

Publishing Relevant Health Research

Many a clinical or a management decision recommended to our health care providers rely on information based on another country's experience. This may result in inappropriate care or even harmful interventions. The ACTA is a publication that endeavors to help us provide data from Filipino cohorts to inform our local practice. The articles submitted to the ACTA are not only intended to demonstrate academic prowess, nor merely a means to fulfill criteria for tenure or promotion. The ACTA can provide a platform for our scientists and researchers to share their work providing a foundation for the practice of health personnel from the Philippines.

All too often we make guidelines based on "international studies." It is not uncommon to note disclaimers in local clinical algorithms such as "There are no cost-effectiveness studies in the Philippines" or "No studies retrieved on Filipino patients' values, preferences and acceptability."¹ In classrooms of health schools nationwide, students report the recommendations of textbooks, description of disease, diagnostic strategies, and treatment protocols from recommendations based on population data not our own.

We need more local reports, we need more local data, we need to utilize our own methodologically collected experience to construct practice recommendations. Thus, we should endeavor to publish what is relevant to our context.

Relevance does not only mean high tech. Low-cost simple interventions developed in our setting as a low- and middle-income country are effective in improving outcomes. This was shown in a paper about Kangaroo Mother Care published in our journal.²

Relevance does not only mean publishing recently collected data. Longitudinal studies analyzing trends may include data obtained over the usual three- to five-year limitations set by some journals.³ Research on foundational or fundamental subjects, or those who deal with rare, niche, or seminal topics, may still be considered publishable, and hence, *relevant*, despite the *age* of the work. A study on developmental outcomes is an example of relevant publication despite the age of the data.⁴

Relevance does not only mean large scale nor expensive. Small scale pilot and feasibility studies test methodological design to prevent future waste when eventually conducting large scale clinical trials. This was seen in a paper on gout published by a local team.⁵ Without such information, missteps in future trials will not be prevented.⁶

We aim to provide information that is useful and essential to our nation and inclusive of the voices and findings of scientists from this part of the world. This is what the ACTA can provide as the National Health Science Journal — the publication of nationally relevant research.

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