

## State of the Journal: *CMGH*'s Progress, Prospects, and Impact Factor



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*Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology (CMGH)* was established to create a forum for high-quality, mechanistic studies of the gastrointestinal tract, liver, and pancreas. *CMGH* has now completed its third full year of publication and has developed a reputation as a rigorous and highly regarded platform for basic and translational research. *CMGH* has also become known for a prompt, fair, and transparent review process in which authors are treated with respect and have access to editors. These statements are supported by the results of our recent readership survey, which will be the topic of a future commentary. One can therefore conclude that *CMGH* is well on its way to becoming the high-impact, open-access forum that our field needs.

### Impact Factor

The question authors and readers ask most often is when will *CMGH*

have an impact factor? There are a number of steps in the process of getting an impact factor. The first step is for Clarivate Analytics (Philadelphia, PA) to include the journal in the Emerging Sciences Citation Index, part of Web of Science. *CMGH* has recently been accepted into the Emerging Sciences Citation Index and for indexing in the Web of Science. Clarivate will now monitor the citation behavior of *CMGH* before making a decision regarding inclusion of *CMGH* in the Science Citation Index Expanded database. Once included in the Science Citation Index Expanded database the journal will receive an impact factor. We are hopeful that this second part of the process will occur rapidly.

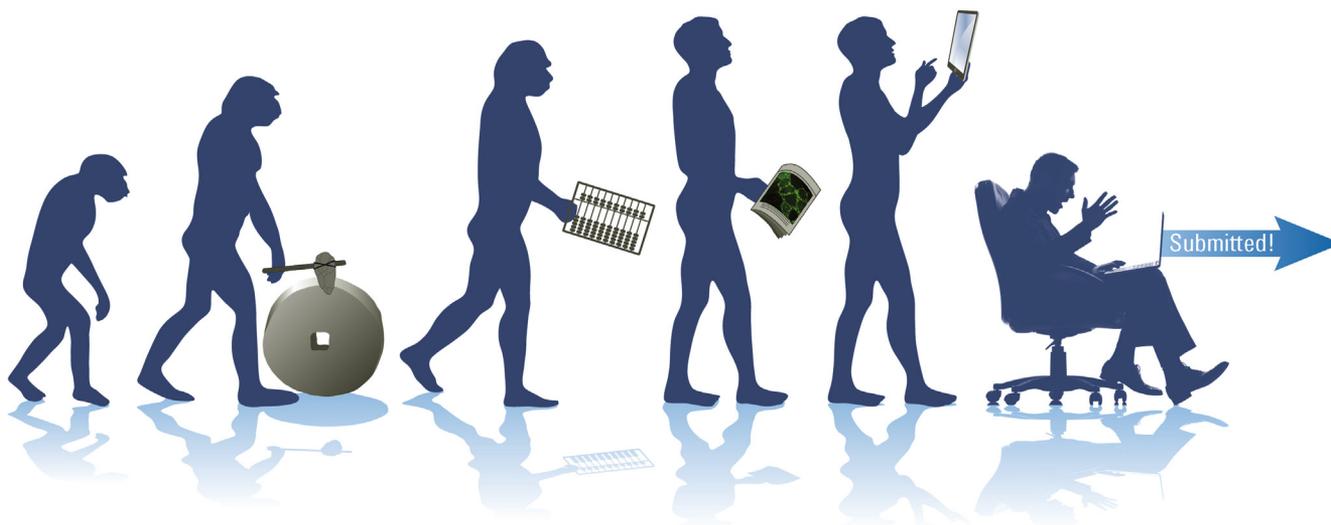
Because *CMGH* indexing in Web of Science is not yet complete, we have used the Scopus database to track citations (Scopus is maintained by Elsevier). Although the details of which items beyond original articles are counted differ between Web of Science and Scopus, the trends are similar. We have compiled 2017 citations to date of the Journal's 2016 articles (Table 1) along with comparable data from several other journals. Notably, these data differ from the impact factor, which assesses citations over the previous 2 years (eg, 2017 citations of 2016 and 2015 articles). Nevertheless, these citations provide an early indicator of the visibility of *CMGH* publications and

suggest that publishing in *CMGH* is impactful.

### Submissions and Decisions

Another measure of a Journal's reputation and perceived impact is the number of submissions it can attract. In 2015, there were 111 research article (including original articles and brief reports) submissions to *CMGH*. This increased to 171 in 2016. As of this writing, 2017 submissions have increased by an additional 20% compared with 2016 submissions. For these articles, first decisions were communicated to authors in less than 3 weeks over the life of *CMGH* as well as for 2017. The overall acceptance rate for research articles has been 25%.

*CMGH* accepts submissions by several routes. Regardless of submission route, it is not necessary to format an article for *CMGH* during initial review. This policy removes unnecessary burdens and simplifies the process for authors. The most common submission vehicle is the *CMGH* website. In addition, submissions rejected by our sister journal, *Gastroenterology*, can be transferred by a fast-track process if they were externally reviewed or by a non-fast-track process if rejected with internal review only. In either case, transfer is simple and requires minimal effort on the part of authors. Decisions on fast-track submissions take



**Table 1.** Comparative Journal Citation Data

Journal	2016 impact factor	Number of original articles and reviews in Scopus in 2016	Number of citations of 2016 articles in 2017 <sup>a</sup>	Average citations per 2016 source item received in 2017
Cancer Research	9.1	687	4069	5.9
Mucosal Immunology	7.5	131	708	5.4
<b>Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology (CMGH)</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>5.3</b>
Journal of Pathology	6.9	156	786	5.0
Journal of Cell Science	4.4	386	1393	3.6
Laboratory Investigation	4.9	116	378	3.2
American Journal of Physiology – Gastrointestinal and Liver Physiology	3.5	219	529	2.4

<sup>a</sup>Data current as of November 3, 2017.

advantage of, but are not dependent on, reviews obtained by *Gastroenterology* and are generally communicated to authors within 3 days. A similar fast-track process is available for authors whose articles have been rejected elsewhere. This requires submission of all correspondence, including reviews, with the previous journal, and also typically results in a decision being made within 3 days.

## Changes in 2017

*CMGH* introduced special issues, article collections, and other features to help readers find articles of interest over 2017. The latter include a *CMGH* Twitter feed (@AGA\_CMGH) and graphical abstracts, which have been well received. Authors are now routinely providing high-quality graphical abstracts and frequently use the *CMGH* template that includes useful elements (available at [CMGHjournal.org](http://CMGHjournal.org)).

Finally, review of acceptance rates in early 2017 showed that the acceptance rate for Brief Report submissions

was well below that of full articles. This appeared to reflect a misconception of the purpose of Brief Reports, which were intended to be short descriptions of landmark observations. We therefore have replaced Brief Reports with Research Letters, a format that better fits the articles previously submitted as Brief Reports. Similar to all *CMGH* articles, Research Letters provide significant new knowledge. They do not, however, typically include the depth of analysis that characterizes full-length *CMGH* original articles. Research Letters will therefore allow authors to rapidly publish work with significant or intriguing novel observations, and several are now in press.

## The Future

*CMGH* is on a rising trajectory. This success reflects the efforts of the AGA staff, most notably Managing Editor Lindsey Brounstein; the Editorial Board; our Elsevier Publisher George Woodward; authors who have supported the Journal; and, of course,

the readers. Change, however, is ahead, as the term of the current Board of Editors will end in June 2019. We look forward to the selection of a team that will carry *CMGH* into the next phases of successful growth.

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### Conflicts of interest

The author discloses no conflicts.

### Most current article

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