



# **THE HEALER**

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# 1. About the Journal

The Healer Journal of Biomedical and Health Sciences (HJBHS) is an international, open-access, double-blinded, peer-reviewed, biannual journal dedicated to making scientific knowledge & research related to biomedical and health sciences widely accessible. It publishes high-quality research work, ensuring global visibility and meaningful impact on clinical practice.

## **1.1 Aims & Objectives**

The Healer Journal of Biomedical and Health Sciences (HJBHS) is an international, open-access, double-blinded, peer-reviewed journal published biannually by Physio Rehab and Research Center (Pvt) Ltd. The journal provides a multidisciplinary platform for research from biological sciences, medicine, allied health sciences, pharmacy, psychology, and related fields. The journal publishes original research articles, systematic and narrative reviews, case reports, short communications, special communications, editorials, and letters to the editor.

All submissions undergo a double-blind peer-review process to ensure academic integrity, methodological rigor, and adherence to ethical research standards. The journal follows the ICMJE recommendations and internationally recognized guidelines for research reporting and publication ethics. By promoting evidence-based practice and fostering collaboration among researchers, clinicians, educators, and health professionals worldwide, HJBHS bridges the gap between scientific discovery and practical healthcare application. Through its print and online-first publications, the journal supports global knowledge exchange that informs clinical decision-making, enriches academic dialogue, and drives innovation in biomedical and health sciences.

HJBHS seeks to:

- Provide a credible and rigorous platform for the publication of high-quality research in biological, medicine, and allied health sciences.
- Promote evidence-based clinical and community health practices through the timely dissemination of impactful scientific findings.
- Foster collaboration among clinicians, researchers, academics, policymakers, and students across diverse health professions.
- Support ethical, transparent, and internationally aligned publication practices following global reporting guidelines.
- Encourage innovation in healthcare through research on emerging technologies and the latest clinical interventions.
- Contribute to global healthcare improvement by highlighting research relevant to patient outcomes, rehabilitation effectiveness, and public health advancement.

## **1.2 Scope of Journal**

HJBHS is published by Physio Rehab and Research Center (Pvt) Ltd, follows the whole publication process in accordance with HEC rules & guidelines, and international standards of research journals. Journal will use Open Journal System (OJS) for all types of communications and publication processes to ensure transparency, integrity, and efficiency. Journal will aim to be indexed with international indexing agencies, including Web of Science and SCOPUS, as per HEC guidelines. The journal has its Editorial and Advisory Board. The Editorial Board is comprised of the Chief Editor, Editor, and Managing Editor. The Advisory Board comprises reputed national and international subject specialists with research expertise.

HJBHS publishes concise, evidence-based research that advances biomedical sciences and the broader field of health sciences. Submissions may include original research, reviews, clinical studies, and case reports across biological, medical, pharmaceutical, and health sciences disciplines. The journal welcomes scholarly contributions from fields including:

- Medicine
- Biological Sciences

- Allied Health Sciences
- Nursing and Midwifery Sciences
- Psychology, Behavioral Sciences, and Mental Health
- Dentistry and Oral Health Sciences
- Pharmacology, Pharmacy Practice, and Drug Research
- Health Professions Education / Medical Education
- Health Data Science, Digital Health, and Medical Informatics
- Biotechnology, Biomedical Engineering, and Health Technologies

### **1.3 Procedure for Publication**

The journal uses the Open Journal System (OJS) for submission of manuscripts, review process, and publication of issues and volumes of the journal. All authors, reviewers, and editors must register on OJS after accepting the terms and conditions in the declaration. The Journal will continue its double-blind peer review policy to ensure research quality and transparency of the process. Call for papers shall be published on the journal website. All manuscripts will be received electronically through the Open Journal System. Please read section 2, “Guidelines and Policies of Journal” for further details and see the publication process in Annexure B.

## 2. Guidelines

### 2.1 Author Guidelines

HJBHS invites high-quality submissions in the fields of biomedical and health sciences. Authors are expected to submit original, evidence-based work, including research articles, reviews, and case studies, that advance knowledge and clinical practice. All submissions must strictly follow the journal's guidelines, which are aligned with internationally recognized standards set by COPE, ICMJE, and DOAJ. Compliance ensures ethical research conduct, transparency, and the integrity of the peer review process. Authors are encouraged to review these guidelines carefully before submission to facilitate a smooth and efficient editorial process.

**Human rights:** If the work involves the use of human subjects, the author should ensure that the work described has been carried out following 'The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association' (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans. Authors should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

**Conflict of Interest:** To prevent the information on potential conflict of interest for authors from being overlooked or misplaced, that information must be part of the manuscript. It should therefore also be included as a single line in the manuscript.

**Submission declaration and verification:** Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture, or academic thesis, that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright holder. If additional papers have or will be published with any overlap of the current dataset, it is the authors' responsibility to notify the editor at the time of submission.

**Changes to authorship:** Authors are expected to consider the list and the order of authors before submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion, or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only before the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the corresponding author: (a) the reason for the change in the author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal, or rearrangement. In the case of the addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed. The editor can consider the addition, deletion, or rearrangement of authors after the manuscript has been accepted only in exceptional circumstances. While the editor considers the request, the publication of the manuscript will be suspended. If the manuscript has already been published in an online issue, any requests approved by the editor will result in a corrigendum.

**Clinical trial results:** The policy of HJBHS regarding clinical trial registration is consistent with the position of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). Results may be posted in the same clinical trials registry in which primary registration resides. This will not be considered to be a prior publication if the results are posted in the form of a brief, structured (less than 500 words) abstract or table. However, divulging results in other circumstances (e.g., investors' meetings) is discouraged and may jeopardize consideration of the manuscript. Authors should fully disclose all postings in registries of results of the same or closely related work.

**Reporting clinical trials:** Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow chart/diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrollment, randomization, withdrawal, and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure.

**Registration of clinical trials:** Registration in a public trial registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal following ICJME recommendations. Trials

must register at or before the onset of patient enrollment. The clinical trial registration number should be included at the end of the abstract of the article. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

**Authorship Letter:** The corresponding author has to submit an authorship letter at the time of submission of the manuscript, duly signed by all co-authors, along with a description of their contributions, affiliations, and email addresses. Declaration of any potential conflict of interest, transfer of copyrights, and funding will also be mentioned in it.

**Open Access:** This is an open-access journal; all articles are published under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](#), will be free for everyone to read, permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction with proper attribution.

**Informed consent and patient details:** Studies on patients or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent, which should be documented in the paper. Appropriate consents, permissions, and releases must be obtained where an author wishes to include case details or other personal information or images of patients and any other individuals in HJBHS publications. Written consents must be retained by the author, but copies should not be provided to the journal. Only if specifically requested by the journal in exceptional circumstances, the author must provide copies of the consents or evidence.

**Double-Blind Peer-Review:** This journal operates a double-blind review process. All contributions will be initially assessed by the editor for suitability for the journal. Manuscripts deemed suitable are then typically sent to two independent expert reviewers (one national and one international) to assess the scientific quality of the paper. The Editor is responsible for the final decision regarding the acceptance or rejection of articles. The Editor's decision is final.

## **Editorials**

HJBHS publishes editorials on scientific or professional issues of biomedical and health sciences matters and innovations in each issue. Editorials are usually commissioned; however, anyone wishing to write an editorial should contact the Journal Editor for discussion about the topic. Editorials should be no more than 1500 words with a maximum of three authors and 20 references. Commissioned editorials are not formally peer-reviewed, but may be subject to informal review. Non-commissioned editorials will be formally peer-reviewed.

## **Types of Manuscripts Accepted**

HJBHS accepts the following types of manuscripts:

- **Original Articles:** Reports of novel research findings.
- **Systematic Reviews:** Comprehensive reviews following a systematic methodology to synthesize evidence.
- **Meta-Analyses:** Quantitative analyses combining results from multiple studies.
- **Case Reports:** Unique or illustrative cases with significant educational value.
- **Case Studies:** Detailed examinations of specific cases providing practical insights.
- **Letters to the Editor:** Commentary on published articles or relevant scientific issues.
- **Editorials:** Expert opinions or perspectives on current topics in biomedical and health sciences.

