

Let's Go Publishing!

Vamos Publicar!



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The 3rd Symposium of the *Acta Médica Portuguesa* (AMP) was held in Lisbon on the 22 November 2014 with the contribution of the Editorial Boards of four Portuguese medical journals (*Gastroenterologia*, *Cirurgia*, *Nefrologia*, *Angiologia* and *Cirurgia Vascolar*). Amongst fourteen communications presented in this scientific meeting were those by a science journalist from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (Débora Miranda) and by the Springer Milano's editor (Donatella Rizza). Some major issues emerged from the debate and the presentations in the meeting resume the major challenges facing Portuguese biomedical publications.

The challenge should be addressed in a context where the way of communication is just as important as its contents. It must take into account emerging new professional groups in this area, such as scientific journalists and medical writers,¹ professionals of communication and documentation with a background in different scientific areas involved in the coordination of communication processes of the results obtained by researchers. It is crucial to find a solution that particularly focuses on the cooperation between physicians and non-physicians specialized in scientific edition and publication. In addition, the support of a Communication Department within the Portuguese College of Physicians (*Ordem dos Médicos*) seems to become very useful in order to build bridges between physicians and the media, to comply with languages and contexts, to routinely advise and adequately inform in a timely fashion, as in times of crisis (like the recent transnational and local epidemic outbreaks such as Ebola in Africa and *Legionella* in Portugal, respectively). Scientific authors and articles need to be publicized, increasing impact factor as well as allowing for improved information access to health professionals and the general population.

In addition, authors and reviewers clearly need training. Medicine course curricula should allocate time to scientific writing and publishing. It became obvious to all those attending this conference that the world tendency of scientific communication involves processing and disclosure of contents in English – which along the 3rd AMP Symposium was repeatedly called as “the new Esperanto”. In fact, even the great international editors assume some difficulty in keeping up with scientific advances when these are communicated in other languages. As such, in order to foster scientific citations, it is essential to communicate in a language accessible to readers worldwide, at least including the abstract, even when a bilingual edition is an alternative.

We should mention that the AMP has already held two other Symposiums, one in 2012, with the contribution of 13 speakers, among whom the Editors-in-Chief of five of the major Portuguese Journals (*Pneumologia*, *Reumatologia*, *Cardiologia*, *Medicina Geral e Familiar*, *Acta Médica Portuguesa*). The 2nd Symposium AMP was held in 22-23 November 2013, with the contribution of the editors of 10 Portuguese journals (*Pneumologia*, *Reumatologia*, *Cardiologia*, *Dermatologia*, *Pediatria*, *Anestesiologia*, *Cirurgia Córdio-Torácica e Vascolar*, *Medicina Geral e Familiar*, *Medicina Física e Reabilitação*, *Acta Médica Portuguesa*) as well as one of the editors of the *British Medical Journal* (Tiago Villanueva). With a different layout, the 2013's edition included two workshops, one on systematic review and meta-analysis, organized by the Cochrane group (Christian Gluud and Dimitrinka Nikolova) and the other by an illustrator from *New England Journal of Medicine* (Daniel Müller). Twenty-two speakers gave their contribution, which allowed for the presentation of a strategic report's draft on biomedical scientific publication in Portugal (Think Tank AMP 2013).²

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The *Acta Médica Portuguesa* aims to become the starting point in the core business of biomedical scientific edition and publication. So far its contribution has been accomplished through three scientific meetings involving 15 medical reviewers and 49 communications.

The AMP is currently receiving approximately 750 annual submissions and a monthly periodicity has even been proposed. Several plans are currently underway and/or awaiting approval by the Portuguese College of Physicians (*Ordem dos Médicos*), such as the printed edition (with a 7,000 copy run), the regulation of publicity aimed to ensure the review's financial sustainability, recruitment of a communication agency for assisting in work and authors' disclosure, structural enhancement and stabilisation, with the recruitment of one more element for the permanent staff and readily available and motivated Associate Editors

to be involved in the management of review procedures as well as in the different phases of the editorial process; *Acta Médica Portuguesa's* integration within the *Ordem dos Médicos* organisational chart, with the Editor-in-Chief's mission, perspective and hierarchical rank clearly defined; setting up a proper work area for the Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors, the authors and other stakeholders.

At the time of writing the AMP remains as the official scientific journal of the *Ordem dos Médicos*, a Portuguese journal of the highest quality, with a social responsibility in science dissemination. The AMP is the only Portuguese medical journal with an impact factor in the "General & Internal Medicine" rank, where the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA*, *Annals of Internal Medicine* and the *British Medical Journal* are included. At the end of 2014 it ranked 132nd in 150 foreign journals.

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