CMAJ Open, a new online open-access journal, will be launched in January 2013 by the Canadian Medical Association. CMAJ Open comes from the same family of journals as the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ), Canada’s major medical journal.

CMAJ Open will publish high-quality medical and health research, without the need for authors to demonstrate high impact. Content will be available online to readers at no charge.

CMAJ Open is seeking high-quality medical research papers for publication. Medical and health care research, including from allied health care professions, is welcome.
ABOUT CMAJ OPEN

CMAJ Open, a new online open-access journal, will be launched in January 2013. It will publish high-quality medical and health research, without the need for authors to demonstrate high impact. Content will be available online to readers at no charge.

CMAJ Open will use a continuous publishing model in which articles will be published when ready, rather than waiting for a specific issue date.

Authors will be asked to pay a publication fee upon acceptance. The ability to pay will not affect editorial decision-making.

CMAJ Open is founded on four main principles:

OPEN ACCESS

CMAJ Open will be available at no cost to readers in Canada and around the world. Authors will retain copyright for noncommercial use of their published paper.

OPEN TO RESEARCH IN ALL MEDICAL DISCIPLINES

CMAJ Open will consider submissions in medical and health care research, including allied health professions.

OPEN TO ALL TYPES OF RESEARCH STUDIES

CMAJ Open will consider research studies with a wide variety of methodologies, including, but not limited to, randomized controlled trials, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, case–control studies, cohort studies, surveys and qualitative research. Protocols and pilot studies are also welcome.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

CMAJ Open is committed to an open peer review system, in which reviewer comments, author responses and previous versions are available along with the final published version.
INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

*CMAJ Open* is an online open-access journal that welcomes high-quality research from all medical and health disciplines. Authors do not need to demonstrate high impact and generalizability for their paper to be considered for publication. Studies should be methodologically sound.

Please note that articles submitted to *CMAJ Open* should not be under consideration by any other journal, including *CMAJ*.

A wide variety of research methodologies are welcome, including randomized controlled trials, systematic reviews and meta-analyses, case–control studies, cohort studies, qualitative research and surveys. Protocols and pilot studies will also be considered. Although large case series of consecutive patients are appropriate for submission, *CMAJ Open* does not publish single case reports. Studies with local geographic focus or limited generalizability will be considered for publication, as well as those with negative results. Animal studies and pure laboratory studies should be submitted elsewhere.

HOW TO SUBMIT

All manuscripts should be submitted through *CMAJ Open*’s ScholarOne manuscript submission website. Detailed instructions for authors and *CMAJ Open* forms are available on the site.

REVIEW PROCESS

Papers submitted to *CMAJ Open* will be assessed by at least two editors to determine suitability for peer review.

*CMAJ Open* is committed to an open peer review system, in which reviewer comments, author responses and previous versions are available along with the final published version. This will provide a manuscript history for readers and serve as a resource for future authors.
CMAJ Open does not require reviewers to judge manuscripts on the basis of originality, importance or generalizability of findings. The editor is responsible for the final decision to accept, revise or reject a submission based on the comments made by the reviewers.

PUBLICATION FEES

Authors will be asked to pay a publication fee of $2250 CDN plus applicable sales tax upon acceptance of their paper. There are no colour or page charges. The ability to pay will not affect editorial decision-making.

Authors who do not have funding to cover publication costs may be eligible for a partial or complete waiver of publication fees. Please contact the editorial office for more information at editorial-open@cmaj.ca.

Please note that by submitting a manuscript to CMAJ Open, authors are agreeing to pay the publication fee upon acceptance, unless specific arrangements have been made in writing with CMAJ Open.

COPYRIGHT

Authors retain copyright of their published papers for noncommercial use.

EDITORIAL POLICIES

The editorial policies for CMAJ Open reflect best practices and are consistent with those of CMAJ, including adherence to the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and the Committee on Publication Ethics guidance.

REPORTING GUIDELINES

CMAJ Open requires compliance with the following reporting guidelines. A completed version of the appropriate checklist should be uploaded as a file with your submission and designated as “Reporting Guideline Checklist.” The guidelines can be accessed here.

Required reporting guidelines include:

- CONSORT: Required for all randomized controlled trials (please use appropriate extension)
- PRISMA: Required for all systematic reviews
- MOOSE: Required for meta-analyses of observational studies
- STROBE: Required for observational studies in epidemiology (please use appropriate checklist)
- STARD: Required for reporting of diagnostic accuracy studies
- COREQ: Required for qualitative research

For more Information on these and other reporting guidelines, see Equator Network.

