

A FOREWORD FROM THE EDITOR

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of South East Asia Journal of Medical Sciences (SEJMS), a peer-refereed journal in medical and allied sciences of a new kind, which will be published quarterly. The appearance of the first issue of the SEJMS is the first step for enhancing communication and collaboration between medical scientists and researchers of South East Asia region and rest of the world.

This journal is aimed to bridge different areas of biomedical and clinical sciences and other closely allied areas including medical education and public health. The journal is aimed not to dedicate to a topic or an intersection of topics but to fill the gap between different areas of above-mentioned field and encourage more and more researchers of worldwide to engage in research and publish/disseminate their research findings.

South East Asia Journal of Medical Sciences is an open access journal. There are manifold advantages of online publishing of a journal and unique in nature as well. Online publishing, unlike traditional hardcopy publishing, by virtue of fascinating progress in information technology, is faster and far less expensive. Easy access and storage of online journals and superior accommodation of images are other advantages. There are a variety of definitions of 'open access', however, one evolved through the Budapest Open Access Initiative is the widely accepted one:¹

'The literature that should be freely accessible online is that which scholars give to the world without expectation of payment. Primarily, this category encompasses their peer-reviewed journal articles By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.'

Research in biomedical sciences in South East Asia region hasn't received same attention like developed

countries and researchers in the region face a number of constraints like lack of funds, information poverty, leadership crisis, cultural conservatism, lack of training in research methodology, problems of publication of research finding in high-impact 'western' journals etc.² Research culture in the region is growing and thousands of researchers are now involved in quality research and struggling to publish their findings in well-known journals for wider dissemination. It was noted that there is an under-representation of biomedical research publications from Asia and other developing countries in the top-ranked journals.^{2,3} A research conducted by Majumder *et al.*⁴ highlighted the 'publication poverty culture' in the region – the number of PubMed-listed papers published by the SAARC countries from 1985-2009 was 1.1% of the total papers indexed by PubMed in the same period. One of the crucial reasons is the rising publication processing fees in most of the international journals. Researchers have no options to publish their articles in local/regional journals. This fact may have a negative impact on the standard of growing research culture and would isolate them from world community of medical scientists. Moreover, the libraries of many academic institutes are also struggling due to financial reason to subscribe journals which are much needed for teaching-learning and research purpose.⁵

This scholarly open access journal aims to contribute to the advancement of medical sciences through scientific discoveries and by providing free access to the research information. The journal also aiming that through its open access system the published works reach to the medical practitioners and scientific community immediately after publication, thus provide higher citations for the authors.

Articles of SEJMS are subjected standard indexing databases like Index Copernicus, Directory of Open Access Journals, and Google Scholar. In due course of time we are expecting SEJMS to be indexed in PubMed and other well-renowned indexing services. Articles published in SEJMS are archived and thus provide unrestricted utilization and requisition of the scientific information. The inaugural issue reflects the face of the journal and sets the stage for subsequent issues, which will publish experimental, theoretical, and computational research papers. SEJMS encourages and invites high quality articles from the international medical research workers to accomplish our mission



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and we aim for the journal to stand for the international quality of publications. On the occasion of this journal inauguration, I am greatly indebted to many people who created the opportunity for the journal to be born and who made it happen, specially the publisher. My special thanks to the members of the editorial Board, who showed their interest in spite of their busy academic and research commitments. I am quite confident that SEJMS will be able to contribute in the field of biomedical sciences and will help to create a research environment and culture in the region to generate evidence-based which will ultimately help to formulate health policies, re-orient health professional education and alleviate diseases and poverty.

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