

Council of Science Editors
6.2 Attracting New Authors

Keepin' it in the family: Article transfers
Elizabeth Yepez, Senior Editor, Springer Nature

SPRINGER NATURE

Agenda

- 1 What is a transfer and why is it an author benefit?
- 2 Springer Nature and transfers
- 3 Three examples

What is a transfer and why is it an author benefit?

- A manuscript whose original target publication played a role in the journal to which it was next submitted and/or the way it was handled at its next target
- What's the difference?
- Why a benefit to the authors?

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- Key to remember: Transfers are about choice

SPRINGER NATURE

OUR MISSION: To help researchers, students, teachers, and professionals to achieve and discover more

- We help researchers bring their research to the world by publishing across the research spectrum – breadth, depth and impact.
- We make research discoverable and useful so it has the maximum impact within the research community and society at large.
- We help researchers, and the institutions and funders that support them, to identify the research data and trends most relevant to them and to put that information into context so they can be more effective, efficient, and successful.
- We break down the barriers between disciplines to make research more accessible and to accelerate discovery.



Transfers and Springer Nature

- Across Springer Nature, each year, more than 200,000 papers are rejected and then subsequently published elsewhere
 - In 2015, a quarter of all BMC rejections were published in a competitor journal
- We are an industry-leading publisher, and we want to offer industry leading transfer services
- GOAL: To help authors find the right home for their paper, to minimize the effort required to resubmit, and to leverage the breadth and depth of the extended Springer Nature portfolio as viable publication targets

Three examples...

Three Examples

- Source > child journal transfers

Three Examples

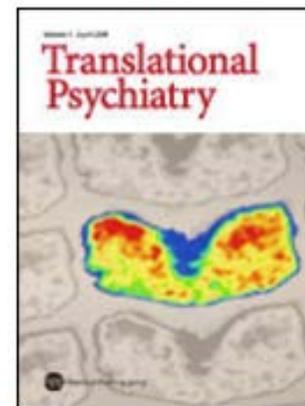
- Source > child journal transfers
- In-program transfers

Three Examples

- Source > child journal transfers
- In-program transfers
- Consortia/ field transfers

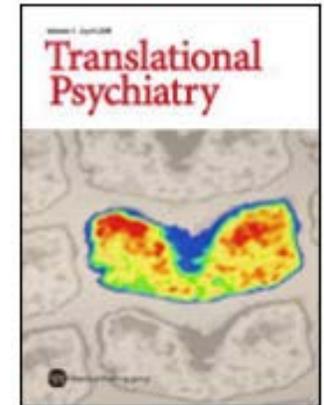
Example 1: Source > Child

- *Molecular Psychiatry* > *Translational Psychiatry*
- *Molecular Psychiatry*: Publishes research that elucidates the biological mechanisms underlying psychiatric disorders and their treatment.
 - *Translational Psychiatry*: Explores the translational pathway between treatments in neuroscience and conceptually novel treatment
 - When *Translational Psychiatry* was launched, *Molecular Psychiatry* had a 3% accept rate



Example 1: Source > Child

- Currently, *Translational Psychiatry* has a 5.538 IF; 63% reject rate; from launch, submissions have increased 226%
- Transfers are by recommendation of editor; author will receive a reject letter and can choose to resubmit to *Translational Psychiatry*
- This is separate to the normal reject letter
- Limitation: We do not track number of suggested transfers against action taken

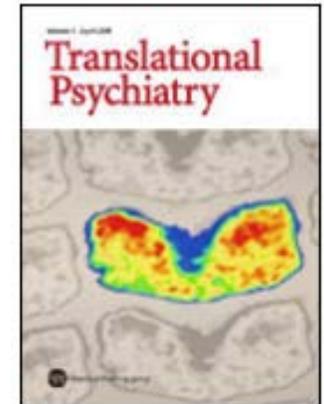


Example 1: Source > Child

Excerpt from sample letter:

Therefore, we regret to inform you that we cannot consider your article for publication in *Molecular Psychiatry*. We hope that you appreciate that less than one in ten submissions receives a priority high enough for publication, and that our decision was therefore based on editorial priorities, and not on the technical aspects of your work or the quality of your science.

