

## Editorial policies

The MJH policies are the guiding principles for the MJH family and authors who would like to submit manuscripts to the journal. Authors should follow the recommendations and procedures in this policy document while preparing and submitting their manuscripts. Authors should take note that the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf> and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines <https://publicationethics.org/> are endorsed by MJH and will be applied.

## Scientific misconduct

As outlined in the figure below (Figure 2), MJH carries out series of scrutiny to assess for originality, relevance, timeliness and adherence to the set guidelines. Among others, the assessment includes checking for scientific misconduct (including plagiarism, fabrication and falsification), request to declare a conflict of interest, sponsorship and authorship.

MJH considers scientific misconduct as a serious offense of act in the health sciences ethics and practice. MJH checks for plagiarism and recognizes all of the following as plagiarized and major reason for rejection of the manuscript:

- Copying a statement and pasting it without rephrasing and without putting the statement in the quotation and citing the source from any document accessed from the internet or hard copies.
- Using other researcher's figures, illustrations, tables and pictures without citing the source and getting permission from the owner of the copyright is considered plagiarized.
- Presenting another person's data as your research finding is also a serious offense.
- Deleting other researcher's names and putting your name instead is an illegal and serious offense, which is likely to prohibit you from publishing in any journal across the world.

Therefore, any type of manuscript submitted to MJH is subjected to the plagiarism-proof reader software. Major plagiarism results in automatic rejection. Major plagiarism

includes the verbatim copying of material that is large portion and/or is central to the piece of work (e.g., arguments or hypothesis). Manuscripts with minor plagiarism concerns are returned to authors for correction. MJH collaborates with international scholars in circulating the name of the fictitious author if he/she is identified as committed very serious plagiarism (like presenting other researchers' data in the results section and stealing published articles). MJH will apply the COPE guidelines for plagiarism handling <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>.

## **Review process**

MJH practices streamlined peer-review process.

### **Roles of the assistant editor**

All submitted manuscripts pass through the assistant editor for checking the eligibility/scope and adherence to the journal's guidelines. Secondly, the assistant editor makes proofreading for plagiarism. The assistant editor forwards an eligible manuscript to the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) or associate editors.

### **Assistant editor initial manuscript screening checklist**

1. Appropriate for the journal (Is the content of the manuscript in line with the scope of the journal?)
2. Word count, number of Tables, Figures and Pictures.
3. Type of manuscript (Is the manuscript identified as the original article, case report, systematic review and like?)
4. Formatting (Is the manuscript prepared strictly following the MJH guidelines?)
5. Plagiarism checks.

### **Roles of EIC and associate editors**

#### **I. Assess manuscript**

- a. The EIC and associate editors receive plagiarism-free manuscripts from the assistant editor.
- b. The EIC and associate editors screen the manuscript's suitability for peer review. To expedite the review and publication process. The EIC and associate editors

should be strict and thorough in their preliminary review of manuscripts. Manuscripts that do not seem to meet the minimum standard of quality for external review need to be rejected outright.

- c. If the manuscript is suitable for peer review, then associate editors invite reviewers within **7 days** of submission.

## **II. Initial manuscript screening checklist by the associate editors**

1. The overall scientific merit in terms of presenting novel results.
2. Adherence to the MJH guidelines and scope (the second time check).
3. Adherence to research finding reporting style and standards.
4. Gross assessment for the grammatical and typographic errors.
5. Presence of statements about consent for primary study participation and sponsor's approval for publication.
6. Statement of ethical committee approval for researches involving the human subject as a primary data source.

## **III. Associate editor invites reviewers.**

- a. Invites at least two reviewers for each original full-fledged manuscript, including systematic review and meta-analysis, and at least one reviewer for case reports, commentaries and brief communications.
- b. Decides based on reviewers' responses to the invitation.
- c. In the event of failing to find at least two reviewers, the associate editor may invite members in his/her sub-team to act as a peer reviewer and notifies this case to the EIC.
- d. Reviewers should report their assessment within 3 weeks (21 days) from the day they declared "agreed" to review.

