

Editorial

Open Access

Welcome To *International Seminars In Surgical Oncology*

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Abstract

This editorial marks the launch of a new online journal for surgical and medical oncology. The internet has produced a profound shift in the way in which clinicians, researchers and patients seek, interpret and utilise medical information and research. The launch of our journal comes at a time when these changes are in a rapid phase of development and consolidation.

"Global, instantaneous and unrestricted accessibility of high quality research"

When we first conceived *International Seminars in Surgical Oncology (ISSO)*, we held the strong belief that all those involved in the care of the cancer patient were entitled to a permanently available online resource with these characteristics. With our publishers BioMed Central, this vision has now become a reality.

We believe that the internet has already induced a paradigm shift in the way in which clinicians and patients access, interpret and utilise medical information. The creation of our online journal, specifically directed at all those involved in the care of the cancer patient, epitomises and will build upon these recent changes.

International Seminars in Surgical Oncology (ISSO) aims to provide a worldwide forum for those involved in cancer research, surgery, medical treatment and palliation. Although termed "ISSO", our journal aims to involve medical oncologists and cancer surgeons. With this in mind, we devised the representation of the journal to be by editors-in-chief from each of these disciplines.

International Seminars in Surgical Oncology (ISSO) has an "Open Access" publication policy, which represents a fun-

damental change in the way articles are published. Open Access normally applies only to research articles, but *ISSO* has taken this further by making *all* its content Open Access, meaning that:

- All articles become freely and universally accessible online – an author's work can be read by anyone visiting the journal site at no cost.
- Authors hold copyright for their own work, and grant anyone the right to reproduce and disseminate the article, provided it is correctly cited with no errors [1].
- A copy of the full text of each Open Access article is permanently archived in online databases separate from the journal. *ISSO's* articles are archived in the following repositories;
 - The US National Library of Medicine (PubMed Central)
 - University of Potsdam, Germany
 - INIST, France
 - The National Library of the Netherlands' digital archive of all electronic publications (e-Depot).

Open Access publication also confers other benefits. The lack of barriers to access publications means they can be rapidly disseminated to the widest possible audience – for example, authors are free to reproduce the published work on their websites or those of their institutions – it follows from this that easier availability may translate to higher citations [2]. Open accessibility may mean greater public access to published research – which accrues benefits for the doctor-patient relationship. Of course, widespread unrestricted availability means that work submitted for publication in *ISSO* must be carefully scrutinised to ensure the aims of the journal are met, and that research published is ethical, unambiguous and meaningful to the readership. This involves a process of peer review.

The aim of peer review is to ensure that published articles represent "good science". We will consider articles that span a wide range of scientific interests; laboratory-based research, clinical trials, cancer surgery – as long as the work is sound, scientifically justified and not misleading. Peer review should not be thought of as a threatening or adversarial process. In the absence of compelling reasons to reject, we advise our reviewers to recommend acceptance of submitted articles, as it is the scientific community which judges the quality of an article after publication.

The peer review process can lead to four different outcomes:

- The article is accepted without revision.
- The article is accepted after revision has been advised, without the editor-in-chief expecting to check those revisions
- The article is neither accepted nor rejected until the authors make revisions and resubmit
- The article is rejected because the work is scientifically unsound, misleading or lacks clarity.

Significantly, we aim to publish accepted research *as soon as possible* after the peer review process – online publication occurs immediately in PDF form, soon followed by a full text (webpage) version of the article. Published articles are quickly listed in PubMed.

International Seminars in Surgical Oncology (ISSO) will consider original research articles, review articles, commentaries, and case reports from any areas in medical oncology and surgical oncology. We also consider comments relating to published articles.

In particular, our vision is to include review articles with teaching material on surgical and medical techniques, as

well as research methodology, in order to build a resource for clinicians, whether experienced or otherwise.

Additionally, we specifically wish to encourage submission from clinicians in developing countries. It is unfair that a country's level of development or state of economy may influence the ability of its scientists and clinicians to access or submit research. Moreover, clinicians in developed nations deserve the right to appreciate clinical experience and practice from countries and individuals whose views might otherwise be unheard. One of our founding intentions was to bridge this disparity.

Finally, the editors-in-chief would like to welcome you to *International Seminars in Surgical Oncology (ISSO)*, and ask for your support as readers and contributors <http://www.issoonline.com/manuscript/>, to make *ISSO* a journal with significant impact on the scientific community.

References

1. **BioMed Central Open Access Charter** [<http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/about/charter>]
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