

## Keeping Our Authors' Trust



During one of our editorial board meetings in 2018, the question was posed of whether we are to accept articles which cite sources from predatory or suspected predatory publications. Predatory journals are deceptive publications that charge article processing fees and provide rapid publication without the benefit of peer review and editorial quality checks. The discussions revolved around the doubtful credibility of an article that is published in a predatory journal. Ultimately, the board decided that if such an article is cited to support articles submitted to JAFES, it lessens the credibility of the submitted article, *and* would reflect on the credibility of JAFES. We informed the authors about this resolve and advised them that we cannot accept their article if the reference in question is retained.

This situation made us realize another dimension of our role in maintaining the integrity of scientific scholarly information. On the one hand, we have invested significantly in refining our editorial policies, ethical standards, and publication operations, to provide authors a high-quality open access platform for their findings. We exerted efforts to be indexed in Scopus, Directory of Open Access Journals, and the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus, and continuously working on inclusion in PubMed and ISI Clarivate. We have established a rigorous article selection process, which begins with an initial editorial board deliberation, a double-blind peer review system through an international pool of experts, and supplemental statistical, and radiologic and pathologic image reviews by in-house statisticians, radiologists, and pathologists, respectively, and culminates with a second round of editorial deliberation.

On the other hand, recognizing the preponderance of deceptive publications, we need to exercise due diligence to guard against citation of information from journals of questionable credibility. It is remarkable to note that such journals do get included in literature searches and even get cited. To some degree, prior to 2018, we have been consulting Jeffrey Beall's list of predatory journals<sup>1,2</sup> to review article references. But this year, after encountering several more article submissions with questionable references, JAFES has begun using Cabell's "Blacklist,"\* a subscription-based service which lists 65 criteria for blacklisting of predatory journals. Originally meant to help researchers know where *not* to publish, we now recognize the blacklist's additional value as an integral reference by editors to decide what *not* to allow to be cited.

To further enhance the quality of articles that JAFES publishes, we are newly introducing changes in our **Author Forms**. We added stipulations in the **Author Declarations** that the manuscript and supplemental materials submitted by authors do not infringe any copyright or violate any other intellectual property rights of others; and that they have obtained written permission from copyright or intellectual property right owners for all copyrighted/patented works that are included in the manuscript. This is to address authors who may inadvertently be using diagrams, photographs, or figures that are already published elsewhere, without proper attribution and permission. We included a certification that the author does not refer or cite predatory or suspected predatory journals.

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\* <https://www2.cabells.com/blacklist>

We shall also require submission of the accomplished **EQuaTOR Network checklist** relevant to the type of research. The checklists are based on reviews of best practices on ethical scholarly publication by experts around the world. This move will ensure that all the items necessary for complete reporting on study findings are included in the submitted manuscript. To increase transparency and assist us in settling authorship disputes, we added a Section on **Author Contribution Disclosure** based on CRediT by the Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI) showing the 14 standardized roles of authors.

Part of our commitment to scientific integrity is our commitment to the authors, who have entrusted JAFES their work, and this commitment extends to protecting their rights to their own work. After deliberations, it has been resolved that the author copyright shall no longer be transferred to JAFES. By signing the **Author Publishing Agreement**, authors shall retain copyright and grant JAFES the right to publish and distribute their work through 100% Open Access, and to enforce a Creative Commons user license (CC-BY-NC) to guide other authors, scientists, and other users, on the proper use of the author's work.

With these and other future improvements in the way we manage the JAFES, we aim to not only remain relevant and be the publication of choice in endocrinology in the region, but more importantly, to keep the authors' trust that we are working with them to ensure the quality, permanence, and visibility of their work.<sup>3</sup> This way, ultimately, we aim to keep all our readers' trust too.



**Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco**

Editor-in-Chief

#### References

1. Beall J. Criteria for determining predatory open-access publishers, 2nd ed. Denver, CO: Scholarly Open Access; 2012. <http://scholarlyoa.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/criteria-2012-2.pdf>.
2. Beall J. Predatory publishers are corrupting open access. *Nature*. 2012;489(7415):179. PMID: 22972258. <https://doi.org/10.1038/489179a>.
3. Nader R, Annesley TM, Moore S, et al. Maintaining research and publication integrity. *Clin Chem*. 2019;65(2):230-5. PMID: 30559173. <https://doi.org/10.1373/clinchem.2018.298901>.

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