EDITORIAL

High Satisfaction: Thank You Survey Respondents!

Tom Janisse, MD

Survey Ratings

At the end of 2008, in its 12th year of publication, *The Permanente Journal* (*TPJ*) conducted its fifth reader survey and found continued high satisfaction. Of the 2910 respondents—70% physicians, 15% clinicians, 11% nurses, 4% academics, researchers, leaders, managers—33% rated *TPJ* "excellent," 49% "good," 12% "average," 4% "fair," and 2% "poor." Overall satisfaction was 94% (including "average" because respondents are comparing to other national medical journals, many with more focused specialty content). The response rate from each Kaiser Permanente (KP) Region was equivalent with 58% specialists and 42% primary care.

In response to the question *"In the last two years, do you feel the quality of the journal has improved, stayed the same or declined?,"* 60% of those who responded said *TPJ* had "improved" or "significantly improved." Another 22% who marked "stayed the same" rated the journal "excellent."

Ninety percent of 2696 respondents accessed *TPJ* in print, preferring to read the journal off-line or at home, though a common request was to receive an electronic Table of Contents (eTOC) by e-mail with links to articles on the Web site. Also, 33% of respondents were "extremely likely" or "very likely" to use video-based education Web services.

Currently *TPJ* has a quarterly print circulation of 25,000 (95% KP); sends an article-linked eTOC to 2700 readers on request (90% non-KP); and in 2008, *TPJ's* Web site was accessed by 506,000 unique visitors from 164 countries.

Reader Comments

We received comments from 1421 readers, which were more illuminating than the statistics cited above (Table 1). Included are

Table 1. Sample verbatim physician comments

Rating (percentage of respondents)	Comments
Excellent (33%)	Very worthwhile reading and attractive, high-quality print journal. I never miss reading it from cover-to-cover. Nice artwork. **–SC**
	This journal is an excellent general read, as good as any subscription journal. I especially like the discussion on topics not usually seen in medical journals but important to us, like your article on the Southern California new physician orientation. **–SC**
	TPJ is a source of pride to the organization. It adds to the prestige of KP and is a showcase to the world of the excellence of KP. **–PC**
	There is a lot of great stuff in *TPJ,* though it seems to go unnoticed. What I like about it is that there are many articles on the delivery system—which we are —where we are unique. **–PC**
	I enjoy the journal very much—it is a great representation of Permanente values. **–SC**
	I am very impressed with the depth and quality of articles in the journal. **–SC**
Good (49%)	Well-respected journal with good articles, I have enjoyed reading it during my residency and now as a hospitalist. **–PC**
	This issue, with seven or more clinically significant articles is more interesting to me than past editions. Social/management articles are okay. Art/poetry/stories are GREAT! **–SC**
	Quality writing, clear scientific reports and reviews, great art. **–PC**
	The journal has become a good blend of medical information and living. **–SC**
	Clinical-based journal that at times gives very surprising papers. **–PC**
	I never read *TPJ* but show it to physician applicants. **–SC**
	TPJ offers a good and improving mix of investigative studies, commentary, reviews, art, etc. I look forward to receiving each issue. **–SC**
	Being able to take the journal home in hard copy is wonderful for me and the folks I share it with. **–PC**
	I enjoy all of the articles. I read them like I read my *New Yorker*! **–PC**
	I really enjoy reading *TPJ* topics. The last issue with the poetry was very personal and enjoyable. **–PC**
Average (12%)	Unfortunately I don't have much time to read many of the articles, but the ones I am able to read are generally interesting. **–SC**
	If the Web site would pop up on my computer, I would prefer online—I need a reminder. **–PC**
Fair (4%)	Too much emphasis on the *softer* side—art, essays, photos. Not a place I would ever turn to find peer-reviewed, breaking scientific studies, but would like to find best practices and ideas from other regions. **–SC**
	Primary Care is dying. We don't have time for a "Rah Rah" Kaiser Journal. Great graphics. **–PC**
Poor (2%)	I know of no one who reads *TPJ.* **–PC**
	The information contained in *TPJ* is rarely of interest to me. In truth, I do not feel it is a useful or a good expenditure. **–SC**

SC = Specialty Care; PC = Primary Care, KP = Kaiser Permanente, *TPJ* = *The Permanente Journal*

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"Fair" and "Poor" comments to give a balanced representation of responses.