However, as the editor of *Translational Psychiatry*, I feel that your article would be better suited within the scope of this publication. Though transferring your paper does not guarantee acceptance, please consider your article for *Translational Psychiatry*. In order for you to do that, we ask that you fully revise your paper as per the comments raised in the peer-review process. With the text of your revision, please include a cover letter with an itemized list of all changes made, or your rebuttal, in response to comments from review. Your revised submission to *Translational Psychiatry* would be evaluated editorially, without another round of external peer-review. When your revision is ready, please submit it, via the transfer link at the bottom of this email, to the *Translational Psychiatry* submission site, <http://mts-tp.nature.com/>.



Transfer link:

As a service to authors, Springer Nature provides authors with the ability to transfer a manuscript that one journal cannot offer to publish to another journal, without the author having to upload the manuscript data again. To transfer your manuscript to another NPG journal using this service, please click on {`$transfer_ms_link`}

nature.com manuscript transfer

Author automatically redirected from link in decision letter to new transfer landing page

No resubmitting
Less time reformatting

Your manuscript, files and author information are automatically transferred to the new journal.

You have control

Choose whether to transfer your submission as-is or make revisions first.

Faster decision

Whenever possible, we'll share editorial and reviewer comments.

[Learn more](#)

1

Select a journal

2

Select manuscript type

3

Review transfer

NMED-U2028
Unknown Title
Celeste Brown

Displaying 11 journals relevant to Nature Medicine
See all 09 journals that accept manuscript transfers.

| Journal | Impact factor | Acceptance rate | Time to publication |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EDITOR RECOMMENDED | | | |
| Cell Death & Disease | 5.177 | 51.5% | 4.1 weeks Initial submission to first decision |
| OPEN ACCESS | | | |
| Article Processing Charge: US\$3,000-3,200 Funding information | | | |
| Select | | | N/A Initial submission to final acceptance N/A Initial submission to online publication |
| Nature Communications | 10.742 | 15.8% | 2.6 weeks Initial submission to first decision |
| OPEN ACCESS | | | |
| Article Processing Charge: US\$5,200 Funding information | | | |
| Select | | | N/A Initial submission to final acceptance N/A Initial submission to online publication |
| Scientific Reports | 5.078 | 66.4% | 5.4 weeks Initial submission to first decision |
| OPEN ACCESS | | | |
| Article Processing Charge: US\$1,300 Funding information | | | |
| Select | | | N/A Initial submission to final acceptance N/A Initial submission to online publication |
| Please note: Manuscripts transferred to Scientific Reports may require reformatting. | | | |
| Nature Biotechnology | 39.08 | 10.4% | 3.0 weeks Initial submission to first decision |
| Subscription access only | | | |
| Select | | | N/A Initial submission to final acceptance N/A Initial submission to online publication |
| Human Genome Variation | N/A | 81.8% | 2.6 weeks |

Journal suggested by editor for transfer appears highlighted and at top of list

Ncomms suggested for all transfers from Nature branded journals

Scientific Reports suggested as option for all transfers

Subset of most relevant journals displayed (based on overlap of subject terms between journals, impact factor, and manuscript's subject term)

1

Select a journal

2

Select manuscript type

3

Review transfer

Review and confirm your transfer

Your manuscript

NMED-L00128

Unknown Title

Celeste Brown

Transfer to

Nature Communications (change)

Manuscript type

Article (change)**What would you like to do once it's transferred?**

- Modify my transferred manuscript before submitting it
- Submit my transferred manuscript without changes

Add a message to the editors (optional, but useful if you aren't revising your cover letter):

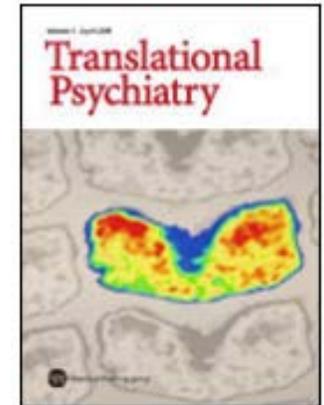
- I confirm that I understand Nature Communications is an open access journal that levies an article-processing charge (APC) per article accepted for publication. By submitting my article I agree to pay this charge in full if my article is accepted for publication. See article-processing charges for Nature Communications.

