

# Uptake of invited transfers to a new cascade journal

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## Objectives

1. To measure the uptake of invited transfers to a cascade journal in its first year.
2. Find out if more authors transfer when categories of decisions with a transfer option were expanded.
3. Find out if the wording in the invitation letter makes a difference in uptake of invited transfers.

## Purpose

To improve the uptake of invited transfers to a cascade journal in its first year.

## Background

*JNCI Cancer Spectrum* is a new open access journal that accepts new submissions as well as transfers from *JNCI: Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and began accepting submissions in April of 2017. When the *JNCI* Editor-in-Chief identified a manuscript to invite for transfer, the *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* Editor-in-Chief would be invited to review the manuscript and available critiques and decide whether or not the manuscript would be appropriate for *JNCI Cancer Spectrum*. Authors of manuscripts with a transfer invitation were given 90 days to accept the invitation. Reminders were sent approximately every 7 days until the invitation expired or the authors chose to transfer or not.

We evaluated the uptake of transfer invitations (as the number transferred/ those invited) during 3 phases:

1. Initially, while only manuscripts that had undergone peer review at *JNCI* and were rejected based on priority were invited for transfer to *JNCI Cancer Spectrum*, using the following wording in the invitation: "We encourage you to submit your revised manuscript to *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* (<https://academic.oup.com/jncics>). Your *JNCI* peer reviews can be included in the transfer, substantially reducing the time to decision."
2. When priority rejected manuscripts were also invited for transfer.
3. When wording was added to the decision letters indicating that the *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* Editors have expressed interest: "Your manuscript has been reviewed by the Editors at *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* who have expressed interest in your work. Although we cannot guarantee acceptance, we encourage you to consider submitting your manuscript to *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* (<https://academic.oup.com/jncics>). Should you choose to transfer your paper, the material will be transferred automatically."

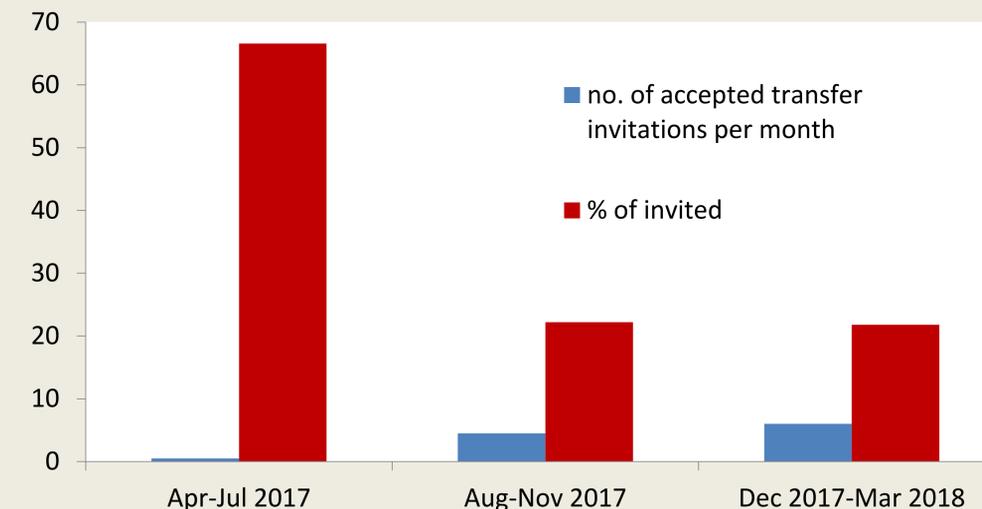
## Results

Table 1. Timeline of author acceptance of invited transfers from *JNCI* to *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* and changes to that process

	April-July 2017	August-November 2017*	December 2017-March 2018
No. of invitations	3	81	110
No. of accepted invitations	2	18 (4.5 per month)	24 (6.0 per month)
Percentage accepted	66.7	22.2	21.8
Transfer decision types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject with peer review (based on priority)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject with peer review (based on priority)</li> <li>• Priority reject without peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject with peer review (based on priority)</li> <li>• Priority reject without peer review</li> </ul>
Invitation letter	Original letter	Original letter	Added specific text about Editors' interest
Period to respond	90 days	90 days	90 days
Days to <i>JNCI</i> priority reject decisions, without vs with transfer	3.9 vs 4.1	4.8 vs 5.3*	6.4 vs 7.7

\*Priority reject was added to the transfer decisions in mid-August.

Figure 1. Uptake of transfer invitations by period



## Results

Table 2. Times to author decision

	Time to decision	Time to accept transfer invitation
Mean, days	16.9	5.1
Median (Range), days	14 (0 to 38)	2.5 (0 to 26)

Table 3. Overall number of invited and accepted transfers in the first year

Decision	No. invited	No. accepted	% accepted
Priority Reject	165	35	21.2
Reject with Review	29	9	31.0
Total	194	44	22.7

## Conclusions

1. The uptake of invited transfers to a cascade journal in its first year is low, less than 25%.
2. Adding manuscripts with priority reject decisions increased the number of invited transfers and number of acceptances.
3. Informing authors in the transfer invitation that the editors have expressed interest in their work did not increase uptake.