Reader Requests

Reader requests, and responding to those requests, is of utmost importance to the journal editors and staff. Table 2 illustrates a representative verbatim sampling of those requests.

Table 2. Representative verbatim physician requests sorted by journal section

Section	Requests
Original Articles	More peer-reviewed *scientific papers*. Original first author publications, and *clinical trials* being run at KP. *Research* in primary care—what works, what doesn't, and new models of care. More *international* studies that pertain to clinical medicine.
Review Articles	More *reviews* on clinically relevant topics. Editorial *reviews* of emerging tech or biomed science advances.
Clinical Medicine	Operational *best practices* from KP Regions. *Guidelines* for clinical practice—primary and specialty care.
Case Studies	*Case reports* from various specialties with updates on progress. More *clinically relevant* articles—*practical* information that I can use in my practice.
Commentary	More *subspecialty* related material (commentary or editorials). *Collections* of articles in my area of practice or interest.
Other	Publish a *table of contents* with link to online journal to all TPMG physicians, nurses. *NEJM* does this—it's great! *Innovations* among different regions. *Themed issues* with calls for participation. More *CME*—print and online. Listing in NLM on *PubMed*. Highlight the journal as part of the *orientation* and *recruiting* process.

CME = Continuing Medical Education; KP = Kaiser Permanente; *NEJM = The New England Medical Journal;* NLM = National Library of Medicine; TPMG = The Permanente Medical Group

2009 Actions

In 2009, on the basis of these reader survey responses and in our ongoing effort to improve the quality of original articles, review articles, case studies, clinical medicine, and commentaries, *TPJ* is actively working to improve our electronic capability and to include quality improvement articles.

Quality Improvement

In support of readers' interest in articles that help them improve their clinical practice and in alignment with KP's partnership with the international Institute for Healthcare Improvement, this Fall issue features four quality-improvement studies selected by *TPJ* for Service Quality Awards at last December's 20th Annual National Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care. A fifth article presents a multicase quality improvement study by The Permanente Medical Group focused on service-score segmentation to enhance satisfaction with patient-physician visits.

New Electronic Capabilities

1. In response to a common request to receive an article-linked eTOC, already this year with the help of five regions, *TPJ* has built a quarterly e-mail distribution to 9000 Permanente physicians.
2. *Google Analytics* implementation is complete for statistical analysis of future issues.
3. A manuscript submission system, called ScholarOne Manuscripts, used by 300 publishers and 3000 journals internationally, was implemented to offer a state-of-the-art capability to improve the manuscript review process for authors and editors. http://xnet.kp.org/permanentejournal/instructions.html.
4. A Weblog function now enhances clinical dialogue on the future utility of electronic medical records: http://permanentejournal.blogspot.com.
5. *TPJ* is developing a content management system (CMS) to sort and display reader-selected content from the entire journal archive.
6. A video-based education Web service is in progress.
7. A Web bookstore is now open for three Permanente Press books (a fourth in January): https://xnet.kp.org/tpp/.
8. Because of high interest in, and growing submissions of visual art, poems, and stories we implemented a literary-arts e-journal called *leaflet* on the journal Web site: http://xnet.kp.org/permanentejournal/leaflet/.

Direction

The editors' purpose is to create excellent medical content bringing new knowledge and practice improvement to readers of *TPJ*. One result this year has been acceptance by the National Library of Medicine, after scientific evaluation, for indexing in *PubMed Central*—the open-access, full-text, electronic archive of articles in biomedical and life science journals. In addition, *TPJ*'s improved electronic capability enhances the communication of Permanente Medicine through the Web to a world-wide readership. ❖