

Under the Hood

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The medical publishing field can be opaque. For many readers, that is of little concern; they just need to trust in the process that provides the article that they are reading. But should you?

It is instructive to follow the money. There are journals out there that will publish anything if the author gives them enough money. As a direct result, these predatory journals prove thin in quality. Others are big enough names to draw advertising and institutional subscriptions and hide “intellectual property” from readers with paywalls. Their quality may be high, but they are unlikely to print many rurally relevant articles. We at the CJRM depend on volunteers, and intentionally do not charge authors, or readers (we are freely licensed under creative commons) but are supported by funding from Society of Rural Physicians of Canada membership fees.

Authors upload their work to our manuscript management system at cjrm.ca. Some of the articles are screened out initially due to being out of scope, that is being not relevant to our core readership of Canadian rural generalist physicians.

Suzanne Kingsmill (our managing editor) takes the articles and assigns them to our assistant editors and other reviewers for analysis. Care is taken to ensure that the authors are anonymous and that the editorial process is unbiased.

Our reviewers examine each article, determine its strengths and faults and pass on their recommendations to either me as scientific editor or the associate scientific editor (Gordon Brock) for a decision.

Much of the time the reviewers and scientific editor find issues with the work. Often, the rural locale has to be better identified (with rural context being everything) and often, it is best to identify the community (or communities). Other common faults include lack of rural insight. After all, the mere fact that the case occurred in a rural setting does not make the case rural unless there is a description on how rural circumstances altered management.

After scientific review (and successful revision), our managing editor does an English review ensuring that the intent of the writing is clear and follows the proper scientific presentation for a research paper.

After translation (if applicable), the article gets copyedited and sent to be typeset by our printers. A PDF mock-up of the article (lacking only the DOI and page numbers) is sent to the author for final review. Once all questions are answered and the proof is approved, it moves to publication. In the case of the CJRM, this involves both web copies and hard copies that are mailed to subscribers who pay extra.

If you have read this far and you want to contribute articles, or want to apply to become an assistant editor, please contact me.

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