

JOURNAL POLICY DOCUMENT

HITEC MEDICAL & DENTAL JOURNAL

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Aims, Objective and Scope

HITEC Medical and Dental Journal is a biannually published, multi-disciplinary, peer reviewed, open access journal that describes the significant and innovative research in all areas of Medicine and Dentistry. In addition to primary research, HMDJ also publishes review articles, meta-analysis reviews, letter to the editor, case reports, case series report, short communication and issues regarding development in fields of medical education.

HMDJ aims to support junior doctors, nurses and medical and dental students, and contribute to the continuing professional development. HMDJ aspires to disseminate high-powered research results with the objective of improving patient care and health facilities. It aims to publish high quality research articles.

Submission of a manuscript implies that the work described has not been published before and is not under consideration for publication anywhere else. The necessity of review of the articles by internal review board and the ethical committee adds value to the articles published in the journal. Any conflict of interest has to be declared thus eliminating the bias on part of the editors or the reviewers. The journal has adopted a rigorous examination of every submitted manuscript towards plagiarism. In case of any doubt, the authors are provided the evidence of copied material from the web. All contributions are rigorously refereed and selected on the basis of the quality and originality of the work as well as the breadth of interest to readers. The journal publishes the most significant research in all fields of medical education thus keeping the updated information available for its readers worldwide. HMDJ publishes articles after exceptional unsolicited reviews as per the laid guidelines.

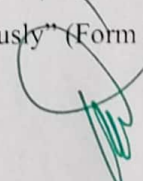
HMDJ, in brief, is a forum for communicating the medical and dental health related issues globally.

Subscription Policy

It is an open access journal. All content of journal can be read and download free of charge.

Editorial Policy

In accordance with the Copyright Act, the Undertaking signed by all authors must accompany each manuscript submitted for publication: "The undersigned author(s) transfer(s) all copyright ownership of the manuscript to the HMDJ if the work is published. The undersigned warrant(s) that the article is original, does not infringe upon any copyright or other proprietary right of any third party, is not under consideration by another journal, and has not been published previously" (Form HMDJ-Authorship).



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Statements and opinions expressed in the articles and communications herein are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Editor(s) or publisher and the Editor(s) and publishers disclaim any responsibility or liability for such material. Neither the Editor(s) nor the publisher guarantees, warrants, or endorses any product or service advertised in this publication; neither do they guarantee any claim made by the manufacturer of such product or service.

Articles are accepted for publication on the condition that they are contributed solely to HMDJ. All articles are reviewed by at least two Reviewers/Referees. Acceptance is based on significance, originality and validity of the material. If the article is accepted for publication, editorial revisions may be made to aid clarity and understanding without altering the meaning.

Clinical conference abstracts, special issues, articles regarding innovation and those related to research methods and reporting are also published. Secondary research including narrative reviews, systematic reviews, evidence based articles, meta-analysis, practice guidelines will also be considered for publication. From time to time invited articles are published. Manuscripts must be original and not under consideration by another publication.

Manuscripts by the Editorial Board members will not be accepted. Self-institutional publications no more than 1/5 of published articles per issue will be allowed.

Policy on Editor Roles and Responsibilities

HMDJ follow the guidelines on editorial independence as mentioned by World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) and the code on good publication practice produced by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), and checklists and advice for good research reporting of the EQUATOR network.

HMDJ's relationship with Editorial team:

The role of the Editor is to publish and produce the best quality researches by providing necessary support as a team member. HMDJ encourages editorial freedom and agrees to fully support editorial decisions and potentially controversial expressions of opinion by the Editorial team provided they are evidence based.

At the time of their appointment, all Editorial team members are provided with a written agreement that clearly states their responsibilities, rights, authority, and general terms of their appointment, and mechanisms for resolving conflict. The Editors are required to uphold and maintain Code of Conduct at all times. The purpose of our Code is to ensure that we, and all those with whom

we collaborate closely, work well together towards our shared vision of a healthier world. In order to achieve this vision, it is vital that our Editors remain true to ethical values, and take a shared responsibility for protecting journal's reputation and trust.

Editorial freedom:

HMDJ abides by the 'WAME statement on editorial freedom, duties and responsibilities', which defines editorial freedom as Editors holding full authority over all editorial content for their journal and the timing of publication of that content. So there is no interference in the evaluation, selection, scheduling, or editing of individual articles either directly or by creating an environment that strongly influences their decisions.