## **Submission Process**

- **Register/Login:** Create an account or log in to the submission portal.
- **Upload Files:** Submit the manuscript and supplementary materials.
- **Metadata:** Provide all required information (e.g., author details, corresponding author, keywords).
- **Acknowledgement/Declarations:** Acknowledgement of Copyrights Statement, AI Usage Declaration, Ethical Review Board Approval, and Conflicts of Interest.

You may refer to the “Submission Process Guide” on the journal website. Once you have submitted the article, all correspondence will be sent by email. In case of any submission-related queries, please send an email to [editor@healerjournal.com](mailto:editor@healerjournal.com)

## **Submission Requirements**

- **Originality:** Manuscripts must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration elsewhere.
- **Language:** All submissions must be in English (British or American spelling is acceptable, but should be consistent).
- **Submission Platform:** Manuscripts must be submitted via the HJBHS submission portal.
- **Supplementary Materials:** Authors may include datasets or any additional files as part of their submission.
- **Acknowledgements & Declarations:** AI Usage Declaration, Copyrights, and Conflict of Interests must be submitted at the time of submission.
- **Authorship Letter and Ethical Review Board Approval** (available in downloads)
- **Authors undertaking** form submission (available in downloads)

## **Submission Preparation Checklist**

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors who do not adhere to these guidelines.

- The submission has not been previously published, nor submitted before another journal for consideration (or an explanation has been provided in Comments to the Editor).
- The submission file is in OpenOffice, Microsoft Word, or RTF document file format.
- Where available, URLs for the references have been provided.
- The text adheres to the stylistics and bibliographic requirements outlined.
- A maximum of six authors is allowed in a manuscript.

- A maximum of four tables/figures is allowed, but we may consider more depending on data analysis and its importance.

## **Formatting Guidelines**

- **Font and Spacing:** Use Cambria, size 12, single-line spacing, justified alignment.
- **Figures and Tables:** All illustrations, figures, and tables are placed within the text at the appropriate points, rather than at the end.
- **Abbreviations:** Define at first use and include a list at the end of the manuscript.
- **Word Count:**
  - Original Research: 2,500 words (excluding references)
  - Review Articles: 3,500 words
  - Systematic Review / Meta Analysis: 5,000 words
  - Case Studies / Case Reports: 2,000 words
  - Letter to Editor / Editorials: 1,500 words

## **Manuscript Preparation**

**Title:** The title should be concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.

**Running title:** Write a short running title on the title page.

**Author names and Affiliations:** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the city and country name, and the e-mail address of each author.

**Corresponding author:** Indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. Ensure that the e-mail addresses and contact numbers are given. The corresponding author details should be included on the title page.

**Abstract:** The structured abstract should comprise the following: Background, Objective, Methodology, Results, Conclusion. A concise and factual abstract is required of a maximum of 300 words. The abstract should state the purpose of the research briefly, the principal results, and the major conclusions. An abstract is often presented separately from the article, so it must be able to stand alone. For this reason, references should be avoided. Also, non-standard or uncommon abbreviations should be avoided, but if essential, they must be defined at their first mention in the abstract itself.

**Keywords:** Immediately after the abstract, provide 4 – 6 keywords aligned with Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). Avoid general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

**Units and Abbreviations:** This journal does not favor abbreviations in the text. However, 95% CI, SD, OR, RR, MD, and such commonly used terms do not require spelling out in full at first mention (they would usually appear within parentheses), but even when presented outside of parentheses, these do not require defining. The journal uses an approved list of units and abbreviations.

**Introduction:** State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

**Methodology:** Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described.

**Results:** Results should be clear and concise. Present key findings using tables and figures where appropriate.

**Discussion:** This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature. Interpret findings, acknowledge limitations, and compare with existing research.

**Conclusion:** The main conclusion of the study should be presented in a short concluding paragraph after the end of the discussion section. Summarize the study's significance and implications.

**Conflict of Interest:** To prevent the information on potential conflicts of interest for authors from being overlooked or misplaced, that information must be part of the manuscript. It should therefore also be included after the conclusion.

**Tables & Figures:** Ensure that each figure has a caption that comprises a brief title or a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum, but explain all symbols and abbreviations used. Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Write captions below the table and place them next to the relevant text in the article. Number the tables consecutively following their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article. The maximum number of tables/figures to be included is 4; however, in some cases, additional ones may be considered due to their importance.

## References

- Follow Vancouver style with a minimum of 20 references.
- Number references sequentially as they appear in the text.
- For three authors or fewer, list all; for more than three, use "et al."
- Use the full journal title or "non-abbreviated journal name".
- All references mentioned in the reference list are cited in the text, and vice versa.
- Permission has been obtained for the use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet).

## Reference Examples

- Journal Article: Patel A, Nguyen T, O'Connor D. Impact of dietary fiber intake on glycemic control in type 2 diabetes. International Journal of Diabetes and Metabolic Health 2024; 12(2): 115–23.
- Online Document: World Health Organization. World report on ageing and health. [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2015 [cited 2025 Dec 16]. Available from: <https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/world-report-2015/en/>
- Book: Roberts H, Garcia M. Essentials of Clinical Epidemiology. 3rd ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill; 2021.
- Chapter in an Edited Book: Singh R, Ahmed S. Immunotherapy approaches in cancer treatment. In: Thompson J, Lee A, editors. Contemporary Oncology Therapeutics. London: Cambridge University Press; 2023. p. 45–68.

## Ethical Considerations

- **Ethics Approval and Consent:** Provide ethics committee details and reference numbers for studies involving humans or animals.
- **Consent for Publication:** Obtain written consent for any identifiable information, including case reports.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Declare all financial and non-financial competing interests.
- **Funding Transparency:** Disclose all funding sources and their roles in the study.

## Post-Acceptance Process

- **Proofreading and Copyediting:** Manuscripts are reviewed for language, clarity, and formatting.
- **DOI Assignment:** Each article is assigned a unique DOI for permanent access.
- **Proof Approval:** Authors must review and approve final proofs before publication.

## Final Submission Checklist

The following list will be useful during the final checking of an article before sending it to the journal for review. All necessary files have been uploaded. Ensure that the following items are present:

- One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:
  - Institution affiliation
  - E-mail address
- Keywords
- All figure and table captions
- All tables (including title, description, footnotes)
- Further considerations
- The manuscript has been spell-checked and grammar-checked. References are in the correct format for this journal.
- All references mentioned in the reference list are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)

## **2.2 Reviewer Guidelines**

HJBHS strictly follows the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers. Reviewers play a vital role in maintaining the scientific quality, ethical integrity, and academic credibility of the journal.

### **Ethical Responsibilities and Confidentiality**

- All manuscripts submitted to HJBHS are treated as the intellectual property of the authors. Any misuse, reproduction, or disclosure of unpublished material is considered unethical and unlawful.
- Reviewers must maintain strict confidentiality and must not use any part of the manuscript for personal research, future publications, or professional activities.
- Author identities and affiliations must remain confidential. Reviewers are strictly prohibited from contacting authors directly under any circumstances.

- Discussion of manuscript content with subject experts or colleagues is permitted only after informing the Editor, and confidentiality must be preserved at all times.

### **Conflict of Interest and Review Timelines**

- If a reviewer is unable to evaluate a manuscript impartially due to a conflict of interest or any other reason, the manuscript should be returned to the Editor within seven (07) working days, along with a clear explanation.
- Once a reviewer accepts the review assignment, a comprehensive review should be completed within two (02) weeks. If additional time is required, the reviewer must inform the Editor in advance.

### **Role of the Reviewer**

- The final decision regarding acceptance, revision, or rejection of a manuscript rests solely with the Editor.
- Reviewers should not state acceptance or rejection decisions in comments intended for authors. Confidential recommendations may be communicated separately to the Editor, clearly referencing the manuscript ID.

