



mHealth: attaining key milestone on the journal's first impact factor and citation score

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The recent announcement of the *mHealth* journal achieving its inaugural impact factor and citation score is a deservedly well-earned accomplishment. This significant milestone represents the culmination of efforts by the Journal's editor-in-chief, Steven Tucker, and the dedicated editorial board members who have been working together since the Journal's inception in March 2015 (1).

This recognition came on the 20th anniversary of the term "mHealth" being first coined and defined in 2003 (2,3). Since then, mobile health or mHealth was hailed as the most innovative and enabling area for the digital transformation of healthcare globally (4). This was reflected by the unprecedented developments and the global impact of mobile health, and is reflected by the global embracement of its application areas by various stakeholders and sectors interested in this important area and its scientific disciplines. These include diverse stakeholders from academic institutions, medical research establishments, global and national healthcare providers, foundations, telecom providers, global high tech giants and many others, all of which have been involved in the development and sustainability of this important area globally since then. The introduction of the first generation of the smartphones in 2007 and the introduction of the 'mHealth Applications' disciplines and markets, ushered in a new and more perceptible and globally pervasive era of mobile health. This global interest was bolstered by the endorsement of mHealth by different global UN entities

such as the [World Health Organisation (WHO) (5), and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) (6).

On the scientific publications front, many of the top scientific publishing organisations launched specialised journals and focused books series in this area and in response to the expanding global research interest in mHealth and its expanding spectrum of health and wellness applications. Furthermore, other established journals in the fields of health informatics, computing, telecom, telemedicine, e-health, and other relevant disciplines have also been extensively publishing scientific and application papers focused in this area. A wide range of scientific and applied clinical studies were published extensively in this area, primarily within the domain of 'smartphone mHealth applications'. The increasing and voluminous publications in recent years emphasise the global importance and continued interest in the diverse scientific disciplines of mobile health. These are being increasingly applied for numerous clinical areas and different care delivery applications utilising new advances in computing, communications, and sensing technologies, representing the core technological and scientific pillars of mHealth (4,7). The COVID-19 pandemic and its long term human, global health and economic impact, compounded with the recent breakthroughs in computing (AI, Big Data, Cloud), telecommunications and networking (6G, IOT), and the recent advances in wearable and bio sensors, will open up new avenues for research opportunities in these key pillars of mobile health.

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However, in recent years, there has been an increase in the use of the term ‘digital health’ in conjunction with mHealth. This relatively recent trend has sparked much debate and speculations about what digital health is and how it exactly correlates and relates to mobile health (4). This remains a debatable and a ‘known unknown’ trend.

The ‘digital’ trend had promoted many established and highly cited scientific and medical journals such as *Nature*, *Lancet*, and others to launch in recent years specialist sister journals dedicated to the ‘digital health’ and ‘digital medicine’ areas. These specialist journals publish highly impacted new research developments and scientific advances in different areas and applications of mobile health, but retitled as digital health applications. The new global *force majeure* of digital Health publications, as well as its reorientation of mobile health, is giving the established publications and journals relevant of mHealth, e-Health, telemedicine and health informatics journals a competitive advantage.

The extraordinary success the *mHealth* journal has made in advancing the knowledge of mHealth research and its different disciplines and application areas is mirrored in the journal’s increasing publications quality, content and its new citation factors. The joint dedication of the EIC, editorial board members, special issue editor, and the reviewers over the last eight years contributed in maintaining the highest standards of academic rigour and scientific excellence and played a critical part in achieving such recognition.

The wealth of knowledge that the journal provided in the previous eight years has not only increased the knowledge and better understanding of mHealth, but has also contributed to the advancement and importance of this transformative area and its global impact. *mHealth* is now one of the leading peer reviewed journals in this area, and I had the honour of serving on its founding editorial board from its start.

I wish the journal great success and progress in its aims to provide a specialised publication platform for high-quality research and dissemination output, as well as to continue its scientific mission and publications journey in this important area.

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