

Hepatitis Monthly: Achievements and Obstacles

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When we started *Hepatitis Monthly* 3 years ago, we had great expectations in our mind and planned each step precisely to reach the moment of truth. Those who have been with us all the way should judge how we have developed so far. A twelve-page newsletter with one review article and a case report is now a mature research based journal known well in and out of Iran. This success has been achieved due to the efforts of respected authors who sent their priceless papers to us, the feedback of our sincere readership, and the perseverance of our enthusiastic staff.

I am positive you have noticed the sharp rise of changes for the past six months. To remind you of the most important ones, I should mention the following: 1. *Hepatitis Monthly* is currently indexed in two prestigious international directories; WHO-EMRO Index Medicus and DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) in Sweden. 2. Its readership has trebled and is increasing day by day. 3. The interactive website is regularly updated and has facilitated most of the routine tasks such as registration, article submission and published article download. Everyday, we have some twenty to forty first-time visitors, which encourages us to keep up the website. At this very moment you are reading the editorial, somebody is surfing the website or downloading an article. As a matter of fact, the rate of visitors and the number of downloads rose so much that we had to double the bandwidth to prevent website crash, which happened on May 6th.

Our mission has always been to reach as many practitioners, researchers and scientists of related fields as possible. So far, *Hepatitis Monthly* has reached many people in EMRO countries:

Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen. The main reason we would like to cover more countries in the region is the fact expressed in our slogan: **Aware Today, Alive Tomorrow**. I think the importance of hepatitis as a threat to the health of people in the region is crystal clear inasmuch as it has been surveyed by many researchers and published in a large number of articles. EMRO countries need to share the information to be able to fight against viral hepatitis as an emerging threat to public health. We are committed to compiling this information with the help of all researchers in the region. It is the right time for international organizations to cooperate in this scientific movement to control hepatitis. One thing they can do is to further the reach of the journal or to support the journal and its cause financially.

To reduce paper consumption and economize on available resources, we encourage our readership to download the electronic version. This way, we not only reach far more people but also expend our resources on more important issues such as conducting more clinical trials in different parts of the region.

Apart from the regular review articles, this issue of *Hepatitis Monthly* has four original articles to mark the change. I would like to take this opportunity to call for original articles in the field of liver diseases especially hepatitis. Researchers and clinicians can

log on to our website and send their invaluable papers to the editorial board. Soon after article submission, it will be acknowledged by a member staff and followed for editorial evaluation until the article is accepted or declined. In either case the corresponding author will be notified for further action. Due to our extensive network of editors and reviewers, this process will take at most 2 months.

Finally, I would like to introduce the capabilities of Tehran Hepatitis Center. You may know it was founded in 2001 to meet the needs of thousands of patients infected with viral hepatitis. From the beginning, we aimed at having a broad vision so as to accommodate all future needs with a precise long-term plan. Our admission process with its

comprehensive interview guarantees all the information we might need in any kind of research. Furthermore, the follow-up system is in place in order not to miss anything anytime. Regular reviews of the patients' files keep all practitioners in THC updated in line with the best approaches and treatments, and the latest pitfalls. Our huge database is part of our national heritage and we are willing to share it with the rest of the world. In brief, THC has the potential to furnish the patients with state-of-the-art management and to provide the researchers with the cutting edge data on hepatitis. Our center, with its newly updated dynamic website (www.thc.ir), will have become the mainstream of hepatitis information by the end of the year.