**Criteria for Manuscript Evaluation:** Reviewers are requested to assess manuscripts based on the following criteria:

- Scientific reliability and professional depth of knowledge
- Relevance of the research question to biomedical and health sciences
- Originality and contribution to existing knowledge
- Adequacy and clarity of the abstract and appropriateness of keywords
- Suitability of the research design and methodology, including statistical validity
- Clear description of inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Relevance, credibility, and presentation of results
- Sound interpretation of data and justification of conclusions
- Relevance and depth of the discussion in supporting the authors' claims

- Accuracy, relevance, and currency of references, including identification of major omissions
- Clarity, relevance, and proper labeling of tables and figures
- Compliance with ethical standards in research
- Overall organization, clarity, and adherence to HJBHS author guidelines

### **Professional Conduct and Constructive Feedback**

- Reviews must be objective, unbiased, and independent of the authors' geographical location or institutional affiliation.
- A fair evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript is essential. Constructive criticism supported by clear reasoning and references, where appropriate, is strongly encouraged.
- Reviewers should not recommend citation of their own work solely to increase personal citation counts. References may be suggested only when academically relevant.
- Discourteous, dismissive, or abrasive language must be avoided. All comments should be professional, respectful, and well-documented.
- While reviewers are not required to correct grammatical or language errors, any assistance in improving clarity and readability is appreciated.
- If additional insights arise after submission of the review report, reviewers may communicate them to the Editor via email.

**Editorial Discretion:** The Editor values reviewers' recommendations; however, editorial decisions are based on multiple expert evaluations and journal policies. Reviewers should not expect every recommendation to be reflected in the final decision.

### **3. Journal Policies**

Journal policies are guidelines and regulations established by academic and professional journals to ensure the integrity, quality, and ethical standards of the publications they produce. These policies typically cover a range of topics, including submission guidelines, peer review processes, authorship criteria, plagiarism checks, and conflict of interest disclosures. They are designed to maintain transparency and fairness in the publication process, ensuring that all submitted work is evaluated based on merit and adheres to ethical research practices. Additionally, journal policies may include open access options, data sharing requirements, and guidelines for addressing errors or retractions. By adhering to these policies, journals aim to uphold the credibility of the scientific and academic community, fostering trust among authors, reviewers, and readers alike.

#### **3.1 Editorial Policy**

HJBHS is an international peer-reviewed journal dedicated to advancing scientific knowledge in biomedical and health sciences. The journal welcomes high-quality submissions that contribute to evidence-based clinical practice and research related to the field of biomedical and health sciences.

The journal publishes a wide range of article types, including original quantitative and qualitative studies, clinical trials, case reports, case series, analytical and descriptive research, laboratory-based studies, short communications, letters to the editor, and special topic reports. The journal also considers high-quality secondary research such as systematic reviews, meta-analyses, scoping reviews, narrative reviews, practice guidelines, methodological papers, conference abstracts, innovation reports, and invited expert contributions. All submissions must be written clearly enough to be understood by a broad readership and should contribute to improved patient care, professional practice, or scientific understanding.

Manuscripts submitted to HJBHS must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration by any other journal. The journal follows the guidelines of the

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) in all matters of authorship, ethical conduct, peer review, and publication integrity. Authors are encouraged to review ICMJE and COPE guidelines at [www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org) and [www.publicationethics.org](http://www.publicationethics.org)

**Authorship Criteria:** Authorship confers credit and has important academic, social, and financial implications as well as accountability for published work. It is the moral obligation of an editorial board to ensure that individuals making significant contributions to a paper are given credit for it, but also to ensure that the authors understand their role in taking responsibility for their publication. HJBHS follows the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\) guidelines](#), which recommend that authorship be based on the following four criteria:

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

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria but have made a substantive contribution to the research should be acknowledged in the acknowledgment section of the article. We accept publications/articles from both National and International Authors. It is important to note that:

- Funding agencies, data collectors, and biostatisticians do not justify authorship.
- Once the authorship certificate is submitted, no further changes will be allowed in the sequence and/or addition of new authors.

**Authors' Contributions:** An author contribution statement defining each author's contribution to the article should be provided. This must be done in two forms: by filling out the authors' undertaking and authorship letter, which can be downloaded from the

journal website. For review articles, where individual statements are less applicable, a statement should be included that clarifies who was responsible for the ideation, who performed the literature search and/or data analysis, and who drafted and revised the work.

**Deceased Authors:** Deceased authors would be included with a death dagger (†) next to the author's name and a footnote stating that the author is deceased, along with the date of death.

**Submission of Manuscript:** Authors should prepare the manuscript according to the specifications given on the journal [author's guidelines](#). All manuscripts submitted through the appropriate channel will be entertained for review. Manuscripts sent to the editor's email should not be accepted.

Authors listed on the manuscript should have met the requirements for Authorship specified above. Without final acceptance from the corresponding author, no manuscript will be published. Once the document is submitted to our journal, it is expected that all the authors have been accepted and they will be bound to the terms and conditions of the journal. The contact information of all authors and the Declaration of Conflicts of Interest should be stated in the manuscript.

**Manuscript Withdrawal Policy:** Once the corresponding author has confirmed to withdraw the submitted article, the author has to communicate with the Editor-in-Chief via email. A manuscript withdrawal form will be sent to the author's email, following which all the respective authors should sign and express their interest in withdrawal. Upon receiving the completed form from the corresponding author, further processing of the article will be stopped. There are very minimal processing charges, and no publication charges are involved in the publication of articles.

**Conflict of Interest:** Conflicts may be due to personal reasons, financial relationships, or academic competitions. It may be due to intellectual passion also. Whatever the reason for conflicts of interest, the credibility of the journal, author, and science itself will be influenced from null to high potential. These influences may affect the scientific judgment of the research carried out. It is very important to disclose the conflicts of

interest that occurred during the process of research. This will help the evaluators, critics, and readers to understand the situations and the research that took place.

**Patient Consent: Informed and Written:** HJBHS follows the World Medical Association (WMA) guidelines that developed the Declaration of Helsinki as a statement of ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects, material, and data. All registered clinical trainees should have informed consents from the patients in which the procedure and method of research are mentioned in detail, and all the possible effects were clearly explained to the patients.

**Research and Publication Misconduct:** HJBHS follows the guidelines provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) for dealing with research and publication misconduct. Duplicating existing publications, a high level of copy in plagiarism, fraudulent or fabricated data, changes in authorship, not disclosing a conflict of interest, and research without ethical clearance can be listed under research and publication misconduct. However, in suspected cases of misconduct, a manuscript may be revealed to members of the university's ethical committee and institutions/organizations that may require it for the resolution of the misconduct.

**Role of Plagiarism Committee:** All the submitted articles are scanned with Turnitin, and the similarity report should be less than 19%. Upon completion of the plagiarism scan, they analyze the quality of the manuscript and report to the editor, after which the manuscript is assigned for the review process. A plagiarism report is created, which is emailed to the author along with a review report. The committee looks into plagiarism-related issues and deals with them according to COPE guidelines.

**Acknowledgment:** Acknowledgment should cover the persons other than those who claim authorship, especially Individuals who worked for manuscript development, funding agency, or persons who provided resources, Organizations that provided support for the smooth run of the research.

**Confidentiality:** HJBHS will not disclose any research paper submitted to it. Once the original research, after proper registration in any clinical registry or scientific agency, is submitted to the journal will be treated as the most confidential material, and

maintaining its confidentiality is our responsibility. We will share the article with manuscript developers, reviewers, and editors in various stages of processing after the submission is confirmed.

**Review of Articles:** Submitted manuscripts are reviewed for originality, significance, adequacy of documentation, reader interest, and composition. Manuscripts not submitted according to instructions will be returned to the author for correction before beginning the peer review/process. Revised manuscripts are judged on the adequacy of responses to suggestions and criticisms made during the initial review. Each manuscript will be checked for technical, epidemiological, statistical, ethical, and language corrections. All parts of accepted manuscripts are subject to editing for scientific accuracy and clarity by the office of the Editor. The editorial board of the journal holds the right to a final decision of accepting or rejecting any article for publication in the journal, at any stage, including the editorial review.