**ARTICLE FORMAT**

Please note that a manuscript submission checklist is included at the end of this “Information for Authors” section. Maximum length: 2500 words, excluding abstract, figures, tables and references. More information on article format is available in the Instructions and Forms box on the *CMAJ Open* manuscript submission site.

The manuscript should include the following sections:

1. **Title:** The title should include the study type.
2. **Abstract:** *CMAJ Open* requires a structured abstract of no more than 250 words. The abstract should contain the following sections and use the following subheadings: Background, Methods, Results and Interpretation. Ensure that all data presented in the Abstract are contained in the Results or tables.
   - **Background:** This should include a clear statement of the study aim and research question.
   - **Methods:** This should include the research design, setting of the study, and participants, including number participating and criteria for selection, entry and exclusion. The interventions, if applicable, should be clearly outlined, as well as primary and secondary outcome measures.
   - **Results:** The main findings should be quantified with 95% confidence intervals and the number needed to treat or harm, if applicable. Absolute, rather than relative, risks are preferable.
   - **Interpretation:** This should include the main conclusions and implications.
   - **Trial registration:** Registry and number should be included for clinical trials and, if available, for other study types.
3. **Introduction:** This section should inform the reader of the topic being studied and provide the context for the research question. The objective of the study should be clearly stated. The section should be no more than two paragraphs.
4. **Methods:** Use a narrative style and avoid jargon when describing the protocol. We encourage authors to include their complete protocol, which may appear as an online appendix to their manuscript if accepted for publication. Subheadings (e.g., setting, design, sources of data, statistical analysis) are helpful for readers; these will vary depending on the study type.
5. **Results:** Wherever possible, results should be summarized in a table. Avoid any redundant presentation of data in tables and in the text of the manuscript.

6. **Interpretation:** This section should include four parts:
   a. Brief summary of the main results of the study (one paragraph)
   b. Explanation of the findings; comparison and contrast of findings with other related studies in the literature (one or two paragraphs)
   c. Limitations of the study (one paragraph)
   d. Conclusion and future directions in the area of the study (one paragraph)

**TRIAL REGISTRATION**

Please note that randomized controlled trials must be registered in a clinical trials registry if patient recruitment began on or after July 1, 2005, as per International Committee for Medical Journal Editors guidance. The registry and registration number should be included in the Abstract. If other studies (e.g., systematic reviews) are registered, this information should be included in the submission.

**PUBLICATION PROCESS**

Once a paper has been accepted, a scientific manuscript editor edits the manuscript for clarity, brevity, style and accuracy. The careful scrutiny at this stage may reveal further areas where information is lacking or clarification is needed. The copyedited manuscript is reviewed by a senior editor before being sent to the corresponding author for approval.

*CMAJ Open* publishes all accepted articles online at cmajopen.ca without waiting for a specific issue. Publication online determines indexing in PubMed Central and other indexes. The published article will contain information on how it should be cited.

**PRESS RELEASE AND MEDIA EMBARGO**

*CMAJ Open* distributes a media release for selected articles on the day of publication.
MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Please submit your manuscript online here.

All submissions should conform to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors’ (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals.

In addition, CMAJ Open has specific requirements for the articles it publishes. These include:

☑ Cover letter
☑ Title and title page. The title should include the study type.
☑ Names, addresses and up to two affiliations for each author, and an email address for the corresponding author.
☑ Up to two degrees for each author. If an author has more than one degree, please include the highest academic and highest clinical degree obtained. We do not publish fellowships.
☑ A contributor’s statement showing how each of the people listed as an author fulfills the criteria for authorship of ICMJE. An author is someone who:
  • Contributed substantially to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, AND
  • Drafted the article or revised it critically for important intellectual content, AND
  • Gave final approval of the version to be published.
☑ References formatted in the Vancouver style.
☑ The checklist for the appropriate reporting guideline, if applicable.
☑ Forms (available in the Instructions and Forms box on the CMAJ Open manuscript submission site)
  • Signed copyright forms (authors retain copyright for noncommercial use).
  • Signed declarations of competing interests (ICMJE) for each author who has declared a competing interest.
  • Signed permission forms from all people who have provide information cited as being from a personal communication.
  • Permission to reproduce materials from other sources from the original copyright holder for any images or data reproduced from another source, with copies of the original work.
INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

Reviewers play a crucial role in the publication of research in *CMAJ Open*. They help us ensure that the studies we publish are methodologically sound, ethical and reported using the appropriate reporting guidelines.

