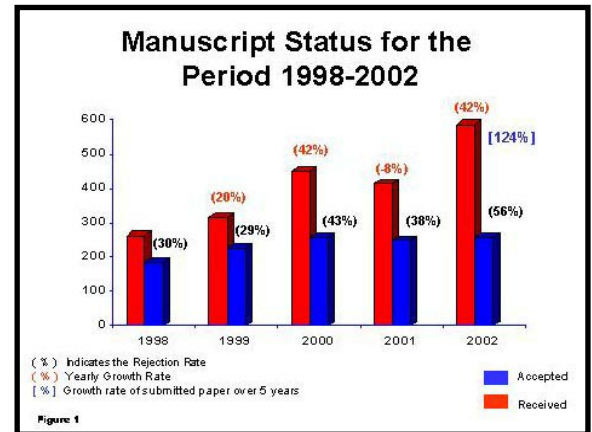
## A college by itself!

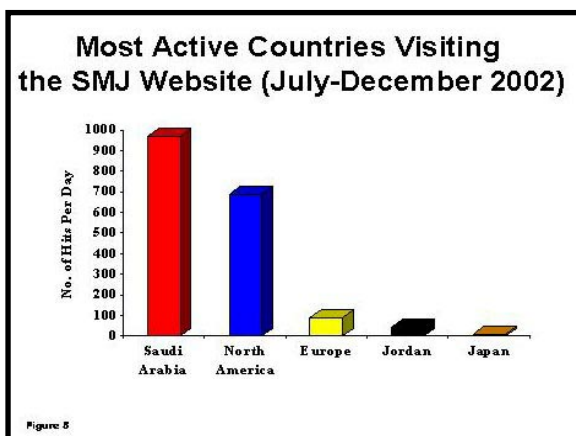
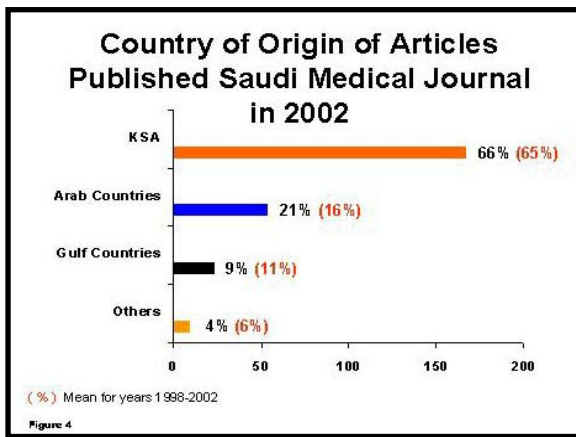
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Saudi medical journal was founded in 1979. In 1999 it became monthly with a steady growth in manuscripts submitted and number of pages published. In the last 5 years, we have doubled in number of articles and pages published. In addition we achieved growth not only in quantity but also in quality. We have published many supplements and special issues in Arabic and English. In the year 2000, the journal was indexed by the National Library of Medicine in Medline and Pubmed. We also have established a website ([www.smj.org.sa](http://www.smj.org.sa)) with an average of 1000 hits daily. We recollected all the published data from all journals published in Saudi Arabia from 1979 until the end of 1999, in a special CD, MedBase.

**Annual Report.** This year we received 587 manuscripts with an increase of 42% from last year and overall increase of 124% in the last 5 years from 1998. The rejection rate for this year was 56% compared to 38% last year, and 30% in 1998 (Figure 1). We published 1572 pages with a 36% increase from last year and a 91% increase from 1998 (Figure 2). The turnover time from submission to acceptance for this year was 3.3 months, the same as last year, but lower by 35% than it was in 1998 at 5.1 months. Each yearly volume will be split into 2 sub-volumes with 2 binders for each annual volume. With each bound issue we will also include a CD containing all literature published for that period. The original articles still constitute the main subject of each issue (Figure 3). Our articles are still mainly from the Kingdom, but we are receiving more articles from the Arab world and other regional countries, such as, Turkey, Iran, India and Pakistan (Figure 4). Despite the increase in the number of publications we will still run monthly this year, however, in the future we may increase publication to twice monthly. We also started to include related abstracts for some articles, from the Saudi MedBase (Figure 5), this will continue over the coming years.

This year the reader will notice a major change in the Editorial Board, and we would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board who have retired at the end of 2002: Abdul-Aziz Al-Meshari, Fahad Al-Muhanna, Fahad Al-Rabiah, Zain Al-Shareef, Bahaa AbaAlkhail, Menwar Anazi, George Araj (Lebanon), Talal Bakhsh, Hassan Bassiouny (Egypt), Abdulbari Bener (UAE), Joseph Dagher (USA), Dirk Deleu (Oman), Mohsen El-Hazmi, Hatem El-Shanti (Jordan), Syed Haider (India), Khalid Haque (UK), Ali Ibrahim (Syria), and Tariq Noman (Yemen). Hussein Al-Freihi, Yagob Al-Mazrou, Nayef Al-Rodhan, Mohammed Abomelha, and Ahmed Kurdi retired from the Editorial Board and joined the Advisory Board. We would also like to thank Muhammad Al-Mufti, Mansour Al-Nozha and Khalid Tabbara who retired from the Advisory Board. We were deeply shocked and saddened by the departure of one of our eminent Advisory Board members, Professor