### **3.2 Editorial Structure and Workflow**

HJBHS maintains a rigorous and transparent editorial process to ensure the publication of high-quality, evidence-based research. Every manuscript undergoes structured evaluation at multiple stages, guided by ethical standards and best practices in scholarly publishing. The following roles and responsibilities define the journal's editorial workflow:

**Editorial Office:** The Editorial Office conducts the initial administrative screening of all submissions to ensure completeness of required documentation, including author forms, ethics approval, and fee receipts. Submissions found to be incomplete are returned to the authors for correction before further processing.

**Editor / Handling Editor:** The Editor or Handling Editor evaluates each manuscript for technical quality, relevance, originality, and scientific merit. They make preliminary editorial decisions, which may include rejection, return for revision, or progression to peer review. Responsibilities also include selecting and inviting suitable peer reviewers, assessing reviewer reports, and providing final recommendations regarding acceptance,

revision, or rejection. All editorial decisions are conducted in compliance with COPE and ICMJE ethical standards.

**Editorial Board Members:** Editorial Board Members may contribute as subject-matter experts during the initial triage or peer review process. They provide guidance to the Editor-in-Chief on journal policies, scope, and publication standards, and may assist in rapid reviews or in resolving conflicting reviewer evaluations.

**Chief Editor:** The Chief Editor holds ultimate responsibility for all editorial decisions, including manuscript acceptance or rejection. They safeguard editorial independence, maintain the integrity of the journal, and ensure compliance with established policies. The Chief Editor also oversees the resolution of ethical concerns and complaints, following COPE-recommended procedures.

**Managing Editor:** The Managing Editor oversees the operational aspects of the journal's editorial workflow. They coordinate the smooth progression of manuscripts from submission to publication, maintain communication with authors, reviewers, and editors, and ensure adherence to timelines, journal policies, and ethical standards. While editorial decisions are finalized by the Chief Editor, the Managing Editor ensures their efficient implementation.

**Copyeditor / Production Team:** Following acceptance, the Copyeditor and Production Team ensure manuscripts meet formatting, grammatical, and technical standards. They prepare final galley proofs and coordinate author approval before publication to ensure high-quality, error-free output.

### **3.3 Publication Ethical Policy**

HJBHS adheres to a transparent, timely, and fair editorial process at every stage, ensuring ethical standards, research integrity, and high-quality publication practices. The journal strives to uphold the highest standards of ethical research, transparency, and integrity in all stages of manuscript submission, peer review, and publication. Authors are expected to comply with the ethical guidelines set by the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)** at <https://publicationethics.org/> and other internationally recognized standards. All research involving human participants or experimental

interventions must have prior approval from the relevant Institutional Ethical and Research Committee, and ethical considerations, including patient safety, informed consent, and the management of control groups, must be clearly addressed. For studies involving previously published tables, figures, or photographs, written permission must be obtained from the original author(s) and publisher, and identifiable patient information must be fully anonymized unless consent is provided.

All submitted manuscripts undergo an initial desk review by the Editorial Committee to ensure compliance with the journal's scope, formatting guidelines, research methodology, language quality, and conceptual clarity. Manuscripts failing these criteria may be rejected at this stage. For accepted manuscripts, the similarity index report is generated in line with HEC policy, and papers may be accepted or rejected based on the findings. Accepted papers are then sent to two reviewers selected from a regularly updated, editorial board-approved reviewer panel. The journal does not allow in-house institutional reviewers. Authors must disclose any conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, as well as any sponsorship or material support related to their work. Prior approval and declarations regarding the use of medicines, devices, or experimental materials must be included.

Upon final acceptance, including reviewer feedback and editorial proofreading, manuscripts are published in online format. HJBHS aims to publish at least five articles per issue, with efforts to include seven to ten articles. At least one-fourth of the published articles should have international authorship, and no more than 5% of publications may be self-institutional as per HEC policy. Immediate family members of the editorial team may publish no more than one paper in three consecutive issues.

### **3.4 Ethics and Malpractice Policy**

The journal that follows the ICMJE's [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#), it is expected of authors, reviewers, and editors that they follow the best-practice guidelines on ethical behavior contained therein. A selection of key points is included below, but you should always refer to the three documents listed above for full details.

## **Duties of Editors**

**Fair play and editorial independence:** Editors evaluate submitted manuscripts exclusively based on their academic merit (importance, originality, study's validity, clarity) and their relevance to the journal's scope, without regard to the authors' race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, citizenship, religious belief, political philosophy, or institutional affiliation. Decisions to edit and publish are not determined by the policies of governments or any other agencies outside of the journal itself. The Editor-in-Chief has full authority over the entire editorial content of the journal and the timing of publication of that content.

**Confidentiality:** Editors and editorial staff will not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate.

**Disclosure and conflicts of interest:** Editors and editorial board members will not use unpublished information disclosed in a submitted manuscript for their own research purposes without the authors' explicit written consent. Privileged information or ideas obtained by editors as a result of handling the manuscript will be kept confidential and not used for their personal advantage. Editors will recuse themselves from considering manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships/connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the papers; instead, they will ask another member of the editorial board to handle the manuscript.

**Publication decisions:** The editors ensure that all submitted manuscripts being considered for publication undergo double-blind peer review by at least two reviewers who are experts in the field. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for deciding which of the manuscripts submitted to the journal will be published, based on the validation of the work in question, its importance to researchers and readers, the reviewers' comments, and such legal requirements as are currently in force regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The Editor-in-Chief may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

**Involvement and cooperation in investigations:** Editors (in conjunction with the publisher and/or society) will take responsive measures when ethical concerns are raised concerning a submitted manuscript or published paper. Every reported act of unethical publishing behavior will be looked into, even if it is discovered years after publication.

## **Duties of Reviewers**

**Contribution to editorial decisions:** Peer review assists editors in making editorial decisions and, through editorial communications with authors, may assist authors in improving their manuscripts. Peer review is an essential component of formal scholarly communication and lies at the heart of scientific endeavor.

**Promptness:** Any invited referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should immediately notify the editors and decline the invitation to review so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

**Confidentiality:** Any manuscripts received for review are confidential documents and must be treated as such; they must not be shown to or discussed with others except if authorized by the Editor-in-Chief (who would only do so under exceptional and specific circumstances). This also applies to invited reviewers who decline the review invitation.

**Standards of objectivity:** Reviews should be conducted objectively, and observations formulated clearly with supporting arguments so that authors can use them for improving the manuscript. Personal criticism of the authors is inappropriate.

**Acknowledgement of sources:** Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that is an observation, derivation, or argument that has been reported in previous publications should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also notify the editors of any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other manuscript (published or unpublished) of which they have personal knowledge.

**Disclosure and conflicts of interest:** Any invited referee who has conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the manuscript and the work described therein should immediately notify the editors to declare their conflicts of interest and decline the invitation to review so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

Unpublished material disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in a reviewer's own research without the express written consent of the authors. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for the reviewer's personal advantage. This also applies to invited reviewers who decline the review invitation.

### **Duties of Authors**

**Reporting standards:** Authors of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed and the results, followed by an objective discussion of the significance of the work. The manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Review articles should be accurate, objective, and comprehensive, while editorial 'opinion' or perspective pieces should be clearly identified as such. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.

**Data access and retention:** Authors may be asked to provide the raw data of their study together with the manuscript for editorial review and should be prepared to make the data publicly available if practicable. In any event, authors should ensure accessibility of such data to other competent professionals for at least 10 years after publication (preferably via an institutional or subject-based data repository or other data center), provided that the confidentiality of the participants can be protected and legal rights concerning proprietary data do not preclude their release.

**Originality and plagiarism:** Authors should ensure that they have written and submit only entirely original works, and if they have used the work and/or words of others, that this has been appropriately cited. Publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the work reported in the manuscript should also be cited.

Plagiarism takes many forms, from "passing off" another's paper as the author's own, to copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper (without attribution), to claiming results from research conducted by others. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.

**Multiple, duplicate, redundant, or concurrent submission/publication:** Papers describing essentially the same research should not be published in more than one journal or primary publication. Hence, authors should not submit for consideration a manuscript that has already been published in another journal. Submission of a manuscript concurrently to more than one journal is unethical publishing behavior and unacceptable.