HMDJ is supported by an independent editorial advisory board team which assists the Editor in chief on editorial policy and content as well as help to establish and maintain editorial policy. Our Editorial team agrees to seek and engage a broad and diverse array of authors, reviewers, editorial board members and readers.

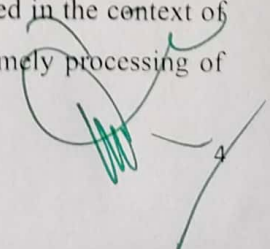
Confidentiality:

We understand that manuscripts submitted to journals are privileged communications that are the author's private, confidential property, and authors may be harmed by premature disclosure of any or all of a manuscript's details. As such, HMDJ's Editorial team and publication staff, are required to keep all information about a submitted manuscript confidential, sharing it only with those involved in the evaluation, review, and publication processes.

HMDJ Editorial team maintains the confidentiality of authors and peer-reviewers in accordance with ICMJE policy. Editors agree to take all reasonable steps to check the facts in journal commentary and to adhere to best journalistic practices. Editors will not publish or publicize peer review comments without permission of the reviewer and author. In cases of breach of confidentiality by those involved in the peer-review process, Editorial team agrees to contact the involved parties and follow up on such cases until they are satisfactorily resolved.

Peer review and timeliness:

HMDJ will follow double-blind peer review process. Initial editorial screening will be done for scope and quality. It will be followed by peer review from the two subject specialists independently. The reviewer's recommendation process is time bound (four -six weeks). Editorial team agree to ensure that reviewer comments are properly assessed and interpreted in the context of their declared conflicts of interest. The Editors will do all they can to ensure timely processing of



manuscripts. If the journal has no intention of proceeding with a manuscript during initial or peer-review process, the Editors will endeavor to reject the manuscript as soon as possible to allow authors to submit to a different journal.

Policy on Peer Review Terms and Conditions

Peer reviewers play a central and critical part in the peer-review process. HMDJ ensures that all reviewers adhere to a set of basic principles and standards during the peer-review process in research publication. It will be based upon Guidelines of COPE emphasizing Conflicts of interest, Confidentiality, Timeliness, Scientific misconduct, Appropriate feedback, Ownership of review and HMDJ use of reviewer's registration details.

Double blind peer review:

HMDJ follows a double-blind peer review process

Conflicts of interests:

During the review process, HMDJ ask author/authors to declare any potentially conflicting or competing interests (which could be personal, intellectual, financial, professional, political or religious in nature) so that the editorial team can assess and factor them into their decisions. In that case, the reviewer should not agree to review a manuscript just to gain sight of it with no intention of submitting a review.

Confidentiality:

Manuscripts submitted to HMDJ are authors' private, confidential property; reviewers should keep manuscripts and the information they contain strictly confidential. Reviewers should not retain the manuscript for personal use and should destroy/delete the hard or soft copies after submitting their review.

Timeliness:

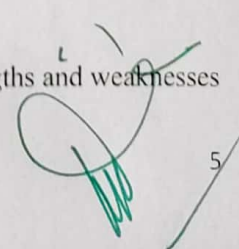
If a reviewer feels qualified to review a particular manuscript, he or she should only agree to review only if found able to return a review within the proposed or mutually agreed time-frame.

Scientific misconduct:

If a reviewer have concerns that misconduct occurred during either the research, its writing, submission, or its substantial similarity between the manuscript and a concurrent submission to another journal or a published article, he has a responsibility to let the journal Editorial team know.

Appropriate feedback:

A reviewer must provide a fair, honest, and unbiased assessment of the strengths and weaknesses



of the manuscript. For example, he has to be specific in his critique, and provide supporting evidence with appropriate references to substantiate general statements. He has to be professional and refrain from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libelous or derogatory personal comments. If the work is not clear because of missing analyses, the reviewer should comment and explain what additional analyses would clarify the work submitted. It is not the job of the reviewer to extend the work beyond its current scope.

Ownership of review:

The reviewer will remain the owner of the review till he submit to HMDJ. It is his responsibility to clearly mention details of any co-reviewer or other third party who may have contributed to review.

Restrictions on use of review:

We do not restrict the use of the review once the manuscript has been published. However, an author's manuscript remains confidential until it is published.

