

Editorial Issue 3 2012

Changes to the journal

Journals need to adapt to the rapidly changing environment, like the rest of us, without losing what is most important. This journal aims to publish high-quality articles without too long a delay after the peer-review process is complete, so that good research is available to add to the evidence base and hopefully to make a difference to understanding, policy and practice.

This journal has made some important changes to our instructions for authors: the editorial panel has reduced the word limits for research papers to 3000 words, and for practice & innovation papers to 2500 words. We consider these limits will still enable authors to write an informative and concise paper, and we are keen to reduce the time lag between acceptance and publication of papers. Currently many manuscripts accepted for publication are available 'Online Early' so they are at least accessible to subscribers before formal publication. Reducing the word limit will increase the number of papers in each issue of the journal, and decrease the time until formal publication.

In addition, we are asking authors of forum, research and practice & innovation articles to provide a brief summary statement, which answers two questions: What is known about the topic? and What does this paper add? Many other journals ask for similar statements, to make it easier for readers who are quickly

scanning a paper for relevance and to find the implications for policy and practice. These deceptively simple questions are what reviewers and editors might ask during the peer-review process. Authors may find them challenging to answer when still immersed in the details of their research, but useful when looking back on the research. Full details are provided in the Instructions to authors on the website: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/263/aid/11564.htm>

Another impending change relates to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), which requires from July 2012 that any publications arising from a NHMRC-supported research project must be deposited into an open access institutional repository within 12 months from the date of publication. To address this extra requirement the publishers of this journal will be working with the NHMRC to assist authors and to ensure the journal is positioned correctly as these cultural changes in scholarly communication develop. There is justice in having Australian taxpayer-funded material made available to the Australian taxpayer.

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