

Editorial



Advancing toward quality, collaboration, and public access

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OPEN ACCESS

Received: Aug 29, 2016

Accepted: Aug 29, 2016

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This August I had the opportunity to discuss scientific publication policy with my colleagues in the Asia Pacific region and World Health Organization (WHO) at the annual convention of the Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors (APAME) held in Bangkok, Thailand. APAME is an Asia Pacific-centered nongovernmental, nonpartisan and nonprofit organization under a mission to promote and advance journalism in medicine in the region through active interactions among scholars to achieve the greatest exchange of information possible. The WHO regional offices in charge of the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus (WPRIM) and the Index Medicus of the South East Asia Region (IMSEAR) also work very closely with the organization.

With the exponential growth of medical knowledge, the significance of pinpointing accurate and up-to-date information to keep the momentum going cannot be stressed enough. What is crucial in the current stage is more collaborative work among the best publishers, which will contribute tremendously to effective global communication and increase in publication quality. When we have made headway among ourselves, it will be time to shift our focus to making public access to notable scientific findings more effortless in order to close the gap between researchers' academic knowledge and the clinical expertise of healthcare personnel.

With that said, the APAME 2016 program was an experience-sharing event for medical journal editors, reviewers, editorial staff, publishers, and librarians that aimed to address the various programs promoting better collaboration and facilitating communication among medical journal editors for better editorial standards and professionalism in medical editing. Dr. Wonchat Subhachaturas opened the door to these possibilities in presenting "Knowledge Visualization: Quality Publication to the Grassroots" emphasizing the genuine value of research work. This was followed by "The Ongoing WHO Database in Thailand and the Development of IMSEAR" delivered by Mr. Charles Patrick Raby, who is in charge of the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia, who greatly inspired the audience. He described the challenging task of keeping databases updated while ensuring quality control of the content. Dr. Nicholas J Talley, a Laureate Professor at the University of Newcastle Australia, presented "A Vision for the Medical Journals of Australia in a Time of Disruptive Innovation" and Dr. Sung-Tae Hong, president of the Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors (KAMJE), provided perspective with "Crossing the Digital Divide in Journal Publishing". The pinnacle of the convention was when XMLink, a subsidiary of KAMJE, gave the workshop "XML in e-Journal Platforms" to share significant ideas and advances in the standard information technology used in e-journals.

Our gathering at the APAME 2016 convention was a reconfirmation that striving for better quality, academic collaboration, and public access to medical research will be key to success in the global production and distribution of quality health information that will lead to better decision making and improvements in health care.