

Readership versus distribution

For the *BCMJ*, the distinction between readership and distribution is more than a matter of semantics—it's a reflection of our success in engaging the medical community of British Columbia.

This publication is somewhat unique in the realm of medical journalism in that every member of Doctors of BC, across every discipline, receives a copy of the journal unless they opt out. A total of 16 669 subscribers received the July/August 2024 issue, an impressive number given that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC listed 15 288 active registrants in its most recent annual report.¹ This means that the *BCMJ* is also reaching medical students, retired physicians, libraries, paid subscribers, and physicians living outside the province.

While distribution numbers might provide an initial gauge of reach, it is the depth of readership and the conversations fostered that truly determine the impact of the content we disseminate. "Impressions" is a term typically used to describe the number of times online content is displayed, and it can far exceed the number of subscribers, because one person may see a single piece of content multiple times. For the *BCMJ*, I like to imagine medical impressions as the number of times our readers recall some information from a *BCMJ* article when talking with a colleague or treating a patient. In this way, I give our authors credit for inspiring, changing, challenging, and informing the practice of medicine, with many thousands of "med-pressions" per month.

Counting the number of copies—whether digital or print—distributed across the province is only a superficial measure of the *BCMJ*'s reach. As we all know from mass emails, high distribution does not necessarily equate to effective communication. Even if our pages are distributed from Fort

Nelson to Invermere to Ucluelet, without an active readership, the valuable information we publish would remain inert.

Readership encompasses the act of engaging with our content—reading, reflecting, and responding. In our field, where rapidly changing science directly impacts patient care, engaging with our colleagues around the province is critical. Physicians who actively consume and apply new information can shape a living body of knowledge that advances the entire field.

Over the past year, we have seen an increasing number of submissions, with a notable spike in Letters to the Editor. We are always excited to hear from so many of you from around British Columbia, so keep those letters coming! An engaged readership creates a dynamic feedback loop, where the journal not only informs its readers but is also informed by them.

Our mission is to share knowledge while building connections among BC physicians. To do that, we need to continue to publish

content that resonates with the practical realities of health care here. Authors of quality assurance studies, local trials, or reviews of regional practices have an unprecedented opportunity to share your knowledge by publishing your work in the *BCMJ*, where your friends and colleagues will read it!

The *BCMJ* is the only provincial medical journal in Canada. It belongs to all of us—the doctors of BC—and we all have a role to play in ensuring it remains a relevant and valuable resource. The *BCMJ*'s vision is to be

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an independent and inclusive forum to communicate ideas and inspire excellence in health care. We look forward to reading your submissions! ■

—Caitlin Dunne, MD, FRCSC

Reference

1. College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia. Annual report 2023/24. Accessed 19 August 2024. www.cpsbc.ca/files/pdf/2023-24-Annual-Report.pdf.



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