**IV. Decides after review reports as stated in the journal's guidelines that include:**

- **Direct acceptance** (forwards the manuscript with 'provisional acceptance' to the EIC).
- **Accept with minor or major revision** (sends email notifications to authors informing them to revise their manuscripts within three months for major revisions but earlier for a minor revision).
- **Reject** (sends email notifications to inform authors about the feedbacks of reviewers and the reasons for rejection).
- **Accept with some concerns** (accepts a manuscript considered scientifically sound by reviewers even if concerns are expressed about a lack of advancement on previous work).
  - A manuscript is deemed scientifically unsound if it is so flawed that even major revision could not make it acceptable. Plagiarized manuscripts are also considered unscientific and liable for automatic rejection. A 'closed reject' decision will be made and the manuscript will not be resubmitted to MJH).
  - Where there are serious (non-remediable) concerns about research ethics or publication ethics, i.e., when a researcher or author misconduct is suspected, MJH will adhere to the COPE guidelines <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>.
  - When only one reviewer's report is received, the associate editor utilizes the experience and expertise of the reviewer from whom the report is available, involves the academic editors or consultants and reaches a decision. If needed, the associate editor seeks the view of the EIC.
  - When reviewers disagree in their assessments, a decision can be taken in consultation with the consultants or one more reviewer's

opinion can be sought before disclosing the decision to the author. If needed, the associate editor seeks the view of the EIC.

**Note:**

- The whole preliminary review of an initially submitted manuscript at the editorial office should not exceed one week before making an appropriate decision.
- The invited reviewer should declare either “accepted” or “decline” within seven days from the day he/she is invited to review. Failure to do so is an automatic withdrawal of the invitation.

## Guide for reviewer’s checklist and ethical responsibility

### Reviewer’s checklist

As described in detail in the guidelines for reviewers, the reviewer’s checklist includes several items but not limited to:

1. Congruity of the title with the content of the manuscript.
2. His/her impression about the title. How attractive and powerful the title is to let the readers read the abstract?
3. Abstract’s power. How concisely are the *background, objective, methods, results* and *conclusions* articulated to let the readers read the body of the manuscript?
4. In-depth assessment of the overall scientific merit in terms of presenting novel results.
5. In-depth assessment of adherence to the MJH guidelines and scope (the third time check).
6. In-depth assessment of adherence to research finding reporting style and standards.
7. In-depth assessment of the grammatical and typographic errors.

8. In-depth assessment of consent for primary study participation.
9. In-depth assessment of content and idea flow in the introduction, appropriateness of the methods and materials, the results presenting style and beauty, coherence of the discussion and conclusion with the results, and appropriateness of the recommendations to the results presented.
10. Assess the coherence of the citation and referencing with the journal's guidelines.

### **Reviewer's ethical responsibilities**

- Treating all manuscripts from the outset as publishable until the in-depth review compels to reject.
- Evaluating and judging the manuscript by its scientific merit and not to be biased by area of study/country origin, type of study and assumed authors.
- Keeping and treating the manuscript and its content as a confidential document. This is a professional and moral obligation. It will be an offense to use the data for any other purpose before it gets published.
- Reviewers should note that this is an academic arbitration. It needs sound knowledge of the subject matter and utmost ethical responsibility.
- Considering the job as a professional responsibility and completing the review as promptly as possible.
- Expecting no compensation for the review work as the worldwide practice showed for decades that peer review is a professional contribution for no return.
- Reviewers should not request authors to cite their own (the reviewers') or their affiliates' published articles.

### **Anonymity of the review process**

MJH applies the practice of masking the identities of the authors, editors and reviewers one for the other, except for editors who have the liberty to know both the reviewers and

authors of a particular manuscript by name and maybe by academic profile. The peer reviewers and authors remain anonymous from submission to publication and beyond.