In turn, reviewers have an opportunity to see the latest research and contribute to the advancement of medical and health knowledge, and are usually able to claim this activity for continuing professional development credit.

*CMAJ Open* does not require reviewers to judge manuscripts on the basis of originality, importance or generalizability of findings. The editor is responsible for the final decision to accept, revise or reject a submission based on the comments made by the reviewers.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

*CMAJ Open* is committed to an open peer review system, in which reviewer comments, author responses and previous versions are available along with the final published version. This will provide a manuscript history for readers and serve as a resource for future authors.

Reviewers are required to sign their reviews with their name, position and institution, and provide a statement of competing interests in completing the review. Please do not make any comments that you do not wish authors and readers to read.

Although *CMAJ Open* has an open peer review process in which reviewer comments are shared with the authors, there may be occasions when reviewers have serious concerns about a manuscript from a research or publication ethics standpoint, such as plagiarism or falsification of data. There is a text box for confidential comments to the editor as part of the review score sheet. This should only be filled in by reviewers when serious breaches in ethics are suspected. This information will be treated as confidential and investigated as required by the journal.
HOW TO BECOME A REVIEWER

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for CMAJ Open, please register at CMAJ Open’s ScholarOne manuscript submission site.

Information on how to register is available on the site, as well as resources for reviewers. It is important to include your areas of expertise when registering, as these keywords will help us choose manuscripts that are appropriate for you to review.

If you are unavailable to review for a period of time, please enter this information on the website. This will help us to quickly select another reviewer.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Manuscripts submitted to CMAJ Open are confidential. Please respect the author’s privacy when reviewing the manuscript. If you would like to consult with a colleague about a manuscript, please acknowledge that input on the review and include a statement of his or her competing interests. It would be preferable to have your colleague register as a reviewer.

COMPETING INTERESTS

You will be asked to write a statement outlining any competing interests relevant to the manuscript when completing a review for CMAJ Open. We recognize that many reviewers will have competing interests, but these do not necessarily prevent you from reviewing. You will have an opportunity to decline our invitation to review if you think that your competing interests preclude you from providing fair comment on the manuscript.

REPORTING GUIDELINES

CMAJ Open requires compliance with the following reporting guidelines. A completed version of the appropriate checklist is included in the PDF proof of the article. The guidelines can be accessed here.

- CONSORT: Required for all randomized controlled trials (please use appropriate extension)
- PRISMA: Required for all systematic reviews
- MOOSE: Required for meta-analyses of observational studies
- STROBE: Required for observational studies in epidemiology (please use appropriate checklist)
- STARD: Required for reporting of diagnostic accuracy studies
- COREQ: Required for qualitative research
For more Information on these and other reporting guidelines, see Equator Network.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY IS CMAJ OPEN BEING LAUNCHED?

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) has created CMAJ Open, an online open-access journal, to be a home for high-quality medical research that does not fit with its flagship journal, CMAJ. CMAJ Open will publish high-quality medical research without the need for authors to demonstrate high impact. Content will be available online to readers at no charge.

Canada has a strong research tradition and CMAJ Open can help disseminate research from within Canada and around the world to peers, policy-makers, clinicians and other health care professionals.

WHAT TYPES OF ARTICLES DOES CMAJ OPEN PUBLISH?

CMAJ Open will consider medical research with sound methodology from all medical disciplines, including research from allied health professions.

Study types include but are not limited to:

- Randomized controlled trials
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses
- Cohort studies
- Case–control studies
- Surveys
- Studies of diagnostic and screening tests
- Qualitative studies
- Research case series (but not single cases)
- Protocols
Studies with local geographic focus or limited generalizability will be considered, as well as those with negative results.

**WHY PUBLISH IN CMAJ OPEN?**

*CMAJ Open* will use rapid online publishing to disseminate research findings to the world at no charge to readers. The journal will use open peer review in which reviewer comments, author responses and previous versions are available along with the final published version. *CMAJ Open* and *CMAJ*, Canada’s flagship medical journal, are owned and published by the CMA.

*CMAJ Open* also meets the requirements of more than 20 major international funding agencies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the US National Institutes of Health, the UK Medical Research Council and others, that publicly-funded research must be freely available online.

Benefits include:

- Rapid peer review and online access to reviewer comments
- Rapid online publishing to disseminate research findings to Canadians and to the world
- Retention of authors’ copyright to their published article
- Free access to articles through cmajopen.ca and PubMed Central

For Canadian researchers, *CMAJ Open* provides an opportunity to disseminate research to policy-makers in Canada, researchers, practising physicians and other peers.

