

A Vision to Globalize the ACTA

Global visibility is our vision for the *Acta Medica Philippina*, now on its 87th year. From its original incarnation as the official medical journal of the University of the Philippines College of Medicine and the College of Public Health in 1939, its status was elevated to a National Health Science Journal by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development in 2009.¹ Listing and relisting by many indices followed, including Scopus and PubMed (restored in 2024 after being delisted in 1967).

Globalizing, however, demands more than ambition. There should be a strong commitment to editorial integrity. This requires an infrastructure supporting quality research and an adherence to standards set by international arbiters such as the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

The ICMJE was initially established to set formatting standards across medical journals, but subsequently went into recommendations on the designation of authorship.² Over time, it has since expanded its recommendations to editorial tasks and determination of conflicts of interest among peer reviewers. The COPE, on the other hand, provides support for editors on how to adjudicate issues related to authorship and other ethical issues that may arise in the publication of medical journal articles.³ Both these institutions create a climate of integrity, encourage rigorous evaluation of submitted manuscripts, and uphold a yardstick against which editorial conduct is measured. That conduct is important for a medical journal as it must withstand international scrutiny. Visibility carries accountability on a bigger stage.

Any journal stepping into this stage, this greater limelight, should be able to exhibit a well-articulated peer review framework, a reliable workflow that shepherds with efficiency the submission-to-publication pathway. This is the minimum expectation of a global audience, an editorial discipline customary in international circles.

Already we are attracting interest in this arena, with submissions not only throughout the regions in the Philippines (“Prevalence of Hearing Problems among School-aged Children Enrolled in Special Education in Selected Public Schools in Ilocos Norte” and “Status of Pediatric Research in the Zamboanga Peninsula, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi Provinces: Promoters and Challenges”), but also from other countries like Germany (“Prescription Errors in a Mental Healthcare Facility: A Content Analysis of Brief Interviews”) seen in this issue, and Indonesia (“The Relationship between Effort-Reward and Work-Life Imbalances on Job Burnout among Emergency Ward Nurses in an Indonesian Public Hospital”).⁴

We thus aim, as a journal, to build trust—systematically, consistently, publicly. We endeavor to reflect international best practice in our pages, through our policies, processes, and principles. By adopting benchmarks that institutions such as ICMJE and COPE have espoused, we hope that soon we will be ready for our close-up.

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