

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*

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From an informal conversation to a peer reviewed, open-access, indexed journal, we are now celebrating the 10th anniversary of the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork: Research, Education, and Practice*. We celebrate the uniqueness of the *Journal* as the only fully open-access journal that addresses massage therapy and bodywork. Scholarly open-access journals have changed the face of scientific publishing in recent years: providing wider dissemination, allowing findings from taxpayer supported research to be available for free, and providing an avenue for researchers in the developing world to connect with researchers in developed countries. The editors of the *Journal* are regularly looking and soliciting articles from massage therapy researchers. This editorial describes the progress of the last ten years—from an article and readership standpoint—including changes in partnerships and increased visibility through social media.

KEY WORDS: massage therapy; research; education; editorial; open-access publishing; social media

Massage therapy research is found in many different types of journals, from nursing to public health, and is often inaccessible behind journal pay-walls. This is as much a problem today as it was in the early 2000s, when an informal conversation between Dr. Glenn Hymel and John Balletto, the then President of the Massage Therapy Foundation, led to a mission to create an open-access journal for massage therapy research.⁽¹⁾ The first issue of the *IJTMB* was published in September of 2008; this year the *Journal* will celebrate its 10th anniversary. We celebrate the uniqueness of the *Journal* as the only fully open-access journal that addresses massage therapy and bodywork. Scholarly open-access journals have changed the face of scientific publishing in recent years: providing wider dissemination of studies, allowing findings from taxpayer supported research to be available to the public for free, and providing an avenue for researchers in the developing world access to the research and connect with researchers in developed countries.⁽²⁻⁴⁾ These

10 years have shown quite a bit of growth and change in our publications, readership, editorial staff, partnerships, and marketing.

In the first year, two issues were published; since then we have maintained four issues a year. This current issue marks the 41st issue for the *IJTMB*. Within those first 40 issues, we have published a total of 194 articles. These articles span the range from News/Announcements to Research studies. A complete breakdown of the articles by journal section can be seen in Figure 1. The editors of the *Journal* are regularly looking and soliciting articles from massage therapy researchers. We continue to inform authors about our no publication fees policy, as well as our indexing with a number of systems including PubMed Central.⁽⁵⁾ We encourage not only researchers, but also practitioners, to submit manuscripts to the *Journal*.

From a modest beginning, registered readers of the *Journal* have increased year over year to over 9,200 readers in June of 2018 (Figure 2). The largest increase in readers was observed between 2016 and 2017 when the *Journal* took a foothold into social media. In the fall of 2016, we began two social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) and through them we share our current published articles and other articles from the last five years. In addition to articles from and information about *IJTMB*, we also share research from other journals. The purpose of sharing

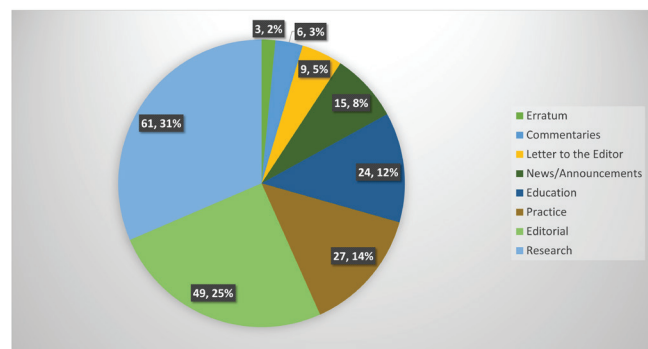


FIGURE 1. Total articles published by journal section (n=194).

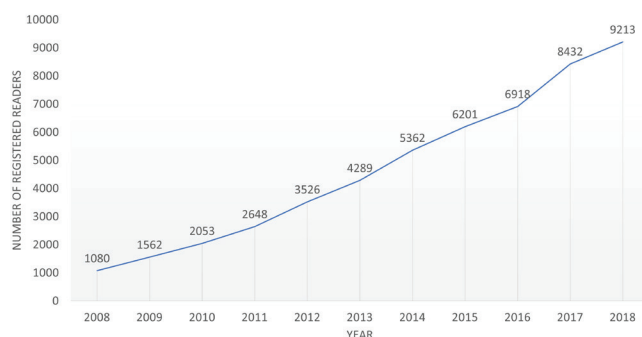


FIGURE 2. Total number of registered readers of the IJTMB by year.

information from other sources is to help those in the profession stay informed about the latest research and to evaluate those papers for reliability and applicability to practice.