**WHAT IS OPEN-ACCESS PUBLISHING?**

Open access is a publishing model that is being increasingly adopted in scholarly publishing as an alternative to traditional publishing. It is founded on the principle that all research should be available to anyone at no charge. To cover the costs of publication, authors pay a fee to publish research.

**IS THERE A PUBLICATION FEE FOR CMAJ OPEN?**

To provide open access to all published material, authors will be asked to pay a publication fee upon acceptance. This fee will help cover the costs of the review process, editing, production and other aspects of rapid online publication. The fee is $2250 CDN plus applicable sales tax per manuscript.
Authors who do not have funding to cover publication fees may be eligible for a partial or complete waiver of publication fees. The ability to pay does not affect editorial decisions.

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CMAJ OPEN AND CMAJ?**

*CMAJ Open* is an online open-access journal that will publish high-quality medical research without the need for authors to demonstrate high impact.

In contrast, *CMAJ* publishes original, high-quality, high-impact research that is new or that is definitive on a topic. *CMAJ* seeks research that is relevant and original with sound methodology. The journal also publishes a mix of research, news, reviews, analyses, practice and humanities articles online and in print.

*CMAJ* will also ask authors upon submission to pay a fee ($2750 CDN plus applicable sales tax) to publish their research study if the article is accepted. As with *CMAJ Open*, authors who cannot pay may request an exemption.

**WILL MY ARTICLE BE CONSIDERED AUTOMATICALLY FOR CMAJ OPEN IF IT IS NOT ACCEPTED BY CMAJ?**

Authors may ask that their article be passed to *CMAJ Open* for consideration if it is rejected by *CMAJ*.

**WHAT IS THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS?**

*CMAJ Open* is committed to open peer review in which reviewer comments, author responses and previous versions are available online along with the final published version. This will provide a manuscript history for readers.

**WILL CMAJ OPEN ACCEPT INDUSTRY-FUNDED RESEARCH?**

Yes. As with all papers, *CMAJ Open* will consider the competing interests of the authors when deciding whether to publish.

**HOW DO I SUBMIT MY ARTICLE?**

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Authors must submit articles through CMAJ Open’s ScholarOne web-based manuscript submission system. Click here to submit your article.

**WHEN WILL MY ACCEPTED ARTICLE BE PUBLISHED?**

CMAJ Open operates on a continuous publishing model, in which accepted papers are published online as soon as they are ready for publication, without waiting for an issue. Every four months, the published papers will be collected into an issue.

**WHERE IS CMAJ OPEN INDEXED?**

Articles published in CMAJ Open will be available at cmajopen.ca from the day of publication. The journal is indexed in PubMed Central.

**DOES CMAJ OPEN HAVE AN IMPACT FACTOR?**

Each calculation of the impact factor spans three years of publication history. Since CMAJ Open is a new journal, it is not yet eligible for an impact factor. The journal will apply to Thomson ISI for inclusion in the Web of Science when eligible.

**WHAT ARE CMAJ OPEN’S COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS?**

Authors who publish in CMAJ Open will retain copyright for noncommercial use.

**WHAT ARE CMAJ OPEN’S EDITORIAL POLICIES?**

The editorial policies for CMAJ Open will reflect best practices and be consistent with those of CMAJ, including adherence to the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and the Committee on Publication Ethics guidance.
CAN I SUBSCRIBE TO CMAJ OPEN?

There is no need to subscribe to *CMAJ Open* because it is an open-access journal. Once the journal begins publishing, you can sign up to receive email alerts about new articles, the table of contents or citation alerts at [www.cmajopen.ca](http://www.cmajopen.ca).

IS THERE A PRINT EDITION?

*CMAJ Open* is an online journal; there is no print edition. However, articles will be collected quarterly into online issues.

HOW DO I SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the Editor must be linked to an article published at [www.cmajopen.ca](http://www.cmajopen.ca). After accessing the article online, please click on “submit a response” in the right-hand column and follow the instructions.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS ABOUT PUBLISHED ARTICLES?

When the journal begins publishing in 2013, you may sign up for email alerts, the table of contents or citation alerts at [www.cmajopen.ca](http://www.cmajopen.ca).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Diane Kelsall is the Editor of *CMAJ Open*. If you have questions, please email us at editorial-open@cmaj.ca.

Mail, phone or fax: *CMAJ Open*, 1867 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa ON K1G 5W8; tel: 866-971-9171 x2295; fax: 613 565-5471