At Nature Publishing Group we offer an open access funding support service to make it easier for authors to discover and apply for APC funding. Find out more.

Transfer manuscript

Example 1: Source > Child

| Year | # Transfers from MP | % Total TP Submissions |
|------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 2012 | 81 | 40% |
| 2013 | 65 | 33% |
| 2014 | 70 | 25% |
| 2015 | 87 | 18% |
| 2016 | 147 | 22% |



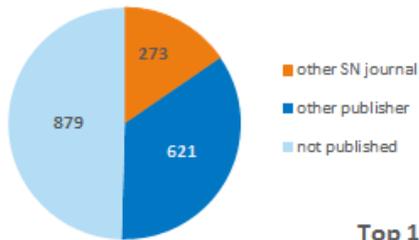
Example 2: In-program transfers (BMC)

- **2008:** BMC began referring manuscripts better suited to another journal, to other BMC titles
- **2013:** BMC introduced a feature in its submission system to enable more automated transfers and collaborated with other divisions to discuss how this could be expanded – in some cases, to non-BMC titles
- **2016:** A record: BMC counted a total of 15,803 transfer offers across the BMC Group, with 3,182 (55%) of those being accepted.
 - Ten of the 575 journals in the group contributed 50% of the transfer offers (a total of 7,775 papers). Our four flagship journals – Genome Biology, Genome Medicine, BMC Biology and BMC Medicine – made 3,600 transfer offers
 - Of the 3,182 transfer offers accepted, BMC Research Notes, BMC Cancer and BMC Genomics accepted the highest number of transfers.
- Question: How could this be expanded?

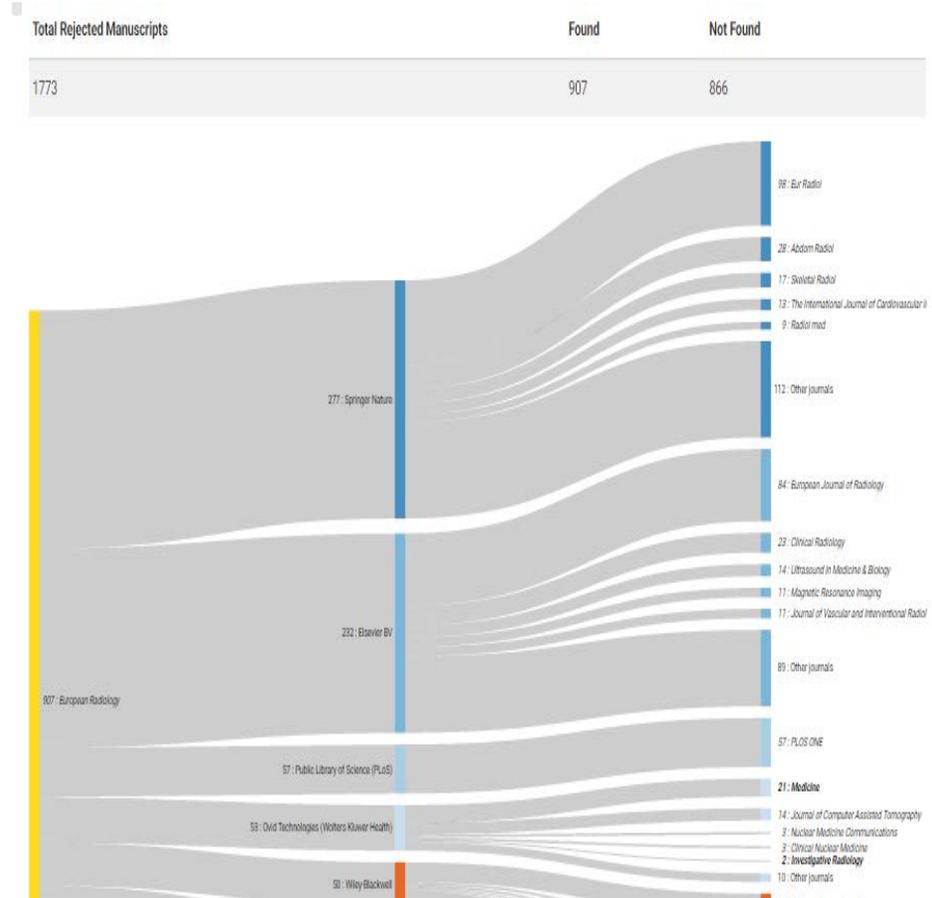
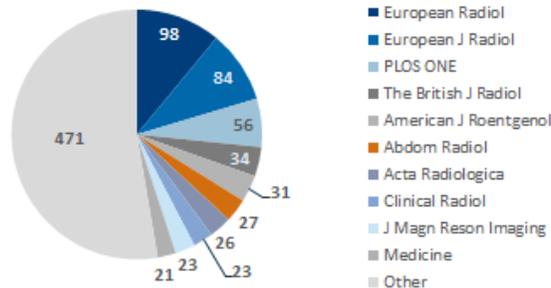
Example 2: In-program transfers (Springer Journals)

