

Editorials

AFP 2018: How We're Doing

Jay Siwek, MD, and Sumi M. Sexton, MD, Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, District of Columbia

This editorial updates and adds to previous reports on statistics for *American Family Physician* (AFP),^{1,2} including our print circulation, website visits, social media engagement, AFP Community Blog views, podcast downloads, video views, social media followers, continuing medical education (CME) credits, acceptance rates for review article manuscripts, timelines to publication, and new additions to our Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) Toolkit. *Table 1* lists benchmarks and statistics for each of these categories.

Circulation

The circulation of AFP's print journal is approximately 182,000. To the best of our knowledge, this makes it the second highest among nearly 5,000 peer-reviewed medical journals indexed by Index Medicus.³ Our readership includes 90,000 members of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), approximately 40,000 nonmember family physicians, and approximately 50,000 general internists. AFP has consistently been rated the #1 journal among primary care physicians.⁴

Website

Our website received more than 26 million unique visitors (attributable to a unique browser or device) in 2017, making it one of the most visited medical publications. This means that in addition to visits by AAFP members, our website is viewed by millions of other health care professionals worldwide and persons seeking information about various clinical conditions.

AFP Podcast

The popular AFP podcast is produced by the University of Arizona College of Medicine Phoenix Family Medicine Residency program. This podcast, which started in November 2015, is regularly in the top 20 medical podcasts among hundreds of others, and at times is the #1 medical podcast on iTunes, where it has a five-star rating. The podcast episodes are downloaded more than 50,000 times per month, and in just over two years have been downloaded more than 1,000,000 times.

AFP Community Blog

Our insightfully written weekly medical blog has had 547,000 page views since its launch in August 2010, and averages 8,000 to 9,000 page views per month. You can

subscribe via a link on the blog's home page (<https://afpjournal.blogspot.com>).

Social Media: Twitter and Facebook

More than 9,000 followers get a daily dose of clinical tips from AFP's Twitter feed (<https://twitter.com/AFPJournal>), which has posted more than 6,000 tweets over the past eight years. AFP also has nearly 13,000 followers and a 4.8-star rating on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/AFPJournal>).

AFP Videos

We are in the process of building up our video collection, which is available on AFP's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCusW9jqgwakkTXgQ7XG9F2Q>), as well as the AFP videos page (<https://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/explore/video.html>).

CME

AFP is among the largest providers of CME in the United States, with more than 488,000 CME quizzes submitted in 2017, translating to approximately 2.8 million credits.

Timelines to Publication

Our goal is to publish review articles an average of six months after acceptance. Other features (e.g., Curbside Consultation, Point-of-Care Guides, Photo Quiz) are published an average of six months after acceptance. Our timelines to publication are longer than most journals because a lot goes into putting our articles together, and we strive to have a mix of topics in each issue. In the future, we aim to further shorten the timeline to publication for articles and features on selected high-priority topics by publishing them online ahead of print.

Acceptance Rates

To ensure comprehensive coverage of a curriculum of topics, we solicit most of the articles published in AFP. Article proposals go through a formal approval process before the author submits a manuscript for consideration. Only about 10% of proposed topics are approved. For both solicited and proposed topics, we provide authors with detailed guidance on the focus of the article. For these reasons, the acceptance rates for solicited manuscripts and approved proposals are high: 96% for solicited manuscripts and 77% for proposed manuscripts in 2017. These statistics apply only to review articles; the acceptance rates and timelines to publication differ for other features.

Manuscripts that are not solicited or preapproved are rarely deemed acceptable. Common reasons include: the topic does not fit *AFP*'s desired curriculum; the topic has been covered

recently or is currently in production (hence, our request that prospective authors contact us before starting to write); or the format is not appropriate (e.g., original research reports, case reports on rarely encountered conditions, nonstandard review articles). For more detailed information, go to <https://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/authors/acceptance-rates.html>.

TABLE 1

AFP's Print, Website, Social Media, Podcast, and CME Statistics for 2017

Item	Benchmark	Approximate number
Print journal	Circulation (twice monthly)	182,000*
Online journal	Recipients of electronic table of contents (twice monthly)	100,000
	Unique visitors to website in 2017†	26,000,000
	Unique visitors to website per month†	2,400,000*
	Registered users in 2017†	1,400,000
	Website visits in 2017	38,000,000
	Page views in 2017	48,000,000
Podcast	Downloads per episode	17,000
	Total downloads per month	50,000
	Total downloads since November 2015	1,070,000
AFP Community Blog	Page views since August 2010	550,000
	Page views per month	9,000
Social media	Twitter followers	9,000
	Tweets since 2010	6,000
	Facebook followers	13,000
AFP videos	Views since 2010	130,000
	Number of videos	15
CME	Credits awarded in 2017	2,800,000
Publication timeline	Average days to publication	
	From submission to acceptance	186 (goal: 150)
	From acceptance to publication	253 (goal: 180)
	From submission to publication	439 (goal: 330)
Manuscript acceptance rates	Manuscripts submitted in 2017	
	Solicited manuscript (n = 68)‡	96%
	Approved proposed manuscript (n = 13)§	77%
	Unsolicited manuscript (no preapproval; n = 19)	11%

AFP = *American Family Physician*; CME = continuing medical education.

*—Information from reference 3.

†—Unique visitors and registered users are attributable to a unique browser or device.

‡—In 2017, there were 100 submissions that had a final decision (some are pending): 68 were solicited, 13 were proposals submitted after preapproval, and 19 were unsolicited and submitted without preapproval. About 90% of solicited manuscripts are actually submitted.

§—Only about 10% of proposed manuscripts are approved for submission. Of those, about 90% are actually submitted.

EBM Toolkit

AFP has a collection of EBM resources (<https://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/authors/ebm-toolkit.html>). It includes an EBM glossary; a list of *AFP*'s EBM Features and Departments; a description of our evidence-rating system, the Strength of Recommendation Taxonomy; articles and resources on EBM; and a relatively new addition, the *AFP* Journal Club Toolkit (<https://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/authors/ebm-toolkit/jc-toolkit.html>), which includes EBM learning points from this feature, which ran from 2007 to 2015.

We are proud of the reach and popularity of *AFP*, but are always looking for ways to make it better for our readers. Please e-mail your comments and suggestions to afpjournals@aafp.org.

Editor's Note: Dr. Siwek is Editor Emeritus and Dr. Sexton is Editor-in-Chief of *American Family Physician*.

Address correspondence to Sumi M. Sexton, MD, at makkars@georgetown.edu. Reprints are not available from the authors.

Author disclosure: No relevant financial affiliations.

References

1. Siwek J. *AFP*'s acceptance rates and timelines to publication. *Am Fam Physician*. 2016; 94(11):874-876.
2. Siwek J. *AFP*'s acceptance rates and timelines to publication. *Am Fam Physician*. <https://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/authors/acceptance-rates.html>. Accessed March 21, 2018.
3. BPA Worldwide. *American Family Physician* brand report and circulation statement. January 2018. <http://www.bpaww.com> [registration required]. Accessed April 11, 2018.
4. Kantar Media. Medical/Surgical June 2014 - December 2017 Readership Summary Table 101 Primary Care Office & Hospital. ■