

Healthcare Infection: a time for change

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A reflection and evolution

It is with some degree of sadness but much excitement that I write this editorial for the final edition of *Healthcare Infection*. The Journal commenced in 1995, with an editorial by the then President Alison Pyper. It was years in the planning and involved the culmination of work by many. At this time, the Journal was marketed as a voice for Australian Infection Control Association (AICA) members, a medium for updating knowledge, sharing experiences, uniting members and promoting the association. Many of these themes still run true 20 years later, despite the changes to the Journal that occurred during this time. The first few publications of the Journal included articles on the introduction of a needle-free system for drug administration, extended spectrum Beta-Lactamase at Princess Alexandra Hospital and clinical indicators – many of the issues we still debate now. The Journal evolved over the next few years and in 2008 changed its name to *Healthcare Infection* and in 2010 was rebranded to reflect the establishment of the Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC).

Progress and key achievements

The Journal has made significant progress throughout its lifetime and particular progress in recent years. We have seen positive increases in several areas, including submissions to the Journal, the rejection rate of articles to around 35% (resulting in higher quality articles), international authors and collaborations, downloads and citations. The 2-year cites per document index (Impact Factor equivalent) is illustrated in Fig. 1 and represents the Journal moving from Quartile 4 into Quartile 3 in the discipline of infectious disease. We have made significant progress, with negligible or no citation data until 2009, increasing each year to reach 1.02 in 2014 (Fig. 1). *Healthcare Infection* is one of the few infection-control Journals anywhere in the world with increases in this metric in recent years. In 2014, there were over 34 000 article downloads based on COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources). In April 2015, Thomson

Reuters announced that *Healthcare Infection* would be included in a 'new edition of the Web of Science' – an entry level collection for journals being considered for Science Citation Index Expanded. Although this does not come with full metrics, it is a significant step for a journal being considered for incorporation into other important products.

The move to a new journal

The ACIPC Executive, with the support of the *Healthcare Infection* editorial team, decided to rebrand and transition *Healthcare Infection* to an improved model. Such a move has been debated and discussed for some time. Such a move allows us to take the Journal to the next level. For survival, it is vital that the Journal is in a position to respond to the changing nature of infection prevention and control, continually publish high-quality articles, attract citations and downloads and have increased exposure and submissions by international authors and collaborators. The end result is to have a Journal that is internationally recognised and indexed accordingly.

As we are seeing increasingly important interactions between clinicians and managers in health care, public health bodies and those responsible for health policy, we will need to embrace the changing nature of our industry and its coverage and work collaboratively with similar disciplines and/or professional associations. As a result, content scope needs to adapt and evolve to include public health and public health policy, health economics, food and animal health in preventing human infections.

Over the past few months, advice and direction has been sought from the Editorial Board, independent experts and ACIPC members. Various options have been explored and modelled. At the core, the new Journal will continue to be centred on infection prevention and control, but provide a greater opportunity for contributions from fields that impact on this endeavour.

The new journal, *Infection, Disease & Health* aims to be a platform for the publication and dissemination of knowledge in the area of infection and disease causing infection in humans. The Journal will publish research, reviews, concise

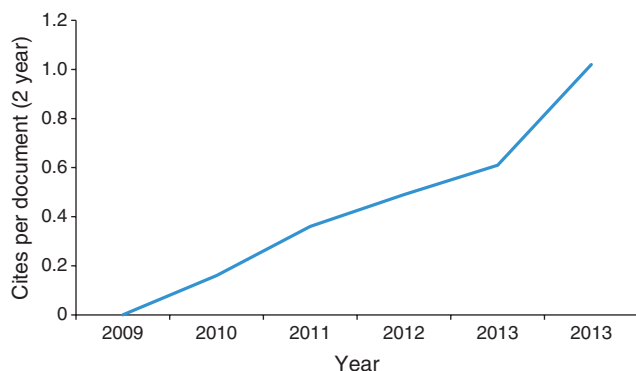


Fig. 1. *Healthcare Infection* cites per document (2 year).

communications, commentary and other articles concerned with infection and disease affecting the health of an individual, organisation or population. The articles accepted in the Journal will follow rigorous standards and investigate, report or discuss: infection prevention and control; clinical, social, epidemiological or public health aspects of infectious disease; health economics, policy and planning for the control of infections; zoonoses; and food hygiene and vaccines related to disease in human health. The audience of the journal includes researchers, clinicians, health workers and public policy professionals concerned with infection, disease and health.