European Radiology Rejections 2015

Fate of 1773 Rejected Manuscripts (until 08.02.2017)



Top 10 journals that published rejects of 2015



Example 2: In-program transfers (Springer Journals)

Based on the approaches and experiences to date within Springer Nature, as well as an open mind with respect to technical possibilities, we defined three primary levers to increase transfers and help authors finding the next best journal to re-submit to.

Lever 1: # of manuscripts submitted to journals that are set up

of manuscripts rejected from journals that are set up

Lever 2: # rejections that are offered a transfer
(=transfer offers)

Lever 3: # of transfers
(=uptake by authors)

of transfers accepted
(=transferred manuscripts that are published)

Given

journals in portfolio

of manuscripts submitted

Legend

Something we can influence

Short-term given / fixed

Example 2: In-program transfers (Springer Journals)

<https://www.springer.com/gp/authors-editors/editors/the-springer-transfer-desk>

Test

Original Submission
* Ann Associate (Associate Editor)

Decision: No Decision

Details History E-mail

- No Decision
- Accept
- Minor revision
- Major revision
- Revise before peer review
- Reject and Transfer**
- Reject before peer review
- Reject after peer review and invite resubmission
- Reject after peer review
- R&T BMCT

If the decision is Rev ission.

Example 2: In-program transfers (Springer Journals)

1. You accept the offer to forward your manuscript to the Transfer Desk, using the link provided in the decision email from the previous journal.
2. The Transfer Desk will analyze your manuscript and propose one or more suitable journals, you then choose your preferred journal titles. You can also suggest additional journal titles yourself. If we need any additional information, our team will contact you directly before we send you the journal title(s).
3. The Transfer Desk will do a pre-submission inquiry to all of your journals-of-choice. This inquiry sends author details, the abstract and conclusion to the journals, and a link to the entire manuscript. This is not a submission: the pre-submission inquiry only checks if the potential receiving journal's editor is interested in receiving the manuscript. If the journal does not want to receive the transfer, the Transfer Desk will assist you with finding another journal.
4. The Transfer Desk sends you the journal comments, you pick your favorite journal for transfer.
5. The transfer is finalized and your manuscript is ready to be resubmitted. Please note that all journals are independently peer-reviewed and the editors may require additional reviews or revisions to the manuscript.

Please note: Your manuscript will not be transferred to another journal without your approval, at any time during the procedure you may decide to cancel the transfer process and resubmit yourself elsewhere. Additionally, a transfer offer does NOT guarantee publication. Manuscripts transferred from other journals will be assessed by additional academics against the editorial criteria of the new journal, and will be sent out for further review if previous reports are not available.