Competing interests:

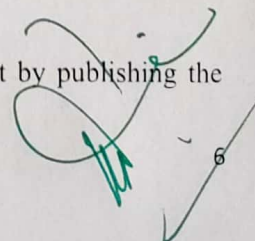
HMDJ Editorial team agrees to ensure all editorial decisions based on the relevance of a manuscript to the journal and on the manuscript's originality, quality, and contribution to evidence. They agree to ensure that those decisions will not be influenced by commercial interests or conflicts of Interest.

HMDJ ensures the independence and integrity of published content. As such, prior to appointment, all of our editorial team members are required to disclose any conflicts of interest in accordance with the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors uniform declaration of competing interests.

Plagiarism Policy**Preamble:**

A journal's reputation is predicated on its ability to publish high-quality scientific works and depends upon the trust of authors, researchers, readers, reviewers, editors, and administrators of public health policy. This trust is enhanced by describing the journal's policies as explicitly as possible to ensure the ethical treatment of all participants in the publication process. This can be achieved only, if the entire peer review and publication process is thorough, objective, and fair. Almost every aspect of this process should involve important ethical principles and decisions which are seldom openly stated and even less often shared with the readership.

Moreover, the medical journals seek to advance the state of medical art by publishing the



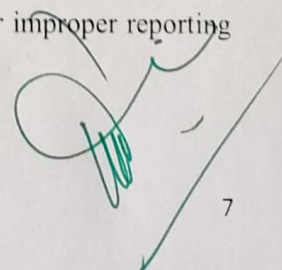
highest quality scientific research and such quality cannot be achieved if plagiarism is abided or if the concept of plagiarism is not fully understood by clinicians, researchers, policy makers, public health workers, and physician- scientists.

Definition:

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, Plagiarism is defined as “taking and using the thoughts, writing, and invention of another person as one’s own”.

Plagiarism can be subdivided into two categories: one where the author intends to mislead the reader’s to author’s contribution by passing off another’s work product as their own; and one where the author does not intend to mislead the reader but misunderstands proper citation or attribution. This second category is more accurately described as sloppy research work product or “innocent error of omission due to ignorance”. The most common forms of scientific misconduct include: -

- **Falsification of data:** Ranges from fabrication to deceptive selective reporting of findings and omission of conflicting data, or willful suppression and/or distortion of data.
- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another without crediting their true source, and representation of them as one's own original work.
- **Self-Plagiarism:** The verbatim or near-verbatim re-use of significant portions of one’s own copyrighted work without citing the original source.
- **Improprieties of authorship:** Improper assignment of credit, such as excluding others, misrepresentation of the same material as original in more than one publication, inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work published; or submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors.
- **Misappropriation of the ideas of others:** An important aspect of scholarly activity is the exchange of ideas among colleagues. Scholars can acquire novel ideas from others during the process of reviewing grant applications and manuscripts. However, improper use of such information can constitute fraud. Wholesale appropriation of such material constitutes misconduct.
- **Violation of generally accepted research practices:** Serious deviation from accepted practices in proposing or carrying out research, improper manipulation of experiments to obtain biased results, deceptive statistical or analytical manipulations, or improper reporting of results.



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- **Material failure to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements affecting research:** Including but not limited to serious or substantial, repeated, willful violations of applicable local regulations and law involving the use of funds, care of animals, human subjects, investigational drugs, recombinant products, new devices, or radioactive, biologic, or chemical materials.
- **Inappropriate behavior in relation to misconduct:** This includes unfounded or knowingly false accusations of misconduct, failure to report known or suspected misconduct, withholding or destruction of information relevant to a claim of misconduct and retaliation against persons involved in the allegation or investigation.
- The editorial board of HMDJ acknowledges that there are grey areas of plagiarism such as the ones listed above where the author's intent is not to mislead. If the author appears to have engaged in merely sloppy research/writing and this is the author's first offense, the executive board will provide the author with the opportunity to revise his manuscript so that it is in accordance with the highest level of integrity and professionalism. To this end, the editorial board will provide the author guidance on the proper citation/attribution of reference material.

Aim:

- The aim of this policy is to apprise students, teachers, researchers about plagiarism and how it can be avoided.
- It is also aimed at discouraging Plagiarism by regulating and authorizing punitive actions against those found guilty of the act of plagiarism.
- To publish highest quality scientific research free from plagiarism

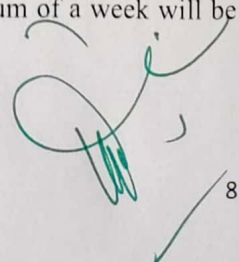
Applicability:

The policy is applicable to all manuscripts submitted for publication in HMDJ.

