

# The Singapore Medical Journal: changing with the times

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It will be virtually impossible for readers of this month's Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ) to miss noticing our new look. Those readers old enough to remember the familiar and longstanding (1971-1996) red-and-white cover of the SMJ may appreciate the basis for our revamped yet updated cover.

Why change? Certainly not because a new editor has been appointed – this will be my second two-year term as editor of the SMJ. The practical reason is because we need much more pages in each issue of the SMJ. Within a period of less than two years, the number of submissions to our journal has more than doubled. Concurrently, the time taken for manuscript processing, reviewing and editorial decision has been shortened. This has resulted in a marked rise in the number of accepted manuscripts.

To solve this happy problem, from this month onwards, the SMJ will increase the number of pages per issue of the journal. From time to time, we will produce a bumper issue incorporating more articles, in order to ensure that the period between manuscript acceptance and publication does not exceed six months. It goes without saying that the

SMJ will continue its policy of giving high priority to publishing articles of topical importance, with recent examples being the severe acute respiratory syndrome<sup>(1,2)</sup>, vancomycin-resistant enterococci<sup>(3)</sup> and the dengue<sup>(4)</sup> outbreaks.

Accommodating more pages entailed changing the type of journal binding from saddle-stitch to perfect binding. This presented us with the opportunity to re-look at the physical aspects of the whole journal, including its cover. Since its birth in 1960, the SMJ has not had many changes in its cover design (Figs. 1-4), with the red-and-white one being most enduring.

Being widely regarded as our national general medical journal, it is fitting that in its 47<sup>th</sup> year, the SMJ chooses a design that re-incorporates the colours of Singapore's national flag and elements of our past designs (Fig. 5). The SMJ is also currently in the midst of a major upgrading of its manuscript processing system, and the new cover will appropriately reflect the SMJ's enhanced capabilities. The pictures on the cover will be changed quarterly, and will consist of images

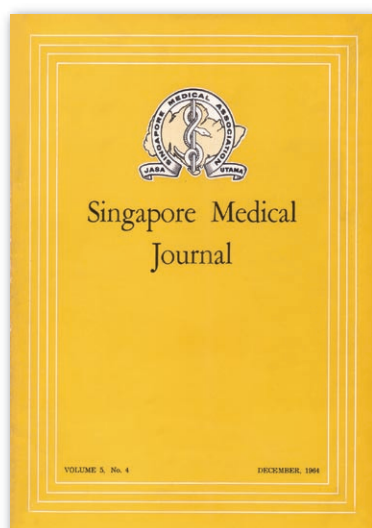


Fig. 1 SMJ cover 1960-1970 (Volumes 1- 11).



Fig. 2 SMJ cover 1971-1996 (Volumes 12- 37).



Fig. 3 SMJ cover 1997-March 2000 (Volumes 38-41 [3]).

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**Fig. 4** SMJ cover April 2000-2005 (Volumes 41[4]-46).



**Fig. 5** SMJ cover 2006 (Volume 47).

from articles published in the SMJ, as well as scenes of Singapore and photographs from our medical institutions. We welcome the submission of high-quality and relevant photographs from the private, public and restructured healthcare and academic medical sectors. The sources of all images will be acknowledged as a footnote on the contents page of each issue.

In tandem with the increased number of published articles and the anticipated increased number of submissions, our editorial board has also been substantially expanded. Most of those who have accepted appointments to the new editorial board are reviewers who have consistently contributed high quality and timely manuscript reviews over the recent two years<sup>(5)</sup>. Our top reviewers for the 2005 review cycle will be listed in next month's issue of the SMJ.

I hope that SMJ readers approve of our new look. Perhaps, it will, in time, be a classic. 

#### REFERENCES

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