A list of the top 10 viewed IJTMB papers is presented in Table 1.⁽⁶⁻¹⁵⁾ Since views are tracked cumulatively, it may seem logical that nearly all (90%) top viewed articles are from the first five years of the *Journal's* existence, but this may be changing with our increased presence on social media. When considering the top 25 articles, two have been from 2013^(16,17) (#17 and #24, respectively), two have been from 2014^(18,19) (#15 and #25, respectively), one from 2015⁽²⁰⁾ (#18), and three from 2016⁽²¹⁻²³⁾

(#12, #21, and #23, respectively). Most surprising, however, is Sarah Fogarty's commentary "Fertility Massage: an Unethical Practice?"⁽²⁴⁾ which, in only three months since its publication, is already ranked 30th most viewed. These more recent publications being in the top 15% of viewed articles may be due to launching of the social media accounts. Future analysis of our social media account data may provide greater understanding of the needs and interests of our readership.

Lastly, the past 10 years have seen changes in partnerships and editors. In 2017, the IJTMB became not only the official journal of the Massage Therapy Foundation, but also for our new partner, the Registered Massage Therapists Association of British Columbia (RMTBC). This partnership is a welcome addition in the initiatives to help sustain our future of providing open-access research for the massage therapy profession. Our editors have also changed over the years, and the *Journal* would not have succeeded without their leadership. We must give a special thank you to Senior Consulting Editor and Emeritus Founding Executive Editor Glenn M. Hymel, EdD, LMT, and to Consulting Editor and Emeritus Founding Editor-in-Chief Thomas W. Findley, MD, PhD. Today we have three editors: Albert Moraska, PhD, Research Section Editor; Grant J. Rich, PhD, BCTMB, LMT, LSW, Practice & Education Section Editor; and myself as Executive Editor.

TABLE 1. Ten Most Frequently Viewed *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork* Articles Since Inaugural Issue in August 2008

Rank	Author(s) and Reference	Title	Volume, Issue, Year	Number of Views
1	Kania A, Porcino A, Verhoef MJ. ⁽⁶⁾	Value of Qualitative Research in the Study of Massage Therapy	Vol. 1, No. 2 (2008)	40,001
2	Munk N, Harrison A. ⁽⁷⁾	Integrating the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health Model into Massage Therapy Research, Education, and Practice	Vol. 3, No. 4 (2010)	37,320
3	Manella C, Backus D. ⁽⁸⁾	Gait Characteristics, Range of Motion, and Spasticity Changes in Response to Massage in a Person with Incomplete Spinal Cord Injury: Case Report	Vol. 4, No. 1 (2011)	33,655
4	Zalta J. ⁽⁹⁾	Orthopedic massage protocol for post ACL reconstruction patellofemoral pain syndrome	Vol. 1, No. 2 (2008)	25,488
5	Pierson MJ. ⁽¹⁰⁾	Changes in Temporomandibular Joint Dysfunction Symptoms Following Massage Therapy: a Case Report	Vol. 4, No. 4 (2011)	24,538
6	Avery RM. ⁽¹¹⁾	Massage Therapy for Cervical Degenerative Disc Disease: Alleviating a Pain in the Neck?	Vol. 5, No. 3 (2012)	21,089
7	Cubick EE, Quezada VY, Schumer AD, Davis CM. ⁽¹²⁾	Sustained Release Myofascial Release as Treatment for a Patient with Complications of Rheumatoid Arthritis and Collagenosis Colitis: a Case Report	Vol. 4, No. 3 (2011)	14,611
8	Black DW. ⁽¹³⁾	Treatment of Knee Arthrofibrosis and Quadriceps Insufficiency after Patellar Tendon Repair: a Case Report Including Use of the Graston Technique	Vol. 3, No. 2 (2010)	14,177
9	Wakefield ML. ⁽¹⁴⁾	Case Report: The Effects of Massage Therapy on a Woman with Thoracic Outlet Syndrome	Vol. 7, No. 4 (2014)	12,416
10	Smith JM, Sullivan SJ, Baxter GD. ⁽¹⁵⁾	A Descriptive Study of the Practice Patterns of New Zealand Massage Therapists	Vol. 4, No. 1 (2011)	12,195

We hope that you will celebrate 10 wonderful years of the *IJTMB* with us and continue to support those who make it possible, including our partners, the Massage Therapy Foundation and the RMTBC. We hope you will also consider joining in the conversations on social media. We look forward to conversing with you there.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION

The author reports no conflicts of interest.

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