The internationalisation of the New Zealand Journal of Medical Laboratory Science

Terry Taylor and Rob Siebers

Recently there have been a number of concerns raised from some members of the New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science (NZIMLS) about the amount of overseas articles published within the NZIMLS Journal believing that we should only be publishing articles from New Zealand authors' seeing it is a New Zealand journal.

Since the journal has become open access around the world and abstracting by international data bases this has dramatically increased the potential reader numbers. This is evidenced by an increasing number of published articles from the journal that are cited in the international biomedical literature (1). There has also been an increase in the number of overseas submissions to the journal. In this August issue is an original article from Portugal and two short communications from Nigeria. In the past we have also published articles from Taiwan, Nigeria, Iran, India, the UK and Australia. Later this year there will be further articles from the USA and Australia. With this in mind this has also seen an opportunity for overseas researchers to look at publishing in our journal. While this may not be an ideal scenario in some of our member’s eyes, it has also given an opportunity to many others to publish articles. One thing that should always be remembered is that we have a panel of experienced and very knowledgeable peer reviewers to rely on to scrutinize articles put forward for publication. What you read in the journal is often significantly different from what was first presented to the reviewer.

This does not answer the question of why we don’t have more publications published from our members. The answer is, we simply do not get many articles submitted from our New Zealand members. If we had to rely on this the journal would be lucky to have more than a couple of articles each issue. There are many different types of scientific writing that can be submitted for publication. This includes original articles, reviews, opinion pieces, short technical communications and scientific letters.

Basically if people want to see more local content then keep encouraging our peers to publish. We all have a tremendous amount of data, case studies and expertise available within the laboratories that we work in. Many excellent presentations are given at the NZIMLS Special Interest Group meetings, the Annual Scientific Meeting and User Group Meetings. Yet, very few end up in the journal despite active encouragement from the Editors and Editorial Board Members. Just remember, what may seem mundane and not worth a lot to one person may in turn be just the information another person was looking for. The NZIMLS Journal provides a target audience for sharing of this knowledge.

In conclusion, the NZIMLS Journal is now becoming more international. The basic aim of the journal has been, and will continue to be to publish quality articles relating to all aspects of medical laboratory science. Whether they come from New Zealand or overseas is immaterial. Of course, being the Institute’s journal we would like to see the NZIMLS members contribute more. Benefits for NZIMLS members is accrual of 20 CPD points per published article (whether as primary or co-author) and being eligible for the journal prizes. Remember, when you give your presentation at a scientific meeting you are reaching only about 50 to 150 people. In the print version you are reaching a readership of about 2,200. Open access worldwide of the journal your target audience is unlimited. You owe it to yourself professionally, to your colleagues and to the world to share your findings and knowledge to the advancement of medical laboratory science. We look forward to your submissions. On a final note, when members tell us that we should only publish articles from New Zealand as it is our (New Zealand) journal, we just ask them a simple question. What have you contributed to the journal?

References

Author information
*Terry Taylor, BSc DipMLS MNZIMLS, Medical Laboratory Scientist1 and Deputy Editor2
Rob Siebers, PGCertPH FNZIC, FNZIMLS CBiol FSB, Associate Professor1 and Editor2
1Southern Community Laboratories, Dunedin
2New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science, Rangiora
3School of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Otago, Wellington

* Email: Terry.Taylor@sclabs.co.nz