

GEOPOLITICAL INTRUSION ON EDITORIAL DECISIONS

Decisions to edit and publish manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals should be based on characteristics of the manuscripts themselves and how they relate to the journal's purposes and readers. Among these characteristics are importance of the topic, originality, scientific strength, clarity and completeness of written expression, and potential interest to readers. Editors should also take into account whether studies are ethical and whether their publication might cause harm to readers or to the public interest.

Editorial decisions should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript, including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors. Decisions to edit and publish should not be determined by the policies of governments or other agencies outside of the journal itself.

Editors should defend this principle, as they do other principles of sound editorial practice, and enlist their colleagues' support in this effort if necessary.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) is a voluntary association of editors who seek to foster international cooperation among editors of peer-reviewed medical journals. WAME also aims to improve editorial standards, to promote professionalism in medical editing through education and self-learning, and to encourage research on the principles and practice of medical editing. Currently, WAME has more than 1000 members representing 642 journals from 75 countries.

Among its many activities, WAME provides a forum for discussion of issues in research publication, and maintains an active list-serve discussion site on which many issues of concern to medical journals are addressed and debated upon. WAME periodically promulgates policy statements on various important issues. The Singapore Medical Journal intends to publish some of these policy statements that the editorial board subscribes to and considers to be relevant to our authors and readers.

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