For the first time, the latest publication of impact factors (IF) from Journal Citation Reports – published by Thomson Reuters (Institute for Scientific Information Web of Science) – included Pain Research & Management. The Journal achieved an excellent first IF of 1.51. The IF is calculated by dividing the number of citable articles published in the past two years into the number of citations generated by these articles in that span of time.

This is a signal event for Pain Research & Management in many ways, two of which stand out. First, the Journal has been included in a select set of journals evaluated by Thomson Reuters as having a significant impact on the scholarly and professional literature. Consequently, the Journal will increasingly attract high-quality manuscripts, its influence will increase and publication in the Journal will continue to enhance the reputations of scholars.

Second, the high IF achieved indicates that the Journal is already having a considerable influence on the scholarly work of others because, on average, each publication is being cited more often than articles are published. This index is likely to be an underestimate of the citation influence of Pain Research & Management because the applied articles published in the Journal are likely to extend their impact over a longer span of time than basic science articles that tend to maximize their impact within the two-year window examined by the Institute for Scientific Information.

While this metric enhances the reputation and credibility of Pain Research & Management in the scientific community, it represents but one element of the impact of the Journal. The Journal has, as objectives, improved understanding and control of the major challenges of human pain. While the Journal achieves these objectives by disseminating fundamental knowledge and a better understanding of assessment, treatment and health care practices, the IF falls short of demonstrating the influence on public policy, the education of health care students, organizational management, professional practice and public understanding, to list but a few domains in which the Journal aspires to have an influence. Despite the importance of the societal changes implied by these goals, their achievement is not directly represented in the IF metric. Nevertheless, they go hand in hand. Join me in congratulating all those who have contributed to making Pain Research & Management a success – my nonexhaustive list includes the Canadian Pain Society, Pulsus Group Inc, authors and other contributors, reviewers, the editorial board and all others who support the Journal.

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