### Workflow of the manuscript review process

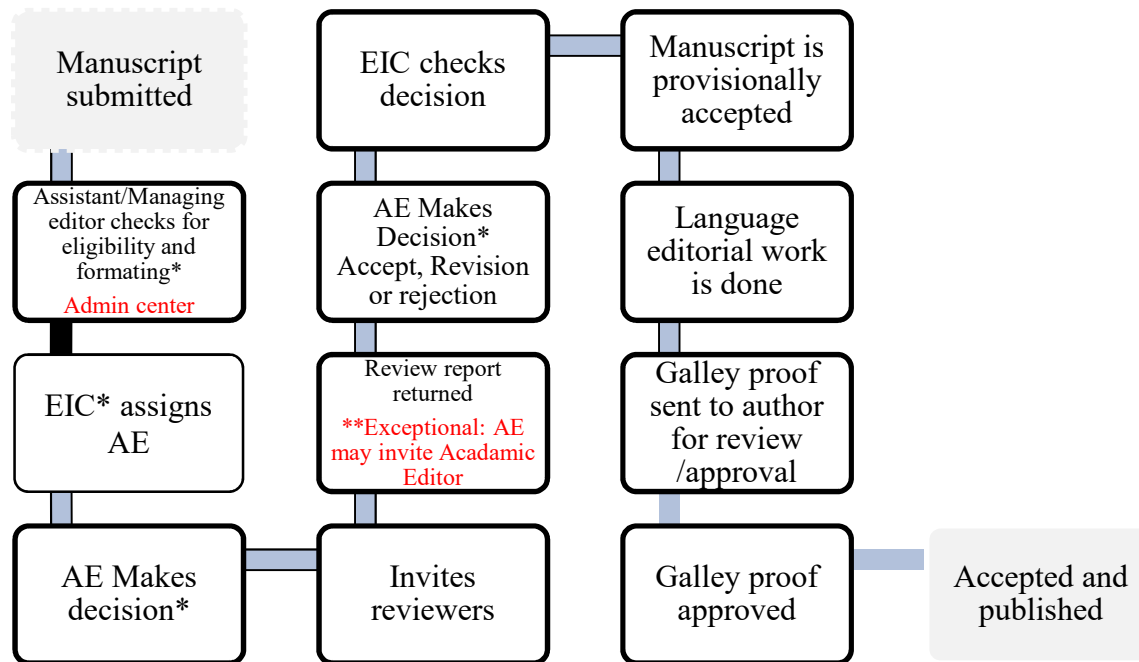


Figure 1. The manuscript review process.

\*Decisions could vary at different points: *transferring to the next level, sending to reviewer, and sending to author for revision (major or minor) or rejection*. If the decision is *sending to authors for revision*, the revised version should be re-submitted to admin centre and the cycle continues. EIC = Editor-in-Chief; AE = Associate Editor

### Conflict of interest management

Authors are

requested to declare the presence or absence of conflict of interest during submission. Authors are advised to disclose any material or financial support and need to be strict to the guidelines in the authorship listing. Authors are also highly recommended to respond genuinely to the questions posed during the online submission. Academic editors and other MJH staff who are interested to submit articles to the journal have to make sure that anonymity is secured with all possible means.

The MJH endeavors to avoid any potential personal, financial or commercial conflicts of interest. Any claim of competing or conflict of interest will be soon disclosed to authors for a possible solutions before the manuscript is rejected. Guidelines for conflict-of-interest resolution before and after publication will be posted on the journal's website.

## Frequency of publication and number of articles

For the first year (volume I), the minimum number of issues will be two and each issue will have a minimum and a maximum of 6 and 10 articles, respectively. After the first year, the number of issues published per annum will be governed by the number of quality articles submitted, the review process and the human and financial resources available.

## Research ethics and consent for publication

MJH will not consider manuscripts for peer review unless the minimum ethical standards are met in the process of protocol approval and during data collection, especially for original articles of primary studies involving human subjects. Approval of the protocol from recognized institutional review board and appropriate informed consent, as applicable, before the data collection are the minimum requirements that need to be met for all studies. Study participants must not be identified; photographs should be masked unless written and signed permission is secured from the individual.

For all clinical trials, trial registration by the appropriate legal body and meeting the minimum standard of the national ethics guidelines is intuitive. By design, systematic reviews and meta-analyses are not subjected to the study participant's consent.

