

## **Advertising Policy**

The publisher, WV Executive, oversees the advertising that is placed in the journal. Advertisers are encouraged to contact the publisher, and the publisher will reach out to potential advertisers. Potential advertisers are informed that the journal is published as a service to WV State Medical Association (WVSMA) members and to disseminate information and education to West Virginia physicians. With input for the WVSMA leadership, the publisher will determine which advertisements are acceptable for the journal. Once an agreement is made to work with an advertiser, the ad will be designed, and the advertiser will be invoiced for the cost of the ad upon publication.

## **Advertising Policy**

The publisher, WV Executive, oversees the advertising that is placed in the journal. Advertisers are encouraged to contact the publisher, and the publisher will reach out to potential advertisers. Potential advertisers are informed that the journal is published as a service to WV State Medical Association (WVSMA) members and to disseminate information and education to West Virginia physicians. With input for the WVSMA leadership, the publisher will determine which advertisements are acceptable for the journal. Once an agreement is made to work with an advertiser, the ad will be designed, and the advertiser will be invoiced for the cost of the ad upon publication.

## **Assisted Technologies Policy**

The use of assisted technologies (AI) in manuscript writing is discouraged, and if utilized, it cannot comprise more than 15% of the text. If AI is utilized, authors must disclose this information in the cover letter, including the percentage of AI generated wording. Any AI generated wording must be accurate and free of plagiarism.

## **Corrections Policy**

Concerns about inaccuracy or mis-information in the journal must be emailed to the editor-in-chief, who will work with the correspondent for optimal resolution of the issue.

## **Data Sharing Policy**

Data relevant to the conclusions of an article should be made available to readers upon request.

## **Editorial Policy**

The editorial board for the journal is selected in the following manner:

1. The West Virginia State Medical Association will intermittently send out a request to its members asking for volunteers to serve on the editorial board.
2. Volunteer editorial board members will serve as peer reviewers and contribute to discussions involving the operation of the publication process.
3. All editorial board members receive written information about the proper method to complete rigorous peer review, so the peer review process is standardized.
4. Editorial board members are expected to review at least one manuscript per year, to remain on the board.
5. New editorial board members are added to board on an as needed basis.

## **Peer Review Policy**

All submitted scientific manuscripts to the Scholastica portal, including original research, case reports and review articles, must undergo rigorous peer review in order to be considered for publication.

### **Step 1: Preliminary Review**

Each manuscript will undergo a preliminary review by the editor-in-chief and/or the editorial staff to ensure that the manuscript guidelines have been strictly followed. If the manuscript guidelines have not been strictly followed, then the manuscript will be desk rejected. If the manuscript guidelines have been strictly followed, then at minimum, three experts in the specific field of study or in the field of medicine, will be invited to peer review the manuscript for the first pass peer review.

### **Step 2: First Pass Peer Review**

Each manuscript must receive at least three peer reviews before a decision of “acceptance” or “revise and resubmit” is made. For the first pass peer review, in order for an outright acceptance, all three peer reviewers must rate the article as “acceptance.” For the first pass review, in order for a revise and resubmit decision, two reviewers must indicate a decision of “acceptance” or “revise and resubmit.” If a manuscript receives two ratings of “rejection,” then a third reviewer is not needed for the final decision of “rejection.” For any manuscript, the editor-in-chief and/or editorial staff can declare a decision of “rejection” if there are ethical concerns, the need for extensive revision, or other factors that may indicate the lack of appropriateness for the journal.

### **Step 3: Second Pass Peer Review**

For articles that receive a decision of “revise and resubmit,” authors will be given a deadline to submit a revised manuscript and a “response to reviewers” document. Authors are expected to address every comment and edit mentioned by all of the peer reviewers. After the revised manuscript and a “response to reviewers” document are submitted, the three original peer reviewers will be invited to review these documents. If all three of the peer reviewers are satisfied with the documents and rate the revised manuscript as an “acceptance,” then the manuscript will be accepted for publication. If there is not a unanimous decision of acceptance at Step 3, then the manuscript will move onto Step 4.

### **Step 4: Third Pass Peer Review**

For the manuscripts that do not receive a unanimous acceptance after the second pass peer review, authors will be notified that more revisions are needed by a specified deadline. After receipt of this revision, the editor-in-chief and/or editorial staff will determine if the authors have satisfied all of the recommended required modifications of all of the peer reviewers. If the authors have satisfied all of the modifications, then a decision of “acceptance” will be made. If the recommended modifications have not been addressed satisfactorily, then the decision will be “rejection.”

## **Research Ethics, Human and Animal Rights, and Informed Consent Policy**

All manuscripts containing original research must include a statement in the Methods section that local institutional review board approval has been sought and obtained. It is of the utmost importance that informed consent of all study participants has been properly obtained. For case reports, authors must obtain the patient's written permission if there are any identifying features in submitted images. Authors should strongly consider getting written permission from any patient even when images are not included. In the cover letter, authors must declare that written permission has been obtained. Research involving animals must be conducted in accordance with US and institutional guidelines in the support the ethical treatment of animals.

In instances where there are any ethical concerns in submitted scientific manuscripts, the journal's Ethics Subcommittee will be consulted and will work with authors to resolve any concerns.