Good News for *V.C.O.T.*

There are two significant events which I am delighted to bring to the attention of Readers in this Editorial - and they are presented to you within our *New Look*. We hope that you are just as pleased with the new cover as we are and welcome any comments you might have.

The first important news is that *Medline* is now indexing *V.C.O.T*. The recognition of the journal in this manner owes much to the quality of material that authors have submitted for publication. At the same time, it will mean that their material will be brought to the attention of others who search *Medline* when applying for grants or putting together the background of articles to be submitted to any medical science journal. The thanks of all of the Members of the Consultant Editorial Board are due to those who have supported *V.C.O.T.* since its inception in 1988. We understand that the listing in *Medline* will date back to the first edition in 2005.

The other very significant news is that *V.C.O.T.* has gone electronic! The beginning of January 2006 saw the launch of *Manuscript Central*, the online manuscript submission and peer-review system. What a change that will be from the initial system of processing used at the birth of *V.C.O.T.* in 1988! At that time, fax machines played a significant part in processing the results of the labours of authors.

Consequent upon these changes, any manuscript that is received in my office after January 1, 2006 will be returned to the author(s) for resubmission online. In order to expedite that process, I shall email authors to inform them of the situation so that they may immediately resubmit their material electronically. Manuscripts received prior to December 31, 2005, and those already in the system, will continue to be processed via mail and e-mail, until all have reached a final decision.

This paradigm shift is necessary for many reasons; an important one being to keep the journal abreast of changes in the publishing world, so that information is more readily available. So, now changes are in order and necessary. How will the changes affect authors?

We have always prided ourselves that, in most cases, *V.C.O.T.* has given authors a rapid ‘turn-around time’ for their manuscripts. The new system will enhance that service. Please see the algorithm towards the front of the journal with supporting instructions regarding submissions. In future, referees will be invited in advance of being sent a manuscript for review. They will have a sight of the Summary of a paper, and then direct me as to whether or not they are available, and willing to review it. The ‘double-blind’ system will remain. The summations and recommendations of referees will be transmitted to authors immediately they are available for this office to make a decision.

This journal has always attempted to encourage authors, whose Mother Tongue is not English, to publish with us. Some excellent material never sees the light of day, because, very understandably, particular individuals are hesitant to submit a manuscript in English. Your Editors will continue to do their utmost to help such authors. This we do by a critical service, which makes suggestions as to rewriting manuscripts with the assistance of an individual, professional or private, fluent in English and the language of the authors. These ‘fine tunings’ of such manuscripts will be the role of an Editor familiar with the subject in question.

Changes to the Instructions to Authors have been necessary, which can be found at the back of the Journal, for instance, we will no longer be charging a processing fee.

*Each venture anew beginning*

Elliot 1888

G. Sumner-Smith, Guelph,
Editor-in-Chief