

From the editorial bench: December 2018.

The appointment of the chief editor for the Journal of Medical Laboratory has led to the emergence of a new website for journal. Prior to launching the journal online, an interim gmail account was created (editor.jomls@gmail.com). This email was used to call for membership of the editorial board and the information was disseminated through the WhatsApp platform. However, it appears only very few members of the association got the information. This may have resulted in poor response as few people indicated interest to serve in the editorial board.

We decided to develop a unique website for the journal from scratch by using an expert. This will allow the journal to take control of the content and to make sure credible articles are peer-reviewed and published in real time.

The website was launched online in the first week of August, 2018. The features (90% ready) that are currently available are:

1. **Registration/login.** Potential authors are expected to register, view their registration information, and also able to make any changes to their password or contact information. The registration will require authentication through the registrant email before all the input information will be saved in the database.
2. **Manuscript submission:** The journal website is automated for the manuscript submission. This will allow the corresponding author and all authors to receive immediate email reply containing the title of the manuscript, list of all authors, list of potential reviewers if included by the corresponding author and the abstract as soon the manuscript is submitted successfully. On the submission platform, authors have the liberty of selecting field of study, the section where their article fall on such as Bacteriology, Mycology, Parasitology, Molecular biology, Chemical pathology/Clinical Chemistry, Haematology/Blood Transfusion and Histopathology. Each of these sections has a section editor assigned. The authors will also be able to select the type of articles they are submitting (Original research article, review article-solicited, review article-unsolicited, Lab case reports, Current perspectives, Letter to the editor and Conference proceedings). The authors will supply the Title of the manuscript, subtitle (less than 50 characters), Structured abstract not more than 250 words, 3-6 key words, list of co-authors, email address, and the role each author play in the manuscript, and List of three potential reviewers. The manuscript upload involves uploading three items;
 - i. a cover letter indicating why the manuscript should be considered, contribution to knowledge, and how the study was funded.
 - ii. First page showing the names of all the authors and their contact information.
 - iii. The main manuscript without any author names or contacts information. We are taking this approach in order to maintain unbiased review process.
3. **Official email:** At the moment, we have created three webmail platforms and they are currently working; This is also available on contact us page: with a google map showing the location of the secretariat at Abuja, Nigeria.
 - i. chiefeditor@jomls.org
 - ii. info@jomls.org
 - iii. registration@jomls.org

All the official communication of the journal will now be with the new email addresses. We intend to create other emails for the various sub-section editors when the volume of manuscript begin to increase. Although sadly, the response in terms of manuscript

submission is yet to yield any positive result despite several calls for manuscript submission on the WhatsApp platform and emails to heads of MLS training institutions.

4. **Editorial team:** Due to the poor reply from members, several emails and personal appeal to the previous editorial board members were made through the vice president-Dr. Felix Emelike, asking them to submit their biodata and passport photo for upload on the site. Unfortunately, only few have responded. Their unresponsiveness is very visible on the website. However, we have to increase our dragnets to other people who are willing to serve and able to respond to issues concerning the journal manuscripts in real time.
5. **Peer-review process:** We will encourage all author(s) to have a proactive disposition to recommendations from the reviewers on changes that they wish for you to make on your submission. Please, note that the intentions of the reviewers are corrective, honourable and wish for your submission to be at its best, and that they do not wish to be unreasonable or biased to your manuscript. All you need to do is accept their recommendations make the changes and you will be prouder of your work in the long run when it is finally published. Author(s) have the liberty to appeal for re-evaluation on the decision of the reviewers concerning their manuscript by providing answers to queries or comments raised by the reviewers. This journal has no intention to discourage any individual from pursuing their zest for research and publishing. In contrary, we want to encourage your academic prowess, promote and support it.
6. **Publications:** Regrettably only one article is published for the December, 2018 online issue. In order to keep the populate the site, we decided to reformat the only issue that was published (hard copy) in 2017 in PDF. The articles are now uploaded on the site as archives. We intend to upload all the published issues from 2012 to 2016 if made available in PDF, so that we can make them visible online. We have to bear in mind that at this internet age, any journal article that cannot be found online, does not exit.
7. **Publication guidelines:** Publication guidelines for authors have been updated and are available online. Information for payment (N30,000.00) on accepted manuscript can be found on the site.
8. **About the Journal:** A brief description of the scope and objectives of the journal are also available online.

Creating a new brand for the journal: In our considered opinion, and in order to build a new brand for the journal and MLS, we have to take some pro-active measures such as;

- i. The journal should have access to all the academic institutions training MLS in the country. A list of the institutions and contact information should be made available to the editorial board.
- ii. In order to support the journal, all academic MLS members of the association who are teaching and doing research in all the training institutions, should be encouraged to publish in the journal as a way of creating our brand. We suggest that the association should liaise with the Council to make it mandatory as a requisite for council accreditation and re-accreditation for teaching staffs. The staffs of the

training institutions should be required to publish at least two papers in the journal every year.

- iii. The association should create ranking or recognition platform for institutions that have published most articles in the journal.
- iv. We intend to register the journal on various indexing platforms in the future. However, one of the requirements for registration is evidence of continuous and regular publication with very stringent and open editorial review policy.

We look forward to receiving your next manuscript.

Chief Editor
JoMLS.