

Role of medical universities in promotion of research culture and production of new knowledge

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One of the important objectives of medical universities is production of new knowledge which is only possible through research. Realizing the importance of knowledge which is going to be an important asset for overall development of the country, Islamic Republic of Iran has given due importance to promotion of research culture in the country. To realize this objective they have given generous funding to the medical universities besides providing them all the opportunities to function independently. At present there are about forty five medical universities in Iran most of which were established after the Islamic Revolution though some of the universities like Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz has a very old history. Now these medical universities are competing with each other to improve their academic ranking based on published research work.

We have had very cordial relations with Isfahan University of Medical Sciences which began when I first visited IUMS couple of years ago. During that visit I had very useful discussions and interaction with many faculty members besides meeting the Vice Chancellor for Research Prof. Payman Adibi. I also had a chance to meet Prof. Roya Kelishadi Prof. of Paediatrics and Director Child Growth and Development Research Center during that visit. I had another chance of meeting her at Shiraz during the COPE conference on Publication Ethic and was immensely impressed with her interest in research and academics. It was during that meeting that we agreed to publish a special issue of Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences for Isfahan University of Medical Sciences which was published in March 2012.¹ IUMS Governing Body has played a vital role in promoting research culture and inculcating

the spirit to do research among the students, postgraduates and faculty members of IUMS over the last many years. It has not only decentralized the whole research administrative set up actively involving the various faculties but also allowed them to approve research projects related to their respective disciplines. However, it is emphasized that each and every research proposal, project must end up in a publication in a peer reviewed medical journal. Faculty members were trained in research by organizing workshops on research methodology and Medical Writing besides increasing the number of biomedical journals published by the university so that they can publish their work. Not only that, distinguished researchers were recognized, honoured and awarded. The university organizes an annual Research Day for this purpose.² It worked wonders and has paid dividends. Bureau of Scientific Resources and Research Publications has built a team which is extremely important for research and academic activities in today's world when integration and collaboration between different disciplines is essential. This is the second special issue of Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences showcasing the research work being done by the faculty of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences.

It was agreed that a team of senior academicians at IUMS will first review the manuscripts before forwarding them to us for further processing. Hence we received fifty five manuscripts for publication in this special supplement. They were all first screened for plagiarism, and then went through another review before they were finally accepted. One of the manuscripts was later withdrawn by the authors, two were dropped because of plagiarism, twelve others were not accepted for further processing because either they had many deficiencies or were more suitable for local publication as we thought they won't be of interest to our readers. Out of these forty, twelve required extensive editing to improve the English language and Grammar while a few needed minor corrections. Some of the manuscripts included in this issue contain state of the art research

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work which is of very high standard and will be a useful addition to the medical literature from this part of the world.

Study by Fatemeh Esfarjani et al on Metabolic Syndrome and its determinants in young Iranians is one of the excellent piece of research work which highlights the importance of prevention of childhood obesity and screening the components of MetS among obese children besides prevention of low birth weight children, which the authors believe should be considered a health priority.³ Study by Ali Reza Khosravi et al on late clinical events of drug eluting versus bare metals stenting is another excellent study which provides evidence that in view of the similar clinical outcome and economic parameters, use of Bare Metal Stents in carefully selected patients should be preferred.⁴ This will be welcome news for many patients who cannot afford the most expensive drug eluting stents. Mortality inequality in 1-59 months of children across Iran provides lot of useful national data.⁵ The readers will also find the study on effect of whole wheat bread and white bread consumption on pre-diabetes patients quite interesting.⁶ The effect of walnut consumption on lipid profiles is also interesting.⁷ Yet another excellent study is by Roya Kelishadi et al on association of resistin and hs-CRP with liver enzymes and components of the MetS in Iranian adolescents: The CASPIAN-III study. It shows that resistin seems to have a contributory role in childhood obesity and its metabolic consequences as fatty liver and metabolic syndrome.⁸ Comparison between pilates exercise and aquatic training on muscular strength in women with multiple sclerosis,⁹ Needle stick injuries which is a common professional hazard faced by health care professionals are some other important studies. Similarly the readers will find quite informative and interesting various occupational health studies, prevalence of HIV infections, false diagnosis in multiple sclerosis, effects of potato consumption as a high glycemic index food and Henna- a cause of life threatening hemolysis in G6PD deficient patients and role of cytomegalovirus in the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis from early life besides some

basic sciences. In all this forms a mix bag of some excellent research work produced by the faculty members of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences.

We would like to thank Prof. Roya Kelishadi the Guest Editor of this issue and her team for their input in compilation of this special issue. We sincerely believe that such regional cooperation between medical universities in Iran and medical publishers from Pakistan will help bring the health professionals of both these brotherly countries further closer so that they learn from each other's experience.

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