The publication of some kinds of articles (such as clinical guidelines, translations) in more than one journal is sometimes justifiable, provided that certain conditions are met. The authors and editors of the journals concerned must agree to the secondary publication, which must reflect the same data and interpretation of the primary document. The primary reference must be cited in the secondary publication.

**Authorship of the manuscript:** Only persons who meet these authorship criteria should be listed as authors in the manuscript as they must be able to take public responsibility for the content: (i) made significant contributions to the conception, design, execution, data acquisition, or analysis/interpretation of the study; and (ii) drafted the manuscript or revised it critically for important intellectual content; and (iii) have seen and approved the final version of the paper and agreed to its submission for publication. All persons who made substantial contributions to the work reported in the manuscript (such as technical help, writing and editing assistance, general support) but who do not meet the criteria for authorship must not be listed as an author, but should be acknowledged in the "Acknowledgements" section after their written permission to be named has been obtained. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate coauthors (according to the above definition) and no inappropriate coauthors are included in the author list and verify that all coauthors have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to its submission for publication.

**Disclosure and conflicts of interest:** Authors should, at the earliest stage possible (generally by submitting a disclosure form at the time of submission and including a statement in the manuscript), disclose any conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. Examples of potential conflicts of interest that should be disclosed include financial ones such as honoraria, educational grants or other funding, participation in speakers' bureaus, membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest, and paid expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements, as well as non-financial ones such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript. All sources of financial support for the work should be disclosed (including the grant number or other reference number, if any).

**Acknowledgement of sources:** Authors should ensure that they have properly acknowledged the work of others, and should also cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work. Information obtained privately (from conversation, correspondence or discussion with third parties) must not be used or reported without explicit, written permission from the source. Authors should not use information obtained in the course of providing confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, unless they have obtained the explicit written permission of the author(s) of the work involved in these services.

**Hazards and human or animal subjects:** If the work involves chemicals, procedures, or equipment that have any unusual hazards inherent in their use, the authors must clearly identify these in the manuscript. If the work involves the use of animals or human participants, the authors should ensure that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) have approved them; the manuscript should contain a statement to this effect. Authors should also include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human participants. The privacy rights of human participants must always be observed.

**Peer review:** Authors are obliged to participate in the peer review process and cooperate fully by responding promptly to editors' requests for raw data, clarifications,

and proof of ethics approval, patient consents, and copyright permissions. In the case of a first decision of "revisions necessary", authors should respond to the reviewers' comments systematically, point by point, and on time, revising and resubmitting their manuscript to the journal by the deadline given.

**Fundamental errors in published works:** When authors discover significant errors or inaccuracies in their own published work, it is their obligation to promptly notify the journal's editors or publisher and cooperate with them to either correct the paper in the form of an erratum or to retract the paper. If the editors or publisher learns from a third party that a published work contains a significant error or inaccuracy, then it is the authors' obligation to promptly correct or retract the paper or provide evidence to the journal editors of the correctness of the paper

### **Duties of the Publisher**

**Handling of unethical publishing behavior:** In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication, or plagiarism, the publisher, in close collaboration with the editors, will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of an erratum, clarification, or in the most severe case, the retraction of the affected work. The publisher, together with the editors, shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred, and under no circumstances encourage such misconduct or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place.

**Access to journal content:** The publisher is committed to the permanent availability and preservation of scholarly research and ensures accessibility by partnering with organizations and maintaining our own digital archive.

### **3.5 Conflict of Interest**

#### **Disclosure of Interests by Authors**

**Scope of Disclosure:** Authors must disclose all relationships and activities that are related to the content of the manuscript and that could be perceived as a conflict of

interest. Disclosure is required regardless of whether the authors believe such relationships influenced their work. Disclosures include, but are not limited to:

- **Financial Relationships:** Employment, consultancies, stock or stock options, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patents (planned, pending, or issued), royalties, travel support, grants, or other financial interests.
- **Non-Financial Relationships:** Personal relationships, academic competition, intellectual beliefs, institutional affiliations, or other circumstances that could affect objectivity.

The time frame for disclosure follows ICMJE guidance:

- No time limit for support directly related to the work reported.
- Past 36 months for all other relevant relationships or activities.
- If no relevant relationships or activities exist, authors must state: **“The authors declare no competing interests.”**

**Timing and Accuracy of Disclosure:** All disclosures must be submitted at the time of manuscript submission and updated if circumstances change during the review or publication process. Failure to provide complete and accurate disclosures may result in manuscript rejection, publication of a correction, or retraction, in accordance with COPE guidance.

**Funding and Role of the Sponsor:** Authors must disclose:

- All sources of funding or material support, and
- The role of the funder in study design, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and manuscript preparation.
- Authors must also confirm that they had full access to all study data and accept responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of the work.

**Disclosure of Interests by Reviewers:** Peer reviewers must disclose any relationships or activities that could affect their ability to provide an objective and unbiased

evaluation of a manuscript. Reviewers should decline review assignments if a conflict exists, including:

- Recent collaboration with the authors.
- Shared institutional affiliation.
- Direct academic or professional competition.

Disclosure and recusal are essential to maintaining the integrity of the peer-review process.

**Editorial Disclosure and Management of Interests:** Editors involved in decision-making must disclose relevant relationships or activities and recuse themselves from handling manuscripts where a conflict exists. Editorial decisions must be made independently and free from competing interests.

**Publication of Disclosures:** All author disclosures of interests and funding information will be published with the article to allow readers to assess potential influences on the work.

**Compliance and Enforcement:** This policy is aligned with **ICMJE Recommendations, COPE Core Practices, and DOAJ Principles.**

- **Authors:** Incomplete or inaccurate disclosure may result in rejection, correction, or retraction.
- **Reviewers:** Failure to disclose relevant interests may result in removal from the reviewer database.
- **Editors:** Undeclared conflicts will be managed according to COPE procedures.

HJBHS reserves the right to investigate any concerns related to undisclosed interests and to take appropriate corrective action.

### **3.6 Peer Review Policy**

The journal follows a double-blind peer review process in which neither the authors nor the reviewers know each other's details. The submitted manuscripts will be reviewed for originality, scientific significance, and adequacy of documentation. Further, reviewers are also required to disclose any conflict of interest regarding the manuscripts they will review. In case of any serious conflict of interest, another reviewer of the same discipline will be chosen for the review. Authors are required to submit a complete list of byline authors, their affiliations, and contact details in a separate file along with the manuscript file. All the manuscripts submitted will be initially scrutinized within a week for completeness and formatting by the editorial staff. The manuscripts not prepared according to the instructions will be returned to the authors for any corrections/modifications before sending them for peer review.

While manuscripts prepared according to the prescribed guidelines will be sent for peer review to at least two independent subject experts (one national and one international). The manuscripts will be accepted or rejected, or sent for modifications, according to the reviewers' recommendations. In case of a difference of opinion among both subject experts, the manuscript will be sent to a third reviewer. All parts of accepted manuscripts are subject to editing for scientific accuracy and clarity by the office of the Editor. The manuscripts will undergo copyediting (including modifications in the text, table, figures, etc.) and layout formatting by the editorial staff. Final articles will be sent to the corresponding authors for proofreading and acceptance of changes made by the editorial staff. The names of the reviewers will be strictly kept confidential and will not be disclosed at any point. Reviewers are expected to keep the scientific data strictly confidential and shall not keep their records or share them with any other colleague. Reviewers must also not use/quote data from the manuscript under review before its publication.

### **3.7 Peer Review Process**

The journal follows a rigorous, transparent, and ethical peer review process to ensure the quality, integrity, and scientific value of published work. The journal operates a double-blind peer review system in accordance with COPE and ICMJE recommendations.

## **Initial Editorial Screening**

- Relevance to the aims and scope of HJBHS.
- Compliance with submission guidelines and journal policies.
- Ethical compliance, including plagiarism screening using Turnitin (similarity threshold should be less than 19%, excluding references).
- Basic scholarly quality, including language, structure, and referencing style.

Only manuscripts meeting these criteria proceed to peer review.

