

# Why a New Journal? Welcome to the Journal of Contemporary Chiropractic

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Years ago, when I first began editing, the state of technology was such that we used typewriters to prepare manuscripts for publication. This had a number of ramifications. One was that if we made a mistake, it might necessitate retyping the entire manuscript. Second, it meant that we could not insert illustrations or tables into the text; instead, those were placed at the end of the paper, one per page, with another page given over to the legends required for each illustration. When we sent this to the publisher, they generated a galley proof. This was a single column of text that we then looked over for any errors we might have missed. We sent those back—by postal mail—and the publisher then generated a series of page proofs. These were representative of final pages; any changes now would cost significant money to fix. Once we okayed the page proofs, the issue could be generated, printed, and mailed. All of this, of course, cost money. The money to accomplish this was generated through subscriptions.

Initially, the changes that followed were incremental, until the first home computers were developed. My first Apple Macintosh computer (1984) completely transformed my life as an editor. One could now easily fix typing errors without needing to retype pages of text (this, even after IBM developed the IBM Selectric typewriter with its single line of correctable type). And there was no longer a need to create galley proofs. One could go immediately to page proofs, with the tables and figures already typeset. And with the advent of email, we did not need to use the US mail system anymore, saving time and money in moving proofs between editor and publisher. Computers became more powerful, email more prevalent, and social media a driving force. All of this affected scientific publication. One thing that happened was an explosion in the number of online scientific publications.

The internet has impacted in serious ways the ability of scientific journals to sell subscriptions. Most users now look only for specific information for specific needs, rather than read journals cover to cover. And this has led to chiropractic—and all health services libraries—to have to purchase journal packs, in which they pay a very high price to obtain the journals they want, along with a host

of journals that are not often used. Further, much of the research published in these subscription-based journals is funded research, with the funds coming in large measure from taxpayers. This now is a kind of double dipping: the public pays for the research, and then pays again to access it. While efforts have been made to correct this, NIH makes the public wait a year before the journal is required to open a given funded piece of research. Recently, Swedish research institutions moved to cancel their contract with one of the world's largest publishers of scientific journals because they felt the publisher was not moving fast enough to open access to publications from those institutions (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/sweden-cancels-elsevier-contract-open-access-dispute-spreads#survey-answer>). Their argument was that they had provided the funding for the research, were affiliated institutions, and felt that the costs of subscriptions to the journals in which that research appeared had become too high.

Thus, the move toward open access publication has taken place. The initial construction of open access publication was written as “author pays,” as opposed to “subscriber pays.” That is, the authors would pay a fee if their paper was published. The idea being, most research is grant funded, so all the author or investigator would need to do is build in some additional funds for this purpose. After all, what is another \$1500 on a budget of several hundred thousand? The goal here was to make that publication accessible to the entire reading world. Copyright would not be assigned, as it is with subscription-driven journals (since a copyrighted journal has to assume the cost of publishing the paper, printing it and mailing it, etc. They cover your costs and you give them the copyright in exchange).

But this also has issues. If you are in private practice, as many chiropractors obviously are, this is clearly an impediment to publication. And if you are a young graduate student, you do not have such funds, and it can seriously impact your annual earnings. This is an argument nicely made in an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled “The Fallacy of Open-Access Publication.” (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Fallacy-of-Open-Access/241786>)

So, what is the answer? Well, there may be more than a single answer, but what we here at Parker University have done is to create an open access publication that is entirely subsidized by the University. There are no submission or

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publication fees, no subscription fees, and every paper will be open access. This is a commitment made to the profession at large. We will provide a rigorous review process, a top-notch editor (full disclosure: me), an ability to publish a paper shortly after its acceptance, and an international reach.

This will also take a commitment on the part of you, the reader and potential author. First, you need to feel comfortable submitting a paper. I promise that anything you send will receive a fair and full review, in a timely fashion, and will be returned if revisions are needed (as they typically are, even for the most accomplished writers among us). You will be treated politely. I've put together an editorial board of individuals with a variety of expertise, in matters ranging from education and research, to politics, interdisciplinary care, and from the "right and left" of chiropractic. There will be balance here.

One of my goals with this publication is to achieve indexing status. For indexing in PubMed, that usually takes at least two years of publication. Indexing is a means by which people can locate your paper when they search for information on a topic related to your paper. PubMed is the main governmental database for scientific information. This is the public gateway to information about healthcare interventions and research. Inclusion is desirable since it is both a measure of quality as well as a measure of accessibility. To earn the ability to be included, the *Journal of Contemporary Chiropractic* will need to ensure it publishes quality papers. But because publishing in indexed journals is desirable, authors tend to seek them out. So, this creates a tension: we need good papers to get indexed, but often the good papers are sent to journals that already have that status. Send them here, please.

Over time I hope to discuss other issues related to scientific publication. There are so many, both good and bad. I will discuss the how-tos of writing case reports, literature reviews, and other papers. I will delve into evidence-based terminology and practices. I will look at challenges: publication bias, predatory journals, outcome switching, and so on. By doing so, I hope to expose you to how to interpret science and how you can then apply it to your patients.

**Welcome to the *Journal of Contemporary Chiropractic*.  
I look forward to your comments and your submissions.**