



The Lure of the Impact Factor and *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*

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Over the past several years as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal*, I have received constant inquiries concerning the *Journal's* impact factor, or lack thereof. I would then need to explain that to receive an impact factor, several years of tracking by Thomson ISI was required. Now, I no longer have to provide that explanation because last month, the *Journal* received its first impact factor from Thomson ISI, a very respectable 3.232. This ranks the *Journal* as third among the 7 non-review sleep journals receiving impact factors.

While the Deputy Editor, Associate Editors and Editorial Board as well as myself are pleased with this impact factor, I would like to reiterate that it is not the sole criterion for a scientific journal's success. The impact factor is an indicator of how often papers in a journal are cited by other papers. Thus, it is one marker of whether the content of a journal is being disseminated and used by scientific investigators. In this regard, it would appear that papers published in the *Journal* are of some relevance to the sleep research community. However, the mission of the *Journal* is to help serve the needs of the membership of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine;

the vast majority of whom are sleep clinicians. Thus, much of the content of the *Journal* is devoted to information that can be used in clinical practice. Consequently, for the *Journal*, the primary metric for success is whether or not the membership values and reads its contents. In this regard, I was pleased to learn that a recent membership survey gave the *Journal* high marks. Given the *Journal's* mission, this is more important than a high impact factor.

As the *Journal* moves forward, a respectable impact factor will be valued, but the *Journal* will not succumb to the seductive lure of pursuing a high impact factor by employing policies targeted to inflate it. Rather we will continue to publish papers, reviews and commentary relevant to the practice of Sleep Medicine and of educational value to the membership of the Academy.

CITATION

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