Guidelines:

Beginning December 2021 HMDJ will implement this policy for dealing with acts of plagiarism and academics dishonesty. Plagiarism, if detected and proved, would be considered a punishable offence. Immediate and unbiased action will be taken by the Plagiarism Committee.

- a. All manuscripts will be scrutinized through Turnitin (software for detecting plagiarism) for generating and analyzing the originality report of that article. A minimum of a week will be given to the focal person for analyzing the article.



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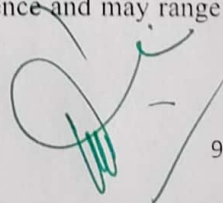
- b. As per HEC Guidelines, If the report has similarity index $\leq 19\%$, then benefit of doubt may be given to the author but, in case, any single source has similarity index $\geq 5\%$ without citation then it needs to be revised and will be sent back to the author for revision to bring similarity index down to permissible limit.
- c. After revision, it will again be processed through the same software for checking its originality. After satisfactory report (SI below 19%), it will be sent to reviewers for peer review.
- d. If author fails to comply, the article will be sent back to the author again for review.
- e. If after second revision the author fails to comply, then the manuscript is rejected and further processing stopped.

If plagiarism is reported in an under-process manuscript, then the manuscript processing will be stopped immediately and corresponding author will be informed regarding dishonesty and asked to explain the allegations raised against manuscript in two weeks.

The plagiarism committee will decide the further action regarding processing of article, after receiving the response from corresponding author.

In case of complaint received from author, readers, reviewers, editors, institution regarding plagiarism in a published article,

- a. The Plagiarism committee will evaluate the accusation including any supporting documentation provided to it within two weeks.
- b. During all committee proceedings, editors shall ensure the confidentiality of both the author and the individual who submitted the complaint alleging plagiarism.
- c. If the committee determines that the evidence is sufficient to warrant a fuller investigation, the committee shall notify the author accused of plagiarizing within ten business days and will give the author a reasonable amount of time to respond to the allegations and procure evidence to support a claim of innocence if necessary.
- d. In case of failure of author(s) to either respond within the stipulated time, or in case they are unable to provide a suitable explanation, the Editor will convene a meeting of the Plagiarism Committee to consider further action.
- e. Further action will depend upon the nature of the offence and may include rejection of the published article along with possible debarment of the author(s) from further publishing in the Journal. The period of debarment will depend upon the nature of the offence and may range from a period of a few months to permanent.



- f. Final decision of committee will be informed to both parties within seven days
- g. Information regarding this action may be published in the forthcoming issue of the Journal on a numbered page and the Editor will be obliged to withdraw the article from the journal website.
- h. If the committee elects to alert the HMDJ readership of an author's academic dishonesty by publishing a written notice or statement, it may do so without providing advance notice or obtaining permission from the author in question.

Processing/ Publication Charges Policy

HMDJ started in Dec 2021. It has been decided that there will be no publication/processing charges. All the expenses will be borne by HMDJ.

Registration details:

HMDJ is having a detailed database for the reviewers' pool to be used in review process. The data base comprises of reviewer's name, qualifications, designation, present position, institute, and specialty, special interest in research and contact details. The data base is kept confidential and used to be updated on annual basis or as per required.

Publication Ethics

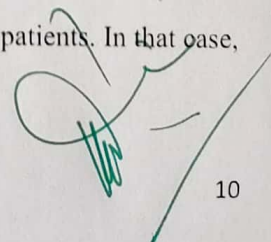
As per policy, the editorial board ensures that all manuscripts published in HMDJ should be based upon morally acceptable research. The HMDJ ensure that whether the authors have followed the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki during research or in preparation of their manuscript. In this regards, HMDJ aims to appraise the ethical aspects of any type of submitted work that involves human participants and whatever descriptive label is given to that work including research, audit, and sometimes debate.

Ethical Approval letter:

HMDJ policy focuses to the mandatory IRB or Ethical Review Board (ERB) or equivalent committee approval letter at the time of submission of manuscript. The letter should have reference number, with clear date, and counter signed by the chairman IRB/ERB.

What happens when the journal considers a study to be unethical?