At the time of writing, the Publisher, Editor-in-Chief, Editorial team and Editorial Board were in the process of being established. I believe this transition is critical, not only to the survival of the Journal, but to ensure it prospers and meets the future needs of ACIPC members, researchers, academics and policy makers in this region.

Articles and topics of interest

This edition of *Healthcare Infection* includes articles on environmental cleanliness,^{1–3} antibiotic resistance,^{4,5} staff health⁶ and antimicrobial stewardship,^{7,8} thus reflecting the infection prevention and control endeavours. Also in this edition of *Healthcare Infection* is a review of *Healthcare Infection* articles over a 12-year period.⁹ To complement this article, listed below are the most cited articles, based on total citations. It is worth noting the publication year, as some have only been published relatively recently:

- (1) Economic rationale for infection control in Australian hospitals (2009).¹⁰
- (2) ASID/AICA position statement – Infection control guidelines for patients with *Clostridium difficile* infection in healthcare settings (2011).¹¹
- (3) The comparative performance of three brands of portable ATP-bioluminometer intended for use in hospital infection control (2012).¹²
- (4) Methods to evaluate environmental cleanliness in healthcare facilities (2013).¹³
- (5) A study of three methods for assessment of hospital environmental cleaning (2013).¹⁴

Table 1. *Healthcare Infection* Editorial Board

• Nick Adrianopoulos, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
• Rob Baird, Royal Darwin Hospital, Darwin, Australia
• Wendy Beckingham, The Canberra Hospital, Canberra, Australia
• Michael Borg, Mater Dei Hospital, Misida, Malta
• Luke Chen, Duke University Medical Center, USA
• Terrence Chinniah, RIPAS Hospital, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei
• Peter Collignon, The Canberra Hospital, Canberra, Australia
• Stephanie Dancer, Hairmyres Hospital, UK
• John Ferguson, Hunter New England Health Service, Newcastle, Australia
• Petra Gastmeier, Charité - University of Medicine Berlin, Germany
• Nick Graves, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia
• Glenys Harrington, Infection Control Consultancy, Melbourne, Australia
• William Jarvis, Jason and Jarvis Associates, USA
• Moi Lin Ling, Singapore General Hospital, Singapore
• Vivian Loo, McGill University, Canada
• Cathryn Murphy, Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia
• Mary O'Reilly, Eastern Health, Melbourne, Australia
• Giovanni Orsi, Università La Sapienza, Rome, Italy
• Didier Pittet, University of Geneva Hospitals, Switzerland
• Walter Popp, Universitätsklinikum Essen, Germany
• Tom Riley, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
• Victor Rosenthal, International Nosocomial Infection Control Consortium, Argentina
• Phil Russo, Austin Hospital, Melbourne, Australia
• William Rutala, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA
• Wing-hong Seto, Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong
• Rhonda Stuart, Southern Health, Melbourne, Australia
• Paul Tambyah, National University of Singapore, Singapore
• Helen Van Gessel, Office of Safety and Quality in Healthcare, WA Health; Faculty of Health Sciences, Curtin University, Perth, Australia
• Gertie van Knippenberg-Gordebeke, Knip Consulting, Netherlands

In the past 2 years, the most read articles, based on download data were:

- (1) Changes in healthcare-associated infections after the introduction of a national hand hygiene initiative.¹⁵
- (2) Improving hand hygiene compliance: harnessing the effect of advertised auditing.¹⁶
- (3) Attitudes towards antimicrobial stewardship: results from a large private hospital in Australia.¹⁷
- (4) How can implementing an infection prevention and control (IPC) technology transform healthcare practices and outcomes for patients?¹⁸
- (5) A nurse-led antimicrobial stewardship intervention in two residential aged care facilities.¹⁹

A word of thanks

Since its inception, the Journal has been supported by numerous authors, reviewers, several Editors-in-Chief and was guided by an exceptional editorial board (Table 1). I would like to take this opportunity to thank the previous Editors, associate editors and the editorial board. I pay particular thanks to Elizabeth Gillespie (previous Editor-in-Chief), the current Associate Editors – Dr Ann Bull, Dr Deborah MacBeth, Professor Allen Cheng, Professor Anne Gardner and Professor Ramon Shaban and the Publisher. I also extended my gratitude and thanks to the Editorial Board, who have guided the Journal over many years.

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