**Selection of Reviewers:** Each manuscript is reviewed by at least two independent experts (one national and one international) selected based on:

- Subject-matter expertise.
- Absence of conflicts of interest (COPE and ICMJE).
- Diversity to ensure balanced and unbiased evaluation.

Reviewers must provide objective, constructive feedback, maintain confidentiality, declare conflicts of interest, and comply with COPE reviewer guidelines.

## **Reviewer Assessment Criteria**

- Originality and contribution to biomedical and health sciences.
- Methodological rigor and validity of results.
- Clarity and coherence of presentation.
- Ethical compliance, including informed consent and data transparency.

Reviews must be constructive, specific, and submitted within the assigned timeframe.

## **Peer Review Process and Editorial Decision**

**Reviewer Recommendations:** Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision, or Reject.

**Revisions:** Authors must respond point by point and resubmit within the specified timeframe. Revised manuscripts may be re-reviewed.

**Final Decision:** The editorial team makes the final decision, taking into account reviewer input and ethical considerations.

**Double-Blind Review and Editorial Oversight:** Author and reviewer identities are concealed throughout the review process to ensure impartiality. Editors oversee the process to ensure fairness, address ethical concerns, and prevent manipulation by verifying reviewer credentials and avoiding conflicts of interest.

## **Editorial Workflow before Publication**

### **Submission Stage**

- Online submission via OJS with required metadata and declarations.
- Initial checks for scope, guidelines, and ethics.

### **Review Stage**

- Double-blind peer review by two reviewers.
- Author revisions based on reviewer feedback.

### **Copyediting Stage**

- Language, style, and technical editing.
- Final author approval.

### **Production Stage**

- Formatting and layout design.
- DOI assignment.
- Proof review and issue scheduling.

## **Transparency, Timeliness, and Ethics**

- Peer review policies are publicly available.
- Standard review timeframe: 4–6 weeks.
- Reviewers may receive anonymized certificates.
- An independent editorial panel handles the appeals.
- Post-publication scholarly discussion is encouraged.

HJBHS is committed to publishing high-quality, ethical, and impactful research through a structured OJS-based peer review system.

## **3.8 Open Access Policy**

As per the definition of open access, "**free and unrestricted online availability**" of journal contents, and readers can access publications free of charge. HJBHS gives open access to all its publications to readers by providing immediate and permanent access to all its articles free of charge and published under the [\*\*Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)\*\*](#) license, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original authors and the source are credited.

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

### **3.9 Copyrights / Licensing Policy**

HJBHS allows authors to retain full copyright of their published work. By submitting a manuscript, authors grant the journal a non-exclusive license to publish, distribute, and archive the article in print and digital formats. Authors may share, store, or reuse their published work for academic, non-commercial, and repository purposes, as long as proper citation to the original publication is provided. The journal does not require authors to transfer copyrights. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission for any copyrighted material (such as figures, tables, or images) incorporated into their manuscripts. Submitted work must be original, not previously published, and not under review elsewhere.

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### **3.10 Data Protection & Privacy Policy**

HJBHS is committed to protecting the personal information of its authors, reviewers, editors, and website users. This policy explains how the journal collects, uses, stores, and safeguards personal data throughout the submission, peer-review, and publication processes.

The journal collects essential information such as contact details, professional affiliations, manuscript submission data, reviewer feedback, and limited website analytics. This information is used only to manage submissions, facilitate peer review, communicate with contributors, improve website performance, and meet legal or ethical obligations. All personal data is kept secure, with access restricted to authorized staff and protected through appropriate technical and organizational safeguards. The journal shares personal data internally and with peer reviewers or editorial managers only when required for the publication workflow. This sharing is strictly limited to journal operations and conducted with parties who maintain professional confidentiality. However, HJBHS does not share personal information with external organizations, advertisers, or any unrelated third parties for any purpose beyond journal operations.

Personal data is retained only as long as necessary for editorial and publication needs or as required by law. Individuals may request the removal of their information after the completion of the publication process. By using the HJBHS website, submitting

manuscripts, or participating in peer review, users consent to the collection and processing of their information as described in this policy. The names and email addresses entered into this journal site will be used exclusively for the stated purposes of this journal and will not be made available for any unrelated purpose or to any outside party. For queries regarding data protection and privacy, please contact [editor@healerjournal.com](mailto:editor@healerjournal.com)

### **3.11 Plagiarism Policy**

In the wake of fundamental improvements being introduced in the system of Higher Education in Pakistan, the credit, respect, recognition of research and scholarly publications, career development, and financial gains are now linked with such original works accomplished without replicating the efforts of other researchers. It has therefore become necessary that the menace of plagiarism is highlighted and curbed through exemplary punitive actions. On the other hand, we must also guard against bogus or false complaints in order to prevent victimization, which may make researchers and scholars shy away from research simply because of the fear of prosecution. A Plagiarism Policy has therefore become necessary to create awareness, define various forms in which Plagiarism exhibits itself, present a methodology of investigation, provide for punitive action proportional to the extent of the offense, and even address the issue of false or spurious complaints. HEC has comprehensively defined plagiarism in its 'Plagiarism Policy'. The excerpt of the said HEC policy is reproduced as under:

According to Oxford Dictionary, plagiarism is defined as "**taking and using the thoughts, writings, and inventions of another person as one's own**". This, or various similar definitions found in recognized publications/documents, are very broad and can be used to create awareness about plagiarism, but are not practical enough to apply to ascertain guilt or innocence in specific cases. To establish the violation of ethical norms, or academic or intellectual dishonesty resulting from Plagiarism and to take punitive actions in this regard, the variety of forms in which Plagiarism manifests itself must be known. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a.** Copying or purposely paraphrasing portions of another author's paper or unpublished report without citing the exact reference.
- b.** Copying elements of another author's paper, such as equations or illustrations that are not common knowledge, or copying or purposely paraphrasing sentences without citing the source.
- c.** Copying portions of another author's paper or from reports by citing but not clearly differentiating what text has been copied (e.g., not applying quotation marks correctly) and /or not citing the source correctly.
- d.** The unacknowledged use of computer programs, mathematical / computer models/algorithms, computer software in all forms, macros, spreadsheets, web pages, databases, mathematical deviations and calculations, designs/models/displays of any sort, diagrams, graphs, tables, drawings, works of art of any sort, fine art pieces or artifacts, digital images, computer-aided design drawings, GIS files, photographs, maps, music/composition of any sort, posters, presentations and tracing.
- e.** Self-plagiarism, that is, the copying or re-use of significant portions of one's own copyrighted work without citing the source."

**Adoption of HEC Policies:** As mentioned earlier, all anti-plagiarism policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines provided by HEC shall be adopted and fully implemented university-wide in letter and spirit. HEC also issues notifications from time to time as an ongoing activity. Therefore, all such notifications shall be deliberated at the appropriate forum(s) of HJBHS for adoption/adaptation in the light of the journal's structure/settings.

**Turnitin:** Turnitin is an internet-based plagiarism detection service, used globally to check plagiarism. It helps students, faculty, researchers, etc., to determine a similarity index of the submitted documents. HEC is incessantly advising to use Turnitin for checking plagiarism in assignments, papers, reports, etc. HJBHS has already been making use of this extremely useful plagiarism detection software and shall continue to use this software in an official capacity.

**Anti-Plagiarism Code of Conduct:** The students/Researchers are expected to:

- Ensure the observance of the universal moral principles of research.
- Abide by all HJBHS & HEC research policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines, etc.
- Follow local and international applicable research policies and established practices.
- Avoid immoral research practices.
- Apply suitable and relevant research methods.
- Conclude based on a critical analysis of the evidence.
- Report completely and correctly the findings of the research.
- Keep clear, complete, and accurate records of all research.
- Acknowledge the individuals who made contributions to the research.
- Obtain informed consent from the respondents/unit of analysis, for example, surveys in the case of Social Sciences, a declaration to the respondents/unit of analysis on the assurance of confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time before data collection.
- Keep privacy/secrecy when reviewing others' work.
- Avoid plagiarism of all kinds.