HMDJ believe that editors have a duty to take on issues of unethical audit or research, not to seek punishment for the authors, but to prevent unethical practice and to protect patients. In that case, the manuscript will be rejected by HMDJ.



Exceptional circumstances:

In rare instances the journal might publish an article despite ethics problems in the work it reported. The usual reason would be that work done in one setting might not reach the ethical standard of work done in another setting, because of differing local resources and standards for health care and research. In deciding to publish such an article, HMDJ would consider the context of the study and aim to balance the overall benefit to society against the possible harm to the research participants.

Policy on Authorship and Contributor-ship

This policy ensures that contributors who have made substantive intellectual contributions to an article are given credit. The contributors understand their role in taking responsibility and being accountable for what is published.

- **Authorship** – HMDJ publish a list of authors' names along with their contribution at the end of the paper.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals (ICMJE Recommendations 2019) recommends that authorship be based on the following four criteria:

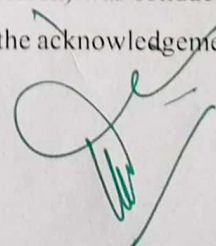
1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; **AND**
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; **AND**
3. Final approval of the version to be published; **AND**
4. Agreement 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.

Corresponding author:

The corresponding author, should take primary responsibility for completing all necessary actions after acceptance of the manuscript and communicating with the journal and with readers after publication. All email communication from HMDJ will be sent to the corresponding author only.

Alteration to authorship:

If an author's affiliation has changed during the course of the work, the author may either list the affiliation at the time that the research (or most significant portion of the research) was conducted, or their current affiliation, or both. The change of affiliation can be explained in the acknowledgements section.




Deceased authors:

Deceased persons deemed appropriate as authors should be highlighted to the Editorial team at the time of manuscript submission and this information should also be included in authors contributor ship-statement.

As per HMDJ policy, all authors must download the authorship (author agreement) form and completely fill it mentioning the conflict of interest and financial disclosure if any.

Acknowledgements:

An acknowledgements statement may be included at the end of the paper, detailing those who helped in carrying out the research but who have not been recognized as contributors, as well as for personal expressions of gratitude.



Competing Interests Policy

HMDJ follows the ICMJE guidelines in competing interest policy. According to ICMJE uniform declaration of competing interests, authors should disclose four types of information to clarify competing interests:

- a) Their associations with commercial entities that provided support for the work reported in the submitted manuscript (the time frame for disclosure in this section of the form is the lifespan of the work being reported).
- b) Their associations with commercial entities that could be viewed as having an interest in the general area of the submitted manuscript (the time frame for disclosure in this section is the 36 months before submission of the manuscript).
- c) Any similar financial associations involving their spouse or their children under 18 years of age.
- d) Non-financial associations that may be relevant to the submitted manuscript.

Data Sharing Policy

Where necessary, HMDJ encourages the authors to share their data to support the publication of their research studies and to interlink data with their published articles. The "Research data" refers to the observations or experiments' results which confirm the research findings, including but not limited to raw data, processed data, software, algorithms, protocols, models, methods, and other related materials.

- HMDJ requires that the research data which supports research paper should be made available publicly and openly upon publication of article if required. If due to data confidentiality or sensitivity, open availability is not possible then it should be shared through a controlled access repository.
- HMDJ strongly encourages that the availability of data relevant to research article should be made available as soon as possible, wherever ethically and legally possible.
- HMDJ requires that clinical trials data should be made available upon reasonable request.

As a member of ICMJE, HMDJ requires that the clinical trials should include a data-sharing plan in the trial's registration that begin enrolling participants on or after 1st January 2019. The ICMJE's policy regarding trial registration is explained at www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/publishing-and-editorial-issues/clinical-trial-registration.html. Changes to the plan must be noted in the Data Availability Statement and updated in the registry record (to comply with ICMJE recommendations)

In following this policy, if authors have made their study data accessible in a data repository, they can link their articles directly to the dataset. The authors may submit a data-sharing statement form along with their manuscripts which include information regarding anonymity of data, available additional related documents (e.g., study protocol or a statistical analysis plan), when and for how long the data will be available along with access criteria.

What data should be shared:

HMDJ encourages the researchers to make available as much of the relevant data from their research paper as possible (without compromising confidentiality) in the form of processed or raw data. Data should not be shared in any way that could compromise participants' privacy or anonymity, and if that would require the authors to break any laws or licensing agreements. If in a particular field, a research community has already established standards for how, what and where the data should be shared, our journal expects authors to meet those criteria.

