

Entering a new decade: The Journal leaps forward with revamped platforms and renewed editorial processes

Vivienne C. Bachelet^{a,b,*} 

^a Editor-in-chief, *Medwave*

^b Escuela de Medicina, Universidad de Santiago de Chile (USACH), Santiago, Chile

* Corresponding author vivienne.bachelet@usach.cl

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Some years ago, Medwave was facing difficult times. While it had been included in the MEDLINE catalog in 2014 and subsequently in Scopus, submissions were neither numerous nor research oriented. Furthermore, the Journal—then financed by sister companies facing financial difficulties—was under increasing constraints to fund its operations. That is when the editorial leadership decided that it was time to move on to a new financial model based on author processing charges, much like most other open access journals in the Anglo-Saxon world. An editorial of the time explained the reasons behind this significant change¹.

Last year, 2020, brought us life-changing events worldwide. People, governments, and organizations were challenged to find adequate responses to the coronavirus pandemic. The Journal was no exception to this. We immediately issued a Call for COVID Papers free from publication charges for the most significant research arising in the region regarding the novel coronavirus. 2020 also brought us a much-awaited opportunity to—finally—renew and revamp our systems, publishing platforms, and editorial practices and policies. We submitted a grant proposal to a Ministry of Science funding line designed to strengthen the editorial quality of local scholarly journals. Our proposal included major technological and editorial quality improvement interventions based on cutting-edge technologies and significant automatization of editorial processes. Closing in on Christmas Eve, we were informed that we had won our proposal. The project began in the early days of 2021, and we expect to conclude the main interventions by the third quarter of the year. Implementation will be gradual, and some will be visible relatively soon than later.

In what does the project consist of? Here are the main areas we are currently working on, which will significantly impact the journal

quality in all spheres. Some of these enhancements will not be noticeable by our readership (back-office upgrades), while others will be seen and appreciated by readers, authors and peer reviewers.

1. We are currently developing a novel publishing platform explicitly designed for bilingual scientific journals, open-sourced, compliant with all international technical standards for portability and preservation of the scholarly record, including XML-JATS². This new publishing platform will enable automatization of many processes ensuring consistent format and accurate metadata associated with each article.

2. We will soon introduce a renewed graphic interface that will build on the tried and tested signature color palette of the Journal but with a different and more modern layout for the homepage and the article-level pages. More functionalities will be included for readers.

3. Article submissions will be processed through a new world-class commercial platform whose development is nearly concluded with a company based in Chennai, India. This platform was designed following our advice and significantly taking into account one an essential characteristic of the Journal: dual-language publication. This new submission platform promises to completely overhaul the submission process experience for authors and the reviewer experience for peer-reviewers. The platform will be completely integrated with the login pages of the Journal, thus requiring a single password for the Journal and the submission of articles.

4. Accepted manuscripts will also be handled on this commercial platform. The copyediting for Spanish and English will be done simultaneously online, and the corresponding authors will be able to check the PDF proof just by clicking a button. They will interact with the English and Spanish copyeditors responding to the queries directly on the platform, making corrections more effortless.

5. We will revise all the editorial processes and author instructions, seeking simplification and better publication ethics standards. We will strive for clarity, ease of use, and the highest journal quality, all in a dual environment of Spanish and English. English authors should find it easy to submit their manuscripts to Medwave, and Spanish-language authors should feel that Medwave is the to-go place to report their findings.

6. Finally, we will no longer ask authors to submit a translated version of their manuscript. The Journal is taking it upon itself to

translate accepted manuscripts into either English (if submitted in Spanish) or Spanish (if submitted in English). Fortunately, artificial intelligence and qualified regional English-language editors are making this possible. We have already rolled out this innovation; now, both languages are being published at the same time after author approval, entailing no extra cost to authors and no further delays in the publication of the English version.

Having a solid financial foundation makes all this possible. Public funding also contributes to the feasibility of carrying out long-overdue projects. We earnestly hope that our readers and authors will be happy to see that Medwave is constantly improving its systems, processes and standards for the benefit of the healthcare community of the Americas and the rest of the world.

Notes

Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare regarding the contents of this editorial.

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