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Global research communication: Where do we fit in?

Pressure to publish is spreading globally faster than knowledge and acceptance of norms for editors and authors on preserving the integrity of knowledge production and dissemination. The result is an increase in behaviors that threaten to undermine trust in what journals publish.

Calls for more training for editors and reviewers are constant, but the global need for training is growing faster than the resources to meet this need. Research publishing skills can be hard to acquire in settings with limited access to education and training. AuthorAID in the Eastern Mediterranean (AAEM) was established in 2009 to help fill the gap in access to education and training. Farhad and Karen advise editors on how to strengthen journal practices and policies. The website (no registration required) provides further advice and links to training and professional development resources.

AAEM also provides free submission and post-peer-review manuscript editing. The aim is to help authors prepare manuscripts that will meet editors’ expectations for clear communication and compliance with the journal’s instructions. Farhad helps with administrative and logistic aspects of AAEM and contributes to training of editors and authors.

Karen helps authors interpret journal policies, editors’ letters and peer reviewers’ comments so that researchers can manage manuscript preparation and revision more efficiently and in a way that satisfies editors’ and reviewers’ expectations.

Manuscript editing for authors

Total manuscripts edited 2009 to 2015 = 394
Published = 292
Published in international journals = 245
Published in national journals = 46

Outcomes

1. Education and training for editors and authors
2. Individual advice for editors and authors
3. Insights for editors on how authors deal with journal instructions and policies
4. Insights for authors on what editors consider good publication ethics, and good writing and reporting

International activity

AAEM has participated in the Conferences on Medical Journals in the Eastern Mediterranean Region in 2008 (EMMJ4, Bahrain), 2010 (EMMJ5, Karachi) and 2015 (EMMJ6, Shiraz) and has provided training for editors and researchers in Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Qatar, Pakistan and United Arab Emirates. It is also a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Farhad is President of EMAME, Editor of Middle East Journal of Cancer, and a clinical trial monitor for WHO. He is also a member of WAME and the Iranian Commission of Medical Journals.

Karen is a member of WAME, EMAME, EASE (European Association of Science Editors) and MET (Mediteranean Editors and Translators).

What do volunteer AAEM editors say?

Pamela Waltl, Freelance Medical Writer, Klagenfurt, Austria

I donate my time to AAEM as I want to help researchers in the Eastern Mediterranean region to get their medical papers published so that they can provide information and data to a wider audience. Non-native English speakers are at a disadvantage in the world of scientific publishing, and I hope to play a very small part in balancing this out. It gives me insight into the fields of research in Iran and a link to a different culture.

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Main supporters for participation in professional development events for editors: Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME) and Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. Manuscript editing: All editing for researchers is provided on a volunteer, pro bono basis by a group of professional editors, researchers or translators experienced in working with researchers whose first language is not English.

Questions

Thanks very much for checking out AAEM. We’ll be glad to hear from you any time.

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Publications