We consider any files generated by authors' research as constituting relevant data. Examples of data submitted include, individual-level deidentified patient data, statistical codes, spread sheets, text files, survey results, interview transcripts, images or videos, audio files, imaging and scanned files etc.

To enhance reproducibility and reuse, the data should be shared by using the sources file in which they were originally generated, for example:

- Images should be provided as .png, .jpg, .eps, etc.
- Text files should be provided as .docx, .doc, .rft, etc.
- Spreadsheets should be provided as .csv, .xls, .tsv, etc.
- Videos should be provided as .mp4, .avi, .wav, etc.
- Imaging and scan files should be provided in .img, .dcm, .hdr, etc.

How to access data that is available upon request:

Data requesters should do the following:

- Email the corresponding author for the research paper to request the relevant data.
- Give a detailed protocol for the proposed study, including funding and resources of your research your request.
- If appropriate, invite the original author[s] to participate in the re-analysis.
- If a month elapses without a response from the authors, the editorial team of HMDJ should be contacted through email.
- The editorial team will assess the request, and if appropriate, will encourage the authors or

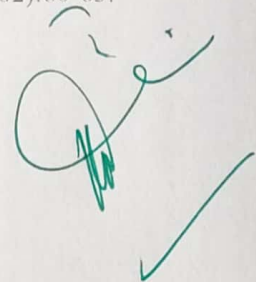
their institution to share the data, although HMDJ are not in a position to compel data release or broker agreements.

How to cite data:

- All publicly available data which is used in the manuscript writing should be cited in the text and the reference list – whether they are data generated by the author(s) or by other researchers.
- Data citations follow HMDJ reference style.

Example:

- John G, Rai S, Chu T, Tange M. Steroid induced effects like in coordination between GABAergic and Glutamatergic neurons in the amygdala. HMDJ. 2019; 02(02):60-63.

A handwritten signature in green ink, followed by a large green checkmark.

Copyright and Licensing Policy

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This is a summary of the license. "You are free to share, copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and adapt, remix, transform, and build upon the material as long as you follow the license terms".

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

Non-Commercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Submission policy

- a. All manuscript should be typed in double spacing on A-4 paper (8.25" x 11.70" = 21.0 cm x 29.70 cm) with one inch (2.5 cm) margin on both sides.
- b. All pages must be numbered starting with the title page being page one.
- c. Each figure and table must be submitted separately.
- d. All manuscripts must be submitted by email to the address: editor.hmdj@hitec-ims.edu.pk

Steps and timelines for publication of manuscript

Following steps are taken for the publication of manuscript:

- a. Submission of manuscript to HMDC through email
- b. Acknowledgment email to corresponding author (1-2 weeks)
- c. Checking of manuscript for plagiarism and references (2-4 weeks)
- d. In case of plagiarism more than 19%, manuscript should be returned to author for correction (1-2 weeks)
- e. Plagiarism less than 19% or after correction of plagiarism by author, initial review by associate editors (1-2 weeks)
- f. Manuscript sent for external review (3-6 weeks weeks)
- g. Final Review by journal editor (1-2 weeks)
- h. Manuscript sent back to author along with external reviewer/editor comments (if major/minor corrections suggested by external reviewer or editor) (2-4 weeks)

- i. After acceptance of manuscript, letter of acceptance issued to author (1-2 weeks)

The publishing timeline from submission to acceptance to publication is 4-6 months.

Correction and retraction policies

Corrections to published errors in medical research or publication are a part of publishing and when detected, needs publication of a correction at the earliest. HMDJ expects authors to intimate the editor about any errors of fact which is noticed in their manuscript once it's published. After review by editorial team, the corrections are made at the journal's discretion.

As Publishers, the HMDJ have a duty to maintain the integrity of the scientific record. For this reason, minor corrections that do not affect the scientific understanding of the paper (for example formatting or typographical errors or preference of wording) may be rejected. In addition, the correction procedure depends on the stage of manuscript process or publication stage, but in all circumstances a correction notice is published as soon as possible:

Ahead of print version:

Published ahead of print (or The Online First) version is considered the version of record, and not an opportunity to make changes prior to print publication. HMDJ will consider replacing this version with the corrected (updated) version and notes the changes that have been made and the date(s) on which the changes were made (in a correction notice at the end of the article). Previous electronic versions prominently note that there are more recent versions of the article. The correction notice will be retained in the print version for record.

