“Tradition Is not Preserving the Ashes, It Is Passing on the Fire”

On Strengthening Ties with GMDS

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"Tradition is not preserving the ashes, it is passing on the fire.”
accredited to Thomas More (1478 to 1535) (see e.g. [1])

Since the journal’s foundation in 1962, Methods of Information in Medicine is stressing the methodology and scientific fundamentals of organizing, representing and analyzing data, information and knowledge in biomedicine and health care. Covering publications in the fields of biomedical and health informatics, medical biometry, and epidemiology, the journal is publishing original papers, reviews, reports, opinion papers, editorials, and letters to the editor [2, 3].

As outlined and discussed in [4], with Methods a publication forum is provided having a certain focus on medical informatics (or, more broader, biomedical and health informatics). However going beyond, it is comprising research publications on the organization, representation and analysis of data, information and knowledge in biomedicine and health care of all scientific disciplines, dealing with this subject. Thus the journal is also including publications from the fields of medical biometry and epidemiology. Even more, Methods wants to provide a forum for interdisciplinary research, crossing boundaries and combining several of these fields, being convinced that this is of significant importance to scientific progress.

In looking at the recent volume of the journal, you can find some publications, which can be assigned to medical informatics (e.g. [5–7]), or to medical biometry (e.g. [8–10]) and to epidemiology (e.g. [11]). You will however also find papers comprising methodological aspects of informatics and biometry (e.g. [12–14]) or even of all three fields informatics, biometry, and epidemiology [15]. Other papers report on interdisciplinary research, which is e.g. related to methodological aspects in medical biometry and computer science ([16]), or within various subfields of medical informatics (imaging, knowledge representation, linguistics) and computer science ([17]).

The origins of Methods are going back to the late 1950s and early 1960s ([2], section 2). They are strongly related to the journal’s founding editor, Professor Gustav Wagner and to the German Association for Medical Informatics, Biometry, and Epidemiology (GMDS, [18]), where Dr. Wagner has served as its President from 1965 to 1973, and being awarded the society’s honorary membership later on. With approximately 2000 members GMDS is one of the largest international societies in the fields of medical informatics, medical biometry, and epidemiology. GMDS’s national e-journal, with (mostly) publications in German language, is Medizinische Informatik, Biometrie und Epidemiologie (MIBE [19]).

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Methods Inf Med 2013; 52: 1–2

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During the last year, GMDS and Methods discussed closer relationships due to the strong overlap between this association and Methods, since the journal’s foundation. As GMDS activities are of both, national and international impact this will hopefully add benefits for all readers of Methods.

The authors of this editorial, in their roles as President of GMDS, as editor of Methods, and as editor of MIBE are glad to announce, that GMDS with MIBE and Methods have decided to strengthen their ties. From now on

- Methods of Information in Medicine is the official international journal of GMDS.
- All GMDS members enjoy electronic access to the journal publications including the journals archive, going back to 1962.
- Methods will continue and even extend its broad interdisciplinary scope, which is well overlapping the objectives of GMDS and its members.
- GMDS will communicate statements resp. reports with international impact through Methods.
- MIBE will closely cooperate with Methods in order to support visibility of research activities in GMDS to Methods readers.

As official journal of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA, [20]) and of the European Federation of Medical Informatics (EFMI [2]) Methods will continue its international scope. As the official international journal of GMDS, we are convinced to provide new and further opportunities to communicate research and statements from GMDS and its members to the international community. In the spirit of the Thomas More quote “his shall be another step in maintaining the tradition of both, GMDS and Methods, for the future of both organizations.

References

3. Instructions to Authors at http://www.methods-online.com.