

Contributing to AMHP

Frederick Bonato, Ph.D., FAsMA



Many of you enjoy reading AMHP, finding it to be an important resource. There are also those among you who publish in the Blue Journal or review manuscripts. However, perhaps you have not submitted anything for publication to the journal but would like to. It may also be the case that you have considered reviewing for AMHP but simply have not volunteered or don't think you can contribute. Although we maintain high standards for both publishing and reviewing in AMHP, we do want to take away the mystery of both activities.

To provide information about publishing in the Blue Journal—and on reviewing—the journal staff will be presenting a panel at the next AsMA meeting that will be held in Denver. We have put together panels like this before and the feedback we receive suggests they have been successful. I will cover some basics, such as describing the general category of articles AMHP publishes and how each type of manuscript should be put together prior to submission. Deb Sventek, Assistant to the Editor, will go over the process of actually submitting a manuscript through our online system, Editorial Manager. Pam Day, Managing Editor, will talk about what happens after a manuscript is accepted. If you are interested in publishing in the Blue Journal, I strongly encourage you to attend this panel. There will be plenty of time for questions and you can always stop by the journal table during the annual AsMA meeting to speak with the journal staff, including Rachel Trigg, Assistant to the Managing Editor.

Also presenting on the panel will be Eilis Boudreau, who will speak about reviewing for the journal. We are always seeking reviewers and qualified referees are especially difficult to recruit for some specialties in the aeromedical community—for example, space medicine and genetics. However, once an invitation to review is accepted, the reviewer has taken on an important responsibility. Serving as a reviewer is a good thing to do for a number of reasons—it deepens engagement, allows reviewers to contribute to their fields, and we cannot overlook that serving as a reviewer is a collegial partnership of sorts. Although it is true that reviewers sometimes recommend rejection for a submission (and some manuscripts do get rejected), in most cases the reviewer's job is to help the authors make the manuscript better.

Regarding reviewing, we are working on a comprehensive set of guidelines that will help reviewers better understand their role and expectations. This idea started with Mitch Garber, one of our Editorial Board members. Mitch is a meticulous reviewer and his suggestions on how to review well are good advice. Associate Editors Mike Barratt and Jan Stepanek contributed to early drafts. It is quite likely that by the time this editorial is published the reviewer guidance document will be available on our website.

Another important change that is likely implemented by now is a required Conflict of Interest form. Requiring that such a form be submitted with a manuscript is common among reputable journals. The form we will use is from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. It is a simple fillable PDF file, but it will help authors, as well as the staff, know when a potential conflict of interest exists.

Finally, as I write this editorial I cannot help but to be reminded—and saddened—by the recent passing of one of our past Editorial Board members, Jane Risdall. Jane was a friend to the journal and a friend to all of us who work with the journal. She was also the wife of current board member and AsMA president, David Gradwell. Jane was incredibly engaged, insightful, and always helpful. This was true for everyone at the journal, but also to authors, who benefited in many ways from her suggestions. Despite her challenges in recent years, Jane continued to review for AMHP until recently—she never refused an invitation. I think I speak for all the journal staff when I say that Jane will be sorely missed; she was a special colleague and friend.

I close with a note of encouragement for you to consider submitting your work to us or serving as a reviewer for the journal. Both can be rewarding. I hope you enjoy the Blue Journal in the coming year. As always, you can email us with any questions or comments you may have at: AMHPjournal@asma.org.

Very best wishes for the New Year!

Reprint & Copyright © by the Aerospace Medical Association, Alexandria, VA.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3357/AMHP.ED0117.2017>