

Editorial

WORKING IN A CLIMATE OF INNOVATION



Dr. John P. O'Keefe

One of the interesting things about working for CDA is that the organization is constantly looking for better ways to conduct its business. As Dr. Conrod wrote in his President's Column last month, CDA is evolving into a more results-oriented organization. This climate of innovation rubs off on us in the publications area.

In this regard, readers know I am keen to exploit the potential offered by combined print and electronic publishing. The real benefit of electronic publication is that it allows us to move important information very quickly to members. We can also publish extra information online in the form of audio-visual material.

The *Journal* has embarked on a strategy to publish certain articles as one-page summaries in print, with the full text only in the electronic version. This creates the potential of bridging the interests of authors and readers. Many of our general practitioner readers have told me they wish to read the summaries of research articles, and not much more. Yet if the

Journal wishes to continue to attract original submissions from dental researchers, we have to provide a credible and respectable peer-reviewed forum for publication. This requires us to publish more than just summaries of articles. Attempting to marry the requirements of readers and authors has led us to an innovative form of publishing, which creates its own challenges.

Those who direct the Medline database, where the biomedical literature is catalogued, had to devise a new means of cataloguing the articles whose full text only appears in the electronic version of the *Journal*. They did this by creating a separate file for the electronic *Journal*, which has its own distinct publication serial number. This Medline entry is termed "Journal [computer file]/Canadian Dental Association."

In this month's edition, the articles by Britton and McCarthy, and by McGaw, Peters and Holton bring to 7 the articles published in the *Journal* in the print summary/full text online format. At present, we have 4 more manuscripts under consideration for this type of publication. As the print *Journal* becomes more user-friendly, this format is likely to become more common, especially for scientific articles.

Potential authors should note that articles published in this new format will not vanish into cyberspace; the full text of these articles can be accessed directly from Medline. Here's how it works. Let's say you wish to locate in Medline the March 2000 article by Drs. Omar El-Mowafy and Marcia Rubo entitled "Influence of composite inlay/onlay thickness on hardening of dual-cured resin cements," whose full text only exists in electronic form.

First go to the Web site of PubMed, a user-friendly version of Medline at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PubMed>. In the designated space, type in the last name of one of the authors followed by the initial of the first name. All articles written by the author that are indexed in Medline will appear on your screen.

Scroll down to the article you are looking for, then click on the title. The abstract that appeared in the electronic version (not the one-page print summary) will come up. In a prominent position just above the title of the abstract is a button with the instruction "Go to Publisher Site." By clicking on this button you are taken directly to the full length version of the article in the electronic *Journal*.

This edition also sees another "first" for the electronic *Journal* — an audio presentation. Dr. John Molinari from Detroit delivered a talk on the significance of latex allergies in dental practice at the National Conference on Infection Control, which figures prominently in this edition. The complete version of that presentation, which lasts about 40 minutes, can be heard by visiting the Web site of the *Journal* and following the links to the audio presentation.

I believe we will be using the audio-visual dimension of electronic publishing with increasing frequency. Naturally, we need submissions of audio tapes, audio tapes accompanied by slides, and digital videos of clinical presentations to exploit this technology to the fullest. This could open up a whole new world of online continuing education for CDA.

Besides authors, we wish to encourage readers to visit our electronic *Journal*. We send out a monthly table of contents reminder to all CDA members for whom we have an e-mail address. If you wish to avail yourself of this service, please contact CDA (reception@cda-adc.ca) with your e-mail address. Another good reason to get on our electronic mailing list is that the organization is increasingly alerting members about fast-breaking important issues by means of e-mail messages. The rapid flow of accurate information is the goal of the evolving CDA.

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