Publication in an issue:

In a printed article (Hard copy version), a correction notice will be printed in the next available print issue. The online version of the article will link to the correction notice, and vice versa.

Retractions of research paper:

Retractions are considered by the editors or editorial team in cases of evidence of plagiarism, unreliable findings or data, duplicate publication, and unethical research. The editorial board may consider an expression of concern notice if submitted manuscript is under investigation. All retraction notices explain why the article was retracted. The retraction procedure depends on the publication stage of the article:

Ahead of print version:

A new version of the manuscript will be posted containing just the metadata, with a retraction note replacing the original text. A retraction notice will also be published in the next available print issue. The original text of article will remain accessible.

Publication in an issue or a continuous publication journal:

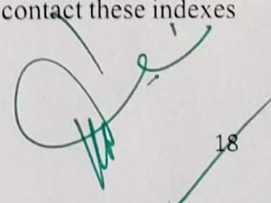
A replacement version of the article will be posted containing just the metadata, with a retraction note replacing the original text. The PDF will be replaced with a version watermarked with "Retracted" but the original text will remain accessible. A retraction notice will also be published in the next available print issue. In rare cases, the journal may have to remove the original content for legal reasons. In such cases, the metadata (title and authors) will be available but text will be replaced with a note mentioning that the article has been removed for legal reasons. A retraction notice will also be published online and/or in print.

Retraction notices are indexed and linked to the original records in Medline and Web of Science if applicable.

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As per policy, the HMDJ wishes to ensure a smooth process to facilitate any change in author name after publication in an issue. As per policy, the authors may change their name for different genuine reasons, for example marriage, divorce, change in religion, change in gender identity, and any other personal reasons. As part of our author's name change policy, the HMDJ will seek to uphold the following guidelines.

- As name change is a deeply personal decision and its possible that an individual may not wish to disclose this change to a large audience. We give option to the author to update their name with or without notice of correction. Unless explicitly requested, the journal will not include correction notice in any journal's format.
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- HMDJ will retain an original copy of the manuscript to ensure that the requested changes have been made accurately and to be able to demonstrate what versions of the article have been published at any given point, should that be required (e.g., for legal purposes). The original version will not be made publicly available.

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Complaints may provide an opportunity and a spur for improvement, and so HMDJ aims to respond quickly, courteously, and constructively to the complaints made by our readers or authors. This policy procedure applies to the complaints that are related to the content, procedures or policies that are the responsibility of HMDJ or our editorial staff. The complaints must relate to content or a procedure that was the responsibility of HMDJ or our editorial staff. HMDJ define it as: "anything defined as a complaint by the complainant" and "anything we believe goes beyond an expression of disagreement with a decision and identifies a perceived failure of process or severe misjudgment". The procedure outlined below aims to be fair to those registering complaints and those complained about.

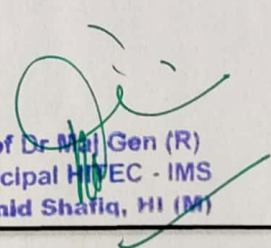
- The complaint should be directly emailed to editor.hmdj@hitec-ims.edu.pk
- All complaints will be reviewed initially by our editorial team within 03 working days and an acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant.
- This team will direct the complaint to the relevant member of the editorial or publishing staff and escalate if required.
- In the case that this initial response is felt to be insufficient, the complainant can request that their complaint is escalated to a more senior member of the team.
- The outcome decision on the complaint made will be intimated to the complainant within one month
- If the complainant remains unhappy, complaints may be escalated to HMDJ Chief Editor, whose decision is final in view to satisfy and justify the complaint.

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Advertising and sponsorship are important to HMDJ in helping us to provide value for our users. Our users and customers expect HMDJ to be trustworthy, independent and to have integrity. Our advertising and sponsorship should support that expectation and these guidelines are to ensure the

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- The advertisements and sponsorship should be delivered in context. Any surreptitious or subliminal advertising is not allowed.
- The sponsored content should be clearly identifiable and nature of any commercial relationship must be transparent to our users.
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- Journal accept advertising and sponsorship from competitors only.
- Advertising and sponsorship are subject to editorial oversight.


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