

The Future Role of Student-Led Journal in Medical Education: 2022-2032

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Ting-Wei Kao (1,2,3)

1- Department of Internal Medicine,
National Taiwan University Hospital, Taipei
100, Taiwan

2- Academic delegate, Asian Medical
Student Association-Taiwan

3- Department of Civil Affairs, New Taipei
City Government, Taipei 220, Taiwan

Correspondence: Dr. Ting-Wei Kao M.D.
National Taiwan University Hospital.
Address: No. 7, Chung-Shan South Road,
Taipei 100, Taiwan.

Email: twkao315@ntuh.gov.tw

Dear editor,

Academic participation in medical students has been correlated with future commitment and long-term achievement in research¹. Munzer *et al* suggested a growing trend of scholar engagement by physicians in training², and student-led journals (SLJ) were among the contributors which facilitate early exposure to the submission and peer-review process. However, the caliber of such a platform must adapt in the next decade to better nurture the development of research work. As a leading senior reviewer for the

Journal, I herein address several personal perspectives regarding the future role of this SLJ.

First, an edition of a featured section on a regular basis is a feasible approach to collect quality research. In conjunction with the current academic competition in the annual assembly of the *association* and the bimonthly-published *eNewsletter*, a special issue focusing on topics with an ongoing debate or of contemporary significance, increments the value and visibility of the *Journal*. Artificial intelligence, telehealth, stem cell, and precision medicine exemplify those subjects with peculiar recent attention. Medical students could be trained to operate synergistically with senior editors and experience the procedure of establishing a topic, calling for papers, and article selection.

Besides, modifying the review process to a more interactive fashion will encourage the participation of medical students as well as maximize educational benefit. As several SLJs adopt, I propose the incorporation of a two-stage workflow, in which students will evaluate the submission first and the comments on the manuscript before the article is advanced to be assessed by external senior reviewers. The advantage is to invigorate critical analysis of medical students at

first-hand, whereas discordant, if not contrary, opinions responded to the authors in the respective two stages has been a conundrum according to previous experience. Feedback by subsequent senior reviewer or even an author toward the primary student is therefore necessitated to improve future quality of assessments.

Finally, a multilateral and mutually interactive forum that allows conversation among students, reviewers, and *Journal* editors will enhance the capabilities of research articulation. Students will also be oriented with the characteristics of SLJ and appropriate submissions would therein be promoted. Meanwhile, junior reviewers could participate in the collaborative reviewing platform to sharpen the skills of critical appraisal. A rudimentary web-based methodology was established by Podder *et al* to evaluate randomized controlled trials before publication³. It is worthwhile to consider the implementation of such a modality in a SLJ as well.

As the next decade approaches, the role of SLJ in medical education will transform from a passive recipient of submission toward an active taskforce that expedite academic engrossment. Engagements from both ends of submitters and

reviewers are prerequisite to facilitate such revolution.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ting Wei Kao, MD

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