

PREFACE

Majority of the editors and reviewers of medical journals in the less developed countries learn the art of editing through on the job training usually on a part time basis, amongst multifarious other responsibilities. There is always a need to formalize their training through exposure to the formal workshops and conferences.

Realization of this need, made us consider the organization of an international conference in Pakistan on the topic of Medical Editing, to promote the cause of medical writing and medical editing in the country. The initial suggestion to have such a conference came from Maj.Gen. M. Aslam, Principal of Army Medical College, Rawalpindi and also the Managing Editor, Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Journal. During our preliminary discussions in Karachi, we agreed that the idea is certainly feasible and very conducive to achieve the objectives of education of the editors and reviewers.

We also agreed on the division of labour amongst ourselves. The crucial issue of funds was taken up by one of us (Maj.Gen.MA) for approaching Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and National University of Science and Technology (NUST) for funding while MHJ and SAJ took care of the other logistics including selection and invitations to our editor colleagues from friendly countries. These invitations had to be restricted due to the limitations of funds. Dr. M.B. Rokni, Dr. Forrokh Habzade, Dr. Farhad Hadjani and Dr. Arash Etemadi all from Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Daa Rizk from UAE, John Cathy from Saudi Arabia finally agreed to come. We were also able to get the blessings of World Health Organization, EMRO region and Ms. Jane Nicholson, Editor WHO EMRO was able to participate on their behalf.

We constituted an advisory committee of editors at Karachi and another at Army Medical College Rawalpindi, the venue of the conference. The conference was planned to be a joint effort of Army Medical College and Pakistan Medical Journalists Association and supported by HEC and NUST. Through a series of consultative meetings and online consultations we were able to put together a scientific programme comprising of current issues related to editing of the journals. Nationally, the announcement of the

conference was able to generate lot of interest and it attracted over 150 editors, associate editors, academics and faculty members and peer reviewers as participants. Attendance through out the sessions was encouraging and enough time was available for interactive discussions.

We have always taken such academic activities as a learning experience and we did learn by organizing this conference which was the first such activity held in Pakistan. The conference, not only provided us an opportunity to assess our strengths but more importantly our weaknesses and insight into the ways to rectify them. This experience will prove to be of immense value since in the near future, Pakistan is to host the EMAME conference which is expected to be much bigger an event.

We have also learnt first hand the value of team work to organize a conference of this nature. While we had the luxury of advice and help from colleagues in Karachi, the team at Army Medical College lead by Maj.Gen. MA, went out of their way to extend all possible help and assistance which played a vital role in the success of the conference. We whole-heartedly acknowledge the team's contribution to the success. This also showed that the combined efforts between civil and army set up can also work wonders in achieving the goal provided there is a will for accommodating each other's view point. Dr. Fatema Jawad, Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Pakistan Medical Association and a member of advisory committee at Karachi deserves special mention for her contributions. She was a great source of strength for us. At Army Medical College, Brig. Azhar Mubarik deserves all the credit for his immense support. From the Pharma industry, M/s PharmEvo extended valuable assistance by providing conference mementoes for the speakers and the chairpersons.

Publication of the proceedings after an event is always an onerous task. MHJ and SAJ took up the challenge to compile and edit the proceedings. To solicit and finally obtain the manuscripts from all the national and foreign speakers is a hard task. However we have tried to do it with a smiling face. The result is now in your hands. We hope it will serve as a source of reminder for those who were present in the conference and also be useful for those who were unable to attend this first ever conference on the topic of medical editing in Pakistan.

As a follow up exercise, we have planned a series of hands-on workshops on Medical Editing in all the major cities and institutions in the country, during the course of next year or so. We expect the cooperation and

collaboration from all the editors of medical and dental journals, Pakistan Medical Research Council (PMRC), College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP), Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC), Pakistan Council of Science and Technology besides medical institutions and universities in Pakistan.

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October 15, 2007

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