

## Review process and responsibilities of reviewers

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Review is an important step in any scientific process. It is considered as a standardized way for the publication of authentic scientific information. To be a good author it is mandatory to become a part in reviewing process. The learning of medical writing can be augmented through reviewing process. Although it is a volunteer duty, it certainly improves and sharpens the reviewing skill which is a prime step towards bright medical career. It helps to get state of the art knowledge and better understanding of scientific writing. The peer review process can lead to better and more transparent reporting of clinical science as well as to furnish an impartial and unprejudiced critical assessment.

When an article is received for processing in a journal, the editorial review used to be the first step. The editor completes this job in 2-3 weeks' time. After that editors will send the manuscript to two or more reviewers for the review. The reviewers for a specific article are selected on the basis of their proficiency and availability. <sup>1</sup>Upon acceptance of review invitation, full text manuscript files can be shared via online journal management systems. The reviewers are requested to forward their comments within 2 to 4 weeks of their review acceptance date. Salient feature for reviewing includes complete reading of a manuscript to have an overall idea of the paper. This should be followed by critical appraisal, focusing on the following key points:<sup>1,2</sup>

A Brief review of the background and introduction of the manuscript is done. It must have a clear rationale, along with mentioning of clear objectives at the end. Relevant articles in that topic should be cited. The second step is to focus on methodology. The population studied must be clearly identified and characterized. Methodology must include all the information like ethical review, study design and duration, collection and generation of data, sampling technique and calculations, inclusion and exclusion criteria. The statistics should be clear and well described. The details for the specific software and statistical tests must be clarified. If needed, statistical review can be done by taking help from statistician. The clinical ethics has a pivotal role, as it includes interventions on human tissues and cells. Therefore study must be approved by ethical board of concerned institution. The results section should be brief, supported by graphs, figures and tables, justifying the claims. Next in sequence comes the discussion write up. It should include the interpretation and description of the results and comparison with national and international literature. The reason for variation in comparative findings must be justified to secure the results. The conclusion should directly reflect the data and results. It must be brief and crisp. The conclusion should be in line with the title and objectives. Furthermore, it must be incorporated in abstract and at the end of manuscript. A vigilant gaze is required for references i.e. citation order, appropriate number based upon type of manuscript and their specific citation style. A manuscript should be screened for the evidence of plagiarism<sup>1,2</sup>.

For a good reviewing process, a supporting approach should be opted to facilitate authors for correcting their mistakes, not to discourage them. The aim should be to improve the standard of their medical write up and hence their publication. Even having good impact of study for relevant field, if it is vaguely written, beyond the extent of corrections, the reviewer has the right to reject it. Confidentiality should be kept to ensure ethics in medical journalism.

The components for reviewing a manuscript should focus for its originality, structuring based upon international committee for medical journal editors (ICMJE) and ethical board approval. For originality a reviewer should focus on the novelty, conception and any addition in the current knowledge. Reviewers while reviewing should carefully see the structuring of manuscript in light of Journal's recommended guidelines. Subsequently reviewer's checklist must be verified for each section i.e. title, abstract, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, recommendations and references. A comprehensive title should clearly describe the crux of manuscript. While structured abstract should include objective, study design, place, duration, methodology, results, conclusion and key words. Ethical review board certificate should be amongst compulsory requirement to justify each and every aspect for ethical considerations. The comments for the Authors should provide the analytical, unbiased and reliable review. It must be accommodating and to the point, providing specific directions for changing the manuscript. The annotations for refinement must be courteous and encouraging. Make it uncomplicated for the author and editor to connect the goal of reporting by corroborating a specified page number, paragraph and line.

The Reviewers responsibilities toward editors should be to notify the editor promptly, if not possible to review and may suggest the names of substitute reviewers. One must be alert regarding any likely conflict of interest. A thoughtful, fair, constructive and informative critique should be provided to easily comprehend for final publication decision. All must be on scientific merit, originality and scope of the work, indicating the ways for its perfection. Any sort of ethical issues if identified should be immediately communicated i.e. breach of accepted criterion of ethics. Last not the least; direct contact with author should be avoided<sup>3</sup>. Paramount ethical boundaries of reviewers should be to ensure confidentiality, constructive critique, competence, impartiality and integrity, disclosure of conflict of interest, timeliness and responsiveness<sup>2</sup>.

Reviewers must try to abide by falsification of particular aspect in a review, unnecessarily holding the review process, unjust condemning the project, violating the secrecy of the work. Making use of privileged knowledge to carry off professional benefit, taking concepts from the paper currently reviewing and individual scolding of the authors, all should be avoided<sup>4-6</sup>.

To conclude review process of medical journals is a trustworthy, prerogative and an endowment to the community and elementary development of the standard of patient management.

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