**Duty to Report:** All HJBHS community members have the implicit duty to report to the authorities concerned, in good faith and without fear, any suspected research misconduct like fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, etc., and/ or any incident where known facts indicate a possibility of a code or policy violation.

### 3.12 AI Usage & Disclosure Policy

**General Principles of AI Usage:** In accordance with COPE Core Practices on **Integrity, Confidentiality, Transparency, and Editorial Oversight**, HJBHS affirms that:

- Responsibility and accountability for all published content rest solely with **human authors, editors, and reviewers**.
- Generative AI tools **cannot be authors**, cannot take responsibility for scholarly work, and cannot be held accountable for ethical conduct.
- Any permitted use of AI must be **transparent and fully disclosed**.

- Manuscripts, peer-review materials, and editorial communications are **confidential intellectual property** and must not be shared with third-party AI systems.
- Editorial and peer-review decisions must be based on **human expertise, independent judgment, and ethical reasoning**.
- AI technologies may be used only when they do not compromise **research integrity, originality, data protection, or ethical publishing standards**.

**AI Policy for Editors:** In line with COPE Core Practices on **Editorial Oversight and Independence**:

- **Editorial Responsibility:** Editors are accountable for safeguarding the integrity of the scholarly record. Editorial decisions must not be delegated to, generated by, or influenced by generative AI systems.
- **Prohibited Use of AI:** Editors must not upload, input, or process any confidential material into generative AI tools, including:
  - Manuscript text and supplementary files
  - Peer-review reports
  - Editorial correspondence and internal deliberations

Such use constitutes a breach of confidentiality under COPE standards.

**Editorial Evaluation:** AI tools must not be used to assess scientific merit, methodological quality, clinical relevance, originality, or ethical compliance, nor to generate editorial recommendations or summaries.

**Approved Systems:** Secure, publisher-approved tools may be used only for limited administrative or integrity-supporting purposes (e.g., plagiarism detection), under controlled conditions with human oversight.

**Oversight of Author AI Disclosures:** Editors must ensure that declared AI use by authors is transparently reported. Manuscripts are evaluated on scientific rigor and ethical compliance, not on the presence of AI-assisted language editing. Suspected

breaches of AI disclosure or misuse will be handled in accordance with **COPE flowcharts for suspected misconduct**.

**AI Policy for Reviewers:** Consistent with COPE Core Practices on **Confidentiality, Objectivity, and Ethical Review:**

**Reviewer Responsibility:** Peer review must be conducted exclusively by the invited reviewer. Reviews must reflect the reviewer's independent expert judgment.

**Confidentiality and AI Restrictions:** Reviewers must not upload, share, or process any manuscript content using generative AI tools, including abstracts, figures, tables, methods, or supplementary materials. Confidentiality obligations apply indefinitely, regardless of editorial outcome.

**Preparation of Review Reports:** Peer-review reports must be written entirely by reviewers without AI assistance for drafting, paraphrasing, editing, or language enhancement. Reviewers remain fully accountable for the content and tone of their reports.

**Scientific Judgment:** AI tools must not be used to generate, influence, or validate scientific opinions, recommendations, or ethical assessments.

**Concerns Regarding Author AI Use:** Suspected undisclosed or inappropriate AI use by authors should be reported confidentially to the handling editor. Reviewers must not attempt verification using AI tools.

**Compliance:** Failure to comply with this policy may result in removal from the reviewer database and further action consistent with COPE guidance.

**AI Policy for Authors:** In alignment with COPE and ICMJE principles of **Accountability, Transparency, and Research Integrity:**

**Accountability and Disclosure:** Authors are fully responsible for all content submitted for publication, including any AI-assisted material. Any permitted AI use must be disclosed in a dedicated statement placed **before the References section**.

**AI-Assisted Writing and Language Editing:** Authors may use AI tools solely for grammar, spelling, and language clarity, provided that:

- AI use is explicitly disclosed
- All AI-assisted content is critically reviewed and approved by the authors
- Authors retain full responsibility for accuracy, originality, and integrity
- AI tools must not be used to generate scientific content, clinical interpretations, results, or conclusions without appropriate human oversight.

**Authorship:** Generative AI tools cannot be listed as authors or contributors. Authorship requires intellectual contribution, accountability, and the ability to respond to questions regarding the work, consistent with ICMJE criteria.

**Images, Figures, and Visual Data:** The use of generative AI to create, alter, enhance, or fabricate images, figures, or visual data is strictly prohibited. Only minimal, non-deceptive adjustments (e.g., brightness or contrast correction) are permitted. Any manipulation that alters data representation constitutes misconduct under COPE standards.

**AI in Research Methods:** AI tools integral to study design or analysis (e.g., machine learning models, motion analysis systems, biomedical, and health sciences analytics) are permitted. Authors must provide full methodological transparency, including software versions, model parameters, data sources, and validation procedures.

**Verification and Editorial Review:** The journal may request raw data, original images, or technical documentation to verify compliance with this policy. AI-generated graphical abstracts or visual summaries require prior written editorial approval.

**Policy Enforcement:** Noncompliance may result in rejection, correction, retraction, or other actions consistent with COPE Core Practices and flowcharts. Authors are encouraged to seek clarification from the editorial office before submission when uncertainty exists.

### **3.13 Archiving & Digital Preservation Policy**

**Authors Self-Archiving:** The journal permits authors to deposit **all versions** of their manuscripts in repositories without embargo. The following versions may be archived:

- **Preprint:** Original version submitted before peer review.
- **Author's Accepted Manuscript (AAM):** Peer-reviewed version accepted for publication.
- **Published Article:** Final published version.

Proper citation of the final published article is encouraged wherever applicable. Authors may upload and store these versions:

- On personal or departmental websites.
- In institutional or company repositories.
- In subject-specific repositories.
- In open-access research platforms.
- For internal educational use, training, or teaching purposes.
- In grant applications and funding submissions.

HJBHS is committed to ensuring the long-term preservation and accessibility of its scholarly content. To achieve this, the journal participates in the LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) and CLOCKSS (Controlled Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe), international digital preservation systems used by libraries worldwide.

This policy ensures that all articles published in the journal are securely archived and remain available to researchers and the academic community, even in the event of

website downtime or other technical disruptions. All content published in the journal, including articles, supplementary materials, and metadata, is eligible for archiving under LOCKSS and CLOCKSS. All content is published under the [\*\*Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)\*\*](#) license. This allows users to copy, distribute, and adapt the work, provided that proper attribution is given to the authors.

**Permission Granted by Authors:** By publishing with HJBHS, authors grant the journal the non-exclusive right to preserve, store, and distribute their work via the LOCKSS and CLOCKSS systems for long-term preservation purposes, while retaining copyright under CC BY 4.0.

## **Preservation Practices**

- Copies of all published content are stored in multiple secure, geographically distributed nodes.
- Archived content maintains all original metadata, DOI assignments, licensing information, and formatting.
- The LOCKSS network ensures that content is verifiable, authentic, and retrievable over time.

### **This system ensures:**

- Guarantees long-term accessibility of scholarly content.
- Protects against technical failures, data loss, or site disruptions.
- Supports academic integrity and continuity of research.
- Preserves the open access principles under the CC BY 4.0 license.

This policy aligns with the requirements of:

- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- CrossRef
- OpenAIRE
- Institutional repositories and global archiving standards.

- OJS/PKP best practice guidelines.

For more information on LOCKSS, please visit <https://www.lockss.org>.

For more information on the CC BY 4.0 license, please visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

### **3.14 Financial Policy**

The financial management of a journal is governed by Physio Rehab and Research Center (Pvt) Ltd, based in Lahore, Pakistan. Local and international reviewers will be paid honorarium as approved by the Editorial Board. The cost of printing administrative expenditure will be covered by the research center if not funded by HEC. Journal only charges a processing fee but does not charge a publication fee from authors, as per approval of the Editorial Board.

### **3.15 Article Publication Charges**

All manuscripts submitted to HJBHS by local authors are only charged an article processing fee of Rs. 5,000; international authors are charged USD 25. These charges help to cover some portion of the editorial, administrative, and operational costs of the journal. Manuscripts are processed **only after receipt of the APC**. There are no publication charges of acceptance manuscripts, which are published free of cost.

