

Editorial independence

The title may sound obvious, an absolute consensus. Many may find it unnecessary to discuss the issue in a CSP editorial, given the journal's clear and longstanding tradition of independence. Still, we are just starting our work as Editors and insist on reaffirming this principle as the basis for editorial activity. Specifically, we wish to state our position at the time of the first change of directors in the Sergio Arouca National School of Public Health (ENSP)/Fiocruz since we took over as editors of CSP.

Science editors are responsible for the quality and integrity of the publications in their journals. In order to properly fulfill their role, they basically need to conduct their work with competence and independence. According to the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME; <http://www.wame.org/resources/policies#independence>), "*editorial independence* [means that], *editors-in-chief should have full authority over the editorial content of the journal ... and when information is published*". Their editorial decisions should not be influenced by the owning organization's interests. Editorial responsibility is the matching contribution by editorial work vis-à-vis the funders of the journal, and the journal's performance evaluation should be based on complete transparency of criteria.

The sustainability and independence of journals are so decisive that the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE; http://www.icmje.org/ethical_2editor.html) recommends that editors have direct access to the owning organization's top management in order to effectively guarantee editorial freedom.

Threats to editorial independence include curtailment of publication of any content contrary to the policy of the scientific association that maintains the journal, or commercial interests in the case of journals owned by private organizations. Another more subtle form of threat is pressure to favor the publication of manuscripts by given authors.

The ENSP/Fiocruz is the institution that founded and owns CSP. Approximately 80% of the funding for CSP comes from the ENSP budget. The rest comes from subscriptions and funds received from government research funding agencies like CNPq and FAPERJ. In nearly three decades, the journal, an editorial project conceived by ENSP, has become a source of pride for the institution and for the field of Public Health in Brazil as a whole. This success is based on a free editorial process, committed to scientific debate and the dissemination of knowledge through the publication of articles selected on the basis of merit and social relevance.

The journal's independence is reflected in the composition of its editorial board and the diversity of affiliations of its authors. Among the three current Editors (appointed by the Director of ENSP), one is a professor at the Institute for Studies in Collective Health of the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro (IESC/UFRJ) and another is a researcher at the Institute of Scientific and Technological Communication and Information at Fiocruz. The associate editors are affiliated with diverse academic institutions in the Northeast, Southeast, and South of Brazil. Only one-fourth of the authors are affiliated with institutions in the State of Rio de Janeiro (only 10% with Fiocruz itself).

It is highly gratifying to work in this setting. It is especially encouraging to note that the candidates in the election for new Director of ENSP all defend the traditional commitment to editorial independence and high-quality science publishing. By the time this issue of the journal is published, the new Director will already have been elected. We congratulate him and wish him success. We also look forward to a prosperous future for CSP, a science journal oriented by the principles of independence and free access.

Marilia Sá Carvalho

Claudia Travassos

Cláudia Medina Coeli

Editors