

Sudanese Journal of Public Health: A New Milestone in Health Arena

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The role of scientific journals in disseminating knowledge and science is well known. Journals are the vehicles through which we communicate our research findings for purposes of enriching knowledge, sharing experience and achieving academic promotion.

Medical journals are present in huge numbers worldwide; nevertheless their distribution is greatly biased towards developed countries. International services such as Medline typically index some 3000-4000 journals, 95% of which come from the developed world [1].

The under-representation of developing countries medical journals coupled with the difficult access to "high-brow" international journals in our countries has often resulted in poor utilization of research (especially relevant local research) in the improvement of population health [2]. Thus, the WHO has called for strengthening medical journals in developing countries to promote research findings for the benefit of policy making and improvement of health interventions [3].

A public health journal is not recorded in the history of medical publications in Sudan [4]. To day, the need for such journal is indisputable. The major health problems in the country revolve around public health issues, being in the aspect of disease control or in the sphere of health policy, management and planning.

Informed by this situation and triggered by the two conferences on medical journalism organized through support of WHO/EMRO in Cairo 2003 and Riyadh 2004, we introduce our journal-the Sudanese Journal of Public Health (SJPH) - as a new contribution to promote health.

Our vision is to see health research getting into policy and practice and our mission is to be a leading journal in facilitating this end through publication and dissemination of public health research.

The main objectives of the SJPH are

1. To inculcate a culture of research among health professionals.
2. To make available the evidence needed to inform health policy and decision-making in the health sector of the country.
3. To equip health professionals with the contemporary knowledge and enable them to exchange their findings and views locally and internationally.
4. To provide researchers and health personnel with a platform for publishing in the spirit of academic and career promotion.

The SJPH strategies to achieve its objectives will not stop in making research visible through publishing, but they will extend to equip researchers and health practitioners with necessary skills in research and scientific writing. The SJPH is also going to work, together with other journals to promote medical journalism in the country and the whole region.

Sudanese Journal of Public Health (SJPH) has been thoroughly prepared for. A group of enthusiastic community physicians has been working seriously to prepare for the introduction and sustainability of the journal.

Warm welcomes and backing is being received from health authorities and institutions in the country. Regionally and internationally, SJPH editor is a founding member of the Eastern

Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME) and recently gained membership to the Forum for African Medical Editors (FAME) and the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME). Technical support from all these associations is expected to contribute to improving quality and visibility of the SJPH. Following on these regional and international relations, plans are now being prepared to create a website for the journal and to gain access to regional and international indexing services, as soon as possible. We invite all health professionals to publish in our journal which will not be limited to public health professionals. We view public health in its widest sense which, encompasses the work of clinicians, other health professionals and even professionals outside the remit of health sector. We hope that this issue of SJPH is up to the expectations and we promise to continue publishing on quarterly basis.

Finally, I welcome you all to the first issue of the SJPH!!

References

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