**Payment Methods:** Payments for processing and publication can be made via online bank transfer or bank deposit. **Cheques are not accepted.**

#### **Bank Details for Local Payments (Pakistan):**

- **Bank Name:** Meezan Bank
- **Branch:** Karim Block
- **Account Title:** Physio Rehab & Research Center (Pvt) Ltd.
- **Account #:** 02840106834789

- **SWIFT Code / IBAN:** PK39MEZN0002840106834789

**International Payments:** Authors may pay in **USD** using the bank IBAN provided.

**Payment Confirmation:** For online deposits of processing charges, a copy of the receipt should be emailed to [editor@thehealerjournal.com](mailto:editor@thehealerjournal.com)

**Note:** A maximum of six authors is allowed.

### **3.16 Waiver Policy**

HJBHS only charges a very minimal article processing fee at the time of submission. Since there are no publication fees involved, there is no waiver policy.

### **3.17 Advertising Policy**

HJBHS maintains a strict policy regarding advertisements to preserve the integrity and independence of its scholarly content. The journal does not accept or publish advertisements from pharmaceutical companies, commercial organizations, or any other external entities.

This policy ensures that all content published in HJBHS remains unbiased, evidence-based, and free from commercial influence.

### **3.18 Corrigendum, Addendum & Retraction Policy**

The journal is committed to maintaining the integrity, accuracy, and transparency of the scholarly record. This policy outlines procedures for handling corrigenda, addenda, and retractions in alignment with COPE Core Practices and international publishing standards.

#### **Corrigendum (Correction)**

**Definition:** A corrigendum is issued to correct significant errors in a published article that do not invalidate the overall findings or conclusions.

**Scope:**

- Author names, affiliations, or acknowledgements.
- Errors in data, tables, or figures that do not alter study conclusions.
- Minor textual or methodological errors.

**Procedure:**

- Authors or readers notify the editorial office of the error.
- Editors evaluate the error and determine if a corrigendum is appropriate.
- A corrigendum is published and linked to the original article.
- The corrigendum clearly describes the correction, its date, and the responsible parties.

**Responsibilities:**

- **Authors:** Report errors promptly and provide accurate correction details.
- **Editors:** Ensure corrections are clear, transparent, and maintain the integrity of the scholarly record.

**Addendum**

**Definition:** An addendum is published to provide additional information, clarification, or supplementary material that was not included at the time of publication, without correcting errors.

**Scope:**

- Additional methodological details.
- Clarifications of interpretations.

- Supplementary datasets or analyses relevant to the original work.

#### **Procedure:**

- Authors submit the addendum to the editorial office.
- Editors assess relevance and ensure it does not alter conclusions.
- Approved addenda are published and linked to the original article.

#### **Key Principles:**

- The original article remains unchanged.
- The addendum enhances transparency and completeness.

#### **Retraction**

**Definition:** A retraction is issued when a published article is seriously flawed or unreliable, due to honest error or research misconduct, and its findings cannot be relied upon.

#### **Grounds for Retraction:**

- Fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism.
- Duplicate or redundant publication.
- Ethical violations in research conduct.
- Major errors invalidating results or conclusions.
- Undisclosed conflicts of interest compromise reliability.

#### **Procedure:**

- Retractions may be initiated by authors, editors, or the publisher.
- Editors investigate using COPE flowcharts and guidelines.

- Retraction notices are clearly labeled, linked to the original article, and explain the reason for retraction.
- The original article remains accessible but marked as retracted.

### **Responsibilities:**

- **Authors:** Cooperate with investigations and acknowledge errors or misconduct.
- **Editors:** Ensure decisions are fair, transparent, and documented.

### **Editorial Oversight and Transparency**

- All corrections, addenda, and retractions are handled consistently to preserve trust in the journal.
- Editors maintain clear documentation of decisions and communications.
- Notifications about changes to published articles are provided to readers and indexed databases where appropriate.
- The integrity of the scholarly record is prioritized over reputational or commercial considerations.

### **Compliance and Ethical Standards**

- This policy aligns with COPE Core Practices, ICMJE Recommendations, and DOAJ Principles.
- Failure to comply with correction or retraction procedures may result in additional actions, including institutional notification.
- HJBHS encourages proactive reporting of errors to ensure ethical accountability and scholarly rigor.

### **Post-Publication Amendments**

- HJBHS supports transparent post-publication amendments and encourages readers and authors to notify the editorial office of errors or omissions.

- All amendments are permanently linked to the original article, ensuring full traceability.

**Summary:** HJBHS is committed to maintaining an accurate, transparent, and trustworthy scholarly record. Corrigenda, addenda, and retractions are issued promptly, responsibly, and in alignment with international best practices to uphold the integrity of scientific publishing.

### **3.19 Withdrawal Policy**

HJBHS upholds the highest standards of publication ethics and adheres to international guidelines, including those set by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Authors are expected to follow the procedures outlined below if they wish to withdraw a manuscript during the review or editorial process.

**Ethical Considerations:** Manuscripts submitted to HJBHS must not be under consideration by any other journal simultaneously. Submitting the same manuscript to multiple journals is considered unethical and constitutes a breach of publication ethics.

#### **Withdrawal Procedure**

- Authors who wish to withdraw a manuscript must submit a formal request via email to the editorial office, stating the intention to withdraw the manuscript.
- Upon receipt of the request, the editorial office will provide a Manuscript Withdrawal Form, which must be signed by all listed authors. Electronic signatures are not accepted.
- The completed and scanned form must be returned to the editorial office for processing.

#### **Confirmation of Withdrawal**

- A manuscript is considered officially withdrawn only after the editorial office issues a formal withdrawal confirmation.
- Until this confirmation is received, the manuscript remains under HJBHS's consideration, and any attempt to submit it elsewhere will be regarded as a breach of publication ethics.

### **Exceptions and Editorial Discretion**

- In rare cases, the editorial office may deny a withdrawal request if significant resources have already been expended in the peer-review process.
- HJBHS reserves the right to report unethical withdrawal attempts to relevant authorities or professional bodies if necessary.

## **3.20 Appeals & Complaints Policy**

HJBHS is committed to maintaining a fair, transparent, and accountable editorial process. This policy outlines the procedures for handling appeals and complaints related to editorial decisions, peer review, or other aspects of the publication process.

### **Scope and Definitions**

- **Appeals** are requests for reconsideration of editorial decisions, typically submitted by authors or reviewers, based on concerns regarding fairness, objectivity, or accuracy.
- **Complaints** express dissatisfaction with any aspect of the editorial or publication process, including ethical concerns, conflicts of interest, delays, or procedural errors.

### **Submission Procedure**

- Appeals and complaints must be submitted in writing via email to the Chief Editor, clearly detailing the nature of the concern and providing any supporting documentation.
- Author and reviewer appeals should include the reason for reconsideration and reference relevant correspondence or reviews.
- Reader complaints should describe the issue in detail and provide evidence where possible.

### **Confidentiality and Impartiality**

- All appeals and complaints are treated with strict confidentiality.
- The editorial team ensures that submissions are reviewed impartially, without influence from any parties involved in the original decision.

### **Review Process**

- The editorial board is responsible for evaluating all appeals and complaints.
- In complex or specialized cases, independent external experts may be consulted to ensure an objective assessment.
- A formal response is typically provided within two weeks of receipt, with updates communicated promptly if additional time is required.

### **Outcomes and Documentation**

- Decisions regarding appeals and complaints are communicated clearly to the complainant or appellant, including any actions taken or recommendations.
- Records of all appeals and complaints, and their resolutions, are maintained internally for quality assurance and continuous improvement of editorial processes.

**Continuous Improvement:** Feedback from appeals and complaints is used to refine journal policies, editorial practices, and peer review procedures, ensuring that HJBHS maintains high standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical publishing.

## Annexure A – Editorial & Advisory Board

### Editorial Team

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The HJBHS receives and publishes manuscripts that conform to the international guidelines and principles of scholarly journals.

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## Annexure B – Publication Process

