



The Painstaking Job of Making Editorial Decisions for Biomedical Journals

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As a biomedical journal, one of the biggest challenges for the Editorial Board of *Annals of Hepatology* is to reduce the review time of the contributor's manuscript after submission, as well as the production process time between acceptance and final publication. Our peer-review process includes a first decision of the manuscript by the editorial committee (editor-in-chief and co-editors) assigning reviewers if considered suitable for publication and monitoring the peer-reviewer-author communication until the paper is accepted or rejected. The second stage corresponds to the publishing process to include the article in the nearest upcoming issue of the journal.

For the first stage, the editorial committee of *Annals of Hepatology* has proposed that under ideal circumstances the review time take no longer than 30 days. However, in this stage, manuscripts may have decisions that require major revision, and this process may extend the review time to two or three months in some journals, while in others it may be more than six months. Subsequently, the second stage of the process depends on the editorial platforms that support the publishing process of the manuscript until its final publication. This last stage, with a prestigious editorial, is usually about a month.

Along with the goal of publishing the best research and reducing the review and publication time, any medical journal with an international prestige aims to achieve a decent impact factor to respond to its readers.¹ *Annals of Hepatology*, the official organ of ALEH, the CASL, and the AMH is currently the best journal in Latin America that has positioned itself in the field of Hepatology and Gastroenterology. During its first period of existence, *Annals of Hepatology* made progress by publishing medical research submitted by the Spanish-speaking Latin American medical organizations in a language other than the mother tongue. This process had also been faced by other medical societies and biomedical journals in the Asian countries

such as Japan, where the first obstacle was to overcome the lack of ability in academic writing in the English language in non-native English speakers.

Given this scenario and despite the effort made by the editorial team in the recent months to notably reduce the review time, we are delayed almost a year in the publication of a considerable number of manuscripts that had been accepted by the previous editorial board. The first resolution to this situation was to place the articles on the website (in press) so that readers could view them. Instead, in this number, we decided to publish the remaining batch of delayed articles. We are entirely aware that the inclusion of the above-average number of articles published bimonthly may negatively affect the impact factor of *Annals of Hepatology*. We assume this risk, and we will be much obliged with the readers of the journal for understanding this situation. On the other hand, we hope that the result of this painstaking decision will create new expectations among our collaborators. Our ultimate wish is to improve the review time of the manuscripts and achieve a substantial improvement in the quality and timing of the production process; all in benefit of *Annals of Hepatology's* collaborators.

REFERENCE

1. Garmel GM. Reviewing manuscripts for biomedical journals. *Perm J* 2010; 14: 32-40.

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