Donating journal

Manuscript is rejected and offered a transfer

- Editor's decision: Decline and transfer to Transfer Desk
- Recommendations can be provided in email, but not required

Transfer Service

Quality checks

- ✓ Plagiarism
- ✓ Ethics
- ✓ Language

Analysis

- Identify suitable journals
- Propose journals to author
- Author can choose preferred journal(s)

Pre-submission enquiry

- Ensure s receiving journal is interested in manuscript
- Feedback is shared with author

Receiving journal

Manuscript submitted to receiving journal

- After transfer regular editorial process can start

Example 2: In-program transfers (BMC)

- Next steps:
 - Most recent results of transfer desk
 - Analyze results from pilot study that integrated a single eJP journal, Scientific Reports, on the Transfer Portal (a portal which connects largely Editorial Manager journals)
 - Pilot ended April 11

Example 3: Consortia transfers (ex., Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium)



Nature Neuroscience
Neuropsychopharmacology
Molecular Psychiatry
Translational Psychiatry

Example 3: Consortia transfers (ex., Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium)



NPRC is an alliance of neuroscience journals that have agreed to accept manuscript reviews from other members of the Consortium. Its goals are to:

- Support efficient and thorough peer review of original research in neuroscience
- Speed the publication of research reports, and
- Reduce the burden on peer reviewers

Example 3: Consortia transfers (ex., Neuroscience Peer Review Consortium)



If accepted, “membership” entails:

- Forwarding all reviews to another journal in the Consortium upon the author’s request
- Configuring review forms to eliminate confidential comments to the editors; and
- Informing reviewers that their reviews may be forwarded to another Consortium journal, ask whether or not the reviewer’s name should be included with the review, and honor the reviewer’s preference

How the NPRC works: When MY JOURNAL receives a request to share our comments

From NN Ed Assistant: "It usually doesn't take them longer than a day or two to respond to me with this answer. In the off chance that it does take longer, in the interest of time, I generally email the review to the new journal anonymously and note that Reviewer #X hasn't yet given us permission to disclose their identity, but I would pass it along if/when they do."

Request comes in from author

Author always the one to request, not journal; they often cite other journal MS# in request

NN: Anywhere from once every six weeks to once a month

Journal reaches out to reviewers

Include comments (from all versions) in request

OK to share comments and ID w/ new journal?

OK to share comments and ID w/ new journal?

OK to share comments and ID w/ new journal?

Yes (>95%)

No (1-5%)

Send to main journal address as specified on NPRC webpage

Journal does not share if reviewer says no; will share blinded if unresponsive

How the NPRC works: When MY JOURNAL receives comments from

Important it's:

1. Formatted for the journal
2. Clear which journal to which it was previously submitted
3. Up to our journal to decide if we want to see a revision with changes highlighted and rebuttal letter

Trigger: Author notes in cover letter plans to request previous reviewer comments

Journal evaluates and considers comments

Original journal receives request from author; sends comments directly to our journal

Needs another review

Decision can be made

Send to new reviewers

Send to original reviewers

Send to one new and one original (NN)

Accept without review

Proceed as normal submission

Up to journal as to whether to send original comments to new reviewers

Example 3: Consortia transfers (Another example)

- In 2013, BMC announced that researchers finding themselves rejected from BMC would be offered the opportunity to take their referee reports with them if they wished to continue publication with such journals as eLife and all journals published by PLOS and EMBO.
- Referee names can be included, if referees agree
- A note from eLife editorial about this “portable peer review”: “eLife offers authors efficient, constructive reviews from experts in the field – with the option to share reviews confidentially with another journal if their work isn’t accepted.”
 - A note from BMC blog post announcement: “How smooth a passage is transfer from eLife likely to be? Authors offered the transfer option will be warned that the recipient journal may seek further advice, and it’s impossible to say how often this is likely to happen.”

Thank you!

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