



## EDITORIAL POLICIES AND GOOD PRACTICES IN EDITING THE JOURNAL 'INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL JOURNAL – MEDICUS'

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### Abstract

Ten years ago the Association of Albanian Physicians in Macedonia undertook the very brave step of publishing a scientific medical journal, *Medicus*, as a platform for publishing biomedical research papers. Medical journal MEDICUS is an international peer-review journal of biomedical science. The first issue was published in 2004, starting with publishing two issues per year. From 2013, the journal delivered three issues per year, namely in January, May and September. Editor-in-Chief of the journal is Prof. Dr. Aziz Pollozhani. This year marks the tenth anniversary since publication of the first issue of *Medicus*, a fact that makes us proud and happy.

The journal has its own official website ([www.imjm.mk](http://www.imjm.mk)), where papers can be submitted and published in electronic form. In addition, the journal also comes out in print form to be distributed mainly in the region.

Taking into account the specific socio-cultural characteristics of the region, the journal attempts to promote research activities in the region, while seeking to serve as an educational tool to promote scientific work in such a setting. As a result, *Medicus* accepts manuscripts for publication in English, Albanian and Macedonian, with a mandatory abstract in English for all papers.

The journal *Medicus* represents a solid platform of biomedical sciences that will serve to advance scientific research and promote professional achievements in medicine.

**Key words:** International Medical Journal "Medicus", peer-reviewed journal, socio-cultural conditions, Republic of Macedonia.

### Introduction

Research and publications of scientific papers has a long tradition in our country. This has been and remains one of the basic foundations of competent professional work and progress of scientific knowledge for the benefit of human health. In our specific conditions and environment, with scarce resources for funding scientific projects and with our modest experience, publishing is not an easy job. The Albanian Association of Medical Doctors in Macedonia (AAMDMD) undertook a very courageous step ten years ago in establishing the scientific medical journal *Medicus* as a platform for publishing scientific papers in the field of biomedicine with the aim of promoting scientific research.

### Establishment and initial development of the journal

The International Medical Journal *MEDICUS* (IMJM) is an international peer-review journal of biomedical sciences [1]. It is the official journal of the Association of Albanian Medical Doctors from Macedonia. The first issue was published in 2004, starting by publishing two issues per year. Since 2013 the journal has had three editions per year, namely in January, May and September. Up to the present, IX Volumes have been published, with a total of 693 papers written on 3,913 pages, covering a wide area of biomedical research. Beside predominant original papers and review articles, some case reports and short communications have been published.

In addition, in some issues overviews of recent international or national medical scientific meetings or symposia have been included. I would like to emphasize that this year marks the 10th

anniversary of the first issue, and the continuity of publishing IMJM, which makes us very proud and happy (Fig. 1)



Figure 1 – Continuity in publishing of the Int Med J MEDICUS, starting from 2004

The Advisory Board and the international Editorial Board members are a highly enthusiastic and dedicated team of medical doctors and scientists, coming from 8 countries besides R. Macedonia. The first Editor-in-Chief was Prof. Dr. Remzi Izeiri, serving from 2004–2011. Since 2012, the position Editor-in-Chief has been assumed by Prof Dr. Azis Pollozhani. We

are most honoured to have Mr Ferid Murad, the Nobel Prize Winner in Medicine and Physiology, as a Honorary Member of our Editorial Board. The Journal has an official web-site ([www.imjm.mk](http://www.imjm.mk)) where abstracts/papers can be submitted and published in electronic form (Fig 2). Additionally, the Journal is also printed in hard copy and distributed regionally.



Figure 2 – Official web-site of International Medical Journal MEDICUS ([www.imjm.mk](http://www.imjm.mk))

Taking into consideration the specific sociocultural setting of the region, the Journal has attempted to affirm scientific activities in the region while serving as an educational tool for the promotion of scientific work in such a setting. Consequently, IMJM has adapted a Language Policy which dictates that the respective papers are published in English, Albanian and Macedonian. It should be emphasized that all papers written in either Macedonian or Albanian should have translated abstracts in English, too.

In order to meet the objective needs, to increase the quality level and international dimension and visibility of the journal, the Board decided, two years ago, that in parallel with strengthening criteria for publication and advancement of the quality of the papers in English as the predominant language for publication, to continue with publications in Albanian and Macedonian, even if for a certain period of time, thus providing a gradual shift [2].

### Challenges and perspectives

The challenges that the Journal has encountered thus far have been considerable. While remaining faithful to the educational purpose, the Editorial Board intends to undertake activities to increase and strengthen the capacity of doctors and other medical staff training on how to publish papers effectively and taking into account the required international standards. In addition, the Board is looking for new approaches to strengthen the quality and visibility, with the vision of being included in the Scopus and PubMed Databases and, later on, to submit application to Thomson Reuters for evaluation and Journal's Impact Factor (IF). The main strategy to reach this goal is to establish the English language as the sole official language of the journal *Medicus*. The Board is also constantly concerned with ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Journal, especially in providing financing for sustainable publications, first of all, for print costs coverage. To prepare for these challenges, the Board plans to organize seminars, respectively workshops, in order to strengthen the capacity of the potential authors to prepare manuscripts of higher quality. It also

aims to strengthen the cooperation between associations and similar bodies for an exchange of experiences and to seek opportunities for cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

In this context, the Editorial Board of the IMJ *Medicus* organized an International Conference on "Scientific writing and editing in biomedicine", from 13–14 December 2013, in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, with more than 80 participants and well known experts in this field from the region as invited lecturers and honourable guests: Professor Izet Masic, Editor-in-Chief and publisher from Sarajevo, Professor Genc Sulcebe and Alfred Priftanji from Tirana, Albania, Professor Koco Cakalarovski, President of the Doctors' Chamber of Macedonia, Professor Nikola Jankulovski, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Professor Naser Ramadani from the University of Prishtina, and others. In addition, the Board plans to organize topic-based meetings with scientists and renowned experts in the Diaspora to exchange experiences with them for the most recent research in the field of medical sciences in order to foster participation in joint projects.

### Conclusion

Publishing and editing a scientific paper is not easy. In our specific conditions and environment and with some modest experience it becomes even harder. With dedication and team work we believe that IMJM will be able to achieve its aims. It will be a solid platform of biomedical sciences and it will serve towards promoting scientific research and the affirmation of professional achievements in medicine.

### REFERENCES

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