The 2002 Australasian Journal of Podiatric Medicine members’ survey - a summary of results

INTRODUCTION
A survey was circulated in September 2002 to 1700 podiatrists across Australasia, who subscribe to the Australasian Journal of Podiatric Medicine (the AJPM) through holding membership with their respective professional association. The principle aims of the survey were to evaluate the AJPM in regards to the following:
- current levels of satisfaction;
- perceptions of whether professional needs are being met;
- additional journal requirements; and
- preferences regarding the future provision of a professional journal.
The survey was initially distributed as an insert of the September 2002 edition of the AJPM. In an attempt to maximize the response rate, a second run of surveys with reminder notes were circulated through individual member association newsletters which also aimed to acquire responses from members who may not read the journal.

RESPONSE RATE
98 of the 1700 surveys (6%) circulated were returned. It is acknowledged that this is a low response rate and the results obtained must be considered in light of this.

SURVEY RESULTS
The following is a summary of the main results obtained from the survey.
- Question 1: How do you currently rate the AJPM?

Results to this question are shown in Figure 1. 97 responses were counted. 74% of respondents overall report being satisfied with the AJPM, with the majority (53%) falling into the moderately satisfied group and 21% reported being highly satisfied. Overall 22% reported being unsatisfied, with 7% being highly unsatisfied. 4% had no opinion.

- Question 2: What proportion of the journal do you read?

Members were asked to indicate on average what proportion of the journal they read. Results are shown in Figure 2.
98 responses were counted. 82% of respondents reported reading half of the journal or more with 30% reading the entire journal. 18% read less than half of the journal. 100% of respondents report reading some part of the journal.

- Question 3: Does the AJPM meet your professional needs?
Members were asked to rate how well the AJPM meets their professional needs in several key areas. The results are summarised in Table 1.

There was between 97 and 98 responses for each key paper area identified. For the first four key paper areas: current research: current clinical practice: current professional issues and product information, the majority response was that members were moderately satisfied. The second most common response across all of these groups was moderately unsatisfied. For the last two key paper areas: classifieds and vehicle to publish, the former rated well to very well in terms of member satisfaction and in the latter the majority expressed no opinion.
Table 1: Member rating of whether the AJPM meets professional needs in the key paper areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Current Research</th>
<th>Current Clinical</th>
<th>Current Professional Issues</th>
<th>Product Info</th>
<th>Classifieds</th>
<th>Vehicle to Publish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Satisfied</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Satisfied</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Unsatisfied</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly unsatisfied</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Question 4: Do you have any additional requirements from your AJPM?

80% of respondents reported yes to this question, 17% reported no. When asked to indicate which content areas/paper types and topic areas are preferred, the following top five responses for each group were recorded (Refer to Table 2).

Table 2: Top five content areas/paper types and topic areas most requested by members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area/ Paper Type</th>
<th>Number of Requests</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Number of Requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical practice issues/ Research (equal first)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Orthoses/Pediatrics</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice management</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Sports medicine</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online resources</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Biomechanics</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gait analysis</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-prints</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>General medicine</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Question 5: What is your preference for accessing information in the future?

Figure 3 indicates members’ first preference for accessing information in the future. The options to select from were: ongoing production of the AJPM in its current format; ongoing production of the AJPM with changes; or discontinuation of the AJPM (with expansion of the bulletin and provision of an international podiatry journal). 97 responses to this question were received. 67% of members overall selected the AJPM in some format, as the first preference of accessing information in the future. One third (33%) of respondents indicated a preference for discontinuation of the journal in exchange for other options.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SURVEY OUTCOMES

Overall the journal rated fairly highly, with good levels of satisfaction generally reported at 74%. Of these, 21% of respondents indicated very high levels of satisfaction. Low to very low satisfaction was reported in around one fifth of respondents. The data suggests that even though satisfaction with the journal varies, all respondents still read portions of the journal, with the large majority reading over half.

While the overall rating for the first two questions was quite positive, it is clear from responses to questions three and four that there is margin for improvement. Question four demonstrates that the large majority of members who responded to the survey have additional requirements from their professional journal. The detailed responses gained in question four offer insight into specific areas that are in demand.

67% of respondents indicated that their first choice for accessing information in the future is through the AJPM in some format. Retaining the journal with changes was the most popular option (43%). Over one third of respondents opted for journal discontinuation as their first choice for accessing information in the future, which shows some disparity in the overall preferences of members.

In conclusion, the AJPM satisfaction survey offers positive support for the continuation of the journal, however the readership has indicated that some change is required. Results of the survey must be interpreted in light of the low response rate when utilising the data in future planning and development of the AJPM.

Thank you to members who took the time and effort to complete surveys.

Anita Rasovic
Editor
The Australasian Journal of Podiatric Medicine