George W. Bruyn, one of the founding pillars of the journal. We have invited an excellent faculty to join us in the Editorial Board in addition to those who remain and we hope that this new blood will maintain the progress of the journal. We would especially like to welcome and thank them for accepting our invitation to join our Editorial Board. The new faculty are: Hisham Akbar, Saeed Al-Ghamdi, Maher Al-Hadidi (Jordan), Hindi Al-Hindi, Abulrahman Al-Rajhi, Assia Al-Rawaf, Ammar Al-Rikabi (Qatar), Ali Al-Shehri, Shouki Bazarbashi, Ahmed Elzubier, Mohammed Fouda, Issam Hamadah, Ali Hajeer, Khalid Kalantan, Muhamad Majeed-Saidan, Ratib Mesleh, Adnan Mofti, Sadek Pharaon (Syria), Khalid Qattan, Assem Rostom (UK), Mona Shahed and Ghazi Tadmouri (Turkey). Also, Ashry Gad Mohammed (supervising statistics), and Rabie Abdel-Halim (editing History of Medicine) will be added to our Editorial Board. There will be some changes in the Editorial Office where Susan Douglas, in addition to her post as the Copy Editor will be Assistant Editor of the journal and Joyce Figuerres, in addition to her post as Editorial Manager, will supervise the Journal website.

In the year 2002 we appointed Susan Douglas as Quality Control Officer to ensure the excellence of the journal and to handle all the complaints arising between the journal, the authors, the reviewers and the publisher. This was very productive and in the coming years this will not be confined to the Quality Control Officer, but we will appoint an Ombudsmen. The first detailed Quality Control report is published in this issue and will be sent to members of the Editorial and Advisory Board for their comments.

**The Future.** Although the journal is now a competitive indexed journal, we are still committed to our ambitious plan for this year and the many years to follow. Our plans for the coming year are outlined.

**Content.** This year we will concentrate on the quality in addition to the look and the size of the journal. Due to a steady increase in number of publications, we suspect that the rejection rate will be increased. Although this is sometimes painful, we believe it is necessary.

The reader will notice some changes in the layout of the journal, and the highlights section is now an established part of each issue. There will be changes in the tables and figures, for the better. Errata notices will appear in the website and be sent to the National Library of Medicine to be linked to all the manuscripts on Pubmed. We have omitted Letters to the Editor and replaced them by Brief Communications. The size of the Journal will be enlarged in width but not in length. Lastly, Instructions to the Authors will now be available in our web site and not published in each issue, but will appear once at the end of each sub-volume.

**Website.** Our website has been modified to accommodate an extensive search facility. We plan to expand on electronic communication through our website, and we may consider sending articles for review electronically through the website, once we ensure confidentiality with a protected password for each manuscript. Our website is still in the developing stages, but still attracts 30,000 hits per month. The highest hits were from Saudi Arabia & North America followed by Europe, Arab countries and Japan (Figure 6). We hope to make many more improvements for the benefit of the readers and reviewers. Any suggestions or comments regarding our webpage, should be

sent directly to Joyce Figuerres, through e-mail via the webpage.

**Supplements.** The journal has published a number of special issues in the past in the Arabic language. This year we will have a new endeavour in which we will publish a well designed issue in Arabic called "Health and Life" which is addressed not only to physicians but also to the public. It will be edited by our Arabic Editor, Ghada Al-Ahmed. It will deal with many topics important to the society addressed by prominent clinicians and scientists giving real facts on topics to educate the public by evidence based rather than tabloid medicine. This endeavour was well supported by His Royal Highness Prince Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz, our Patron, and Ketab Al-Otaibi, our Editorial Director. In addition to this we are planning to have 2 supplements, one on Pediatric Surgery with Assia Al-Rawaf as the Guest Editor and the second on Cancer in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with Shouki Bazarbashi as the Guest Editor, both have joined our Editorial Board. Additional supplements on important courses, workshops and symposia are also planned for the coming years. We are willing to publish more supplements on important academic activities in the Kingdom or outside. We have appointed Susan Douglas, to be Assistant to the Guest Editors for any future supplements.

**Courses, workshops and symposia.** At the beginning of this year, SMJ entered into an exciting venture: The Second Intensive Course on (1) Planning and Performing a Research Study and (2) Writing and Presenting a Scientific Paper in conjunction with the

Research Committee of the Department of Surgery at King Saud University. A report on this symposium will be published in one of the coming issues. We have approached the East Mediterranean Medical Journal and the Bahrain Medical Bulletin with a view to holding a combined meeting on Medical Journalism, which has resulted in a Regional Conference to be held in Cairo 24-27 November this year. The objectives of this conference will be to review the current status of medical journals published in the Region. This will include assessing the problems, developing guidelines and establishing a code of ethics. A one day training workshop for editors will be conducted. As a result of the meeting we hope to establish a combined Council of Editors of medical journals in the Region. Editors, interested health educators, biomedical researchers, authors, publishers, scientists and academicians are asked to participate.

The journal has gone so far, not only as a basin for publication of manuscripts on medical research, but also in society education by publishing arabic issues. Our future vision is to be part of training and education, and set a foundation for a college in medical journalism not only in the Kingdom but in our area. Our future plans are very ambitious but we cannot do it alone without the help of the Colleges, Universities, researchers and subscribers.

At a time where "civilized" countries are busy with war and terrorism in our area, Saudi Medical Journal shines monthly as a civilized face coming from Arabia.