Upon submission of manuscripts, authors must confirm that the appropriate institutional review board has reviewed the study protocol. It is an international experience to follow the Declaration of Helsinki by the World Medical Association, <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/> which, among others, states that all medical research has to ensure respect for all human subjects and protect their health and rights.

Furthermore, studies conducted locally or elsewhere have to follow the national research ethics guidelines for getting acceptance for peer review. Studies involving human participants, human data, or human tissue must include a statement on ethical approval and consent on their submission.



## Comments on published articles

MJH entertains and publishes comments and responses to published articles. The comments should not exceed 300 words and need to be supported by credible 5-8 references. The authors are responsible to respond to comments on their articles and to clarify any issue for the larger audience. The authors' response should not also exceed 300 words with 5-8 references. There is no need to structure both the comments and responses.

## Authorship criteria

MJH adopts the four ICMJE authorship criteria.

- *“Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND*
- *Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND*
- *Final approval of the version to be published; AND*
- *Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved”.*

Therefore, to be an author or co-author, substantial contribution starting from the protocol development to the final write-up and review of the manuscript has to be seriously taken into consideration to maintain the journal's standard and accept public responsibility for the content of the study.

## Guides on writing acknowledgments

People or organizations that make substantial financial or technical contributions to the scientific content of the research work can be acknowledged by name with a summary of the description of their contributions.

## Copyright

Articles will be published when the corresponding author completes online an Article Publishing Agreement. Authors retain copyright even after publishing online on the MJH website. Authors have full right to reuse their articles for educational purposes and as background information for their future research works without contacting the MJH editorial office.

## Publisher

SPHMMC is the publisher of all MJH issues. Authors are responsible for the contents of the respective articles published in MJH. The views expressed in each article are not necessarily the editorial policy of the journal nor that of the publisher.

## Post-publication reviews for editorial and erratum

All efforts will be invested to avoid any grammatical and typographical errors and missed content before the publication. However, there might be rare possibilities whereby one or more errors are encountered. Therefore, the main purpose of post-publication review is to detect and correct any significant editorial and errata.

MJH welcomes all correctable errors detected by readers or authors to make immediate corrections on the online article and announce to the larger body of the journal's audience in the next issue published in the form of hard copy.

## Data sharing

MJH supports international and local data-sharing policies. Authors are advised to share at least the minimum dataset they have used to prepare the manuscript and to deduce the conclusions as needed. The dataset will be used to interpret, verify and extend the research in the article, as appropriate. Authors should include a data availability statement while submitting their manuscripts. Authors must respect their ethical and legal responsibilities while sharing the dataset. Authors who do not prefer to share the dataset should give their reason and discuss it with the editor during the manuscript submission.

## Appeals and complaints policy

Authors can contact the MJH if they have any appeals or complaints. Regarding the appeal against the rejection of a manuscript, authors can contact the EIC. Authors should present a good justification for their appeal. Regarding any complaint about the publication process of MJH, authors can contact the editorial office. The MJH will review any complaint and provide timely response accordingly. Regarding complaints about publication ethics or scientific misconducts, MJH applies the COPE guidelines <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>. Authors should refer to and follow the specific instructions of appeal and complaint handling from the MJH website.

## Retraction policy

MJH makes the utmost effort to publish only accurate results without errors. Whenever authors make honest errors (e.g., misclassification or miscalculation), MJH will consider retraction with republication (also referred to as “replacement”). Such retraction with republication will be considered only when the error is judged to be unintentional and the revised version of the paper survives further review and editorial scrutiny. However, when the errors are serious enough to invalidate a paper’s results and conclusions, it will be necessary for published articles to be retracted. MJH will follow the COPE guidelines in such cases <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Flowcharts>. Retraction notices will be indexed and bi-directionally linked to the original article.

## Promotion

MJH uses all possible media to promote its credibility and reputability to the larger audience of readers and contributors. The journal staff will do all their level best to let it be indexed in MEDLINE/PUBMED electronic database.

## MJH family

The editorial team, peer reviewers, academic editors, all the editorial and production staff are recognized as the journal’s family. EIC, associate editors and academic editors do all their level best to bring highly credible local and international scholars to the MJH family.

