



Fahad Aziz, MD, FASN

Wisconsin Medical Journal: Past, Present, and Future

Fahad Aziz, MD, FASN, *WMJ* Editor-in-Chief

Since its establishment in 1903, the *Wisconsin Medical Journal (WMJ)* has served as an essential forum for the medical community of the Midwest. It is a peer-reviewed, indexed scientific journal that has published several important scientific manuscripts over the last 100 years, focusing on continuing education for physicians and other health care professionals and advancing scientific knowledge. Initially, it was published by the Wisconsin Medical Society (Society); however, in 2019, the Society transferred its ownership to the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) and the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), thereby broadening its impact. Since that time, the journal has seen a sharp rise in manuscript submission—doubling from 60 to 80 per year to 130 to 150 per year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, *WMJ* published several research papers, case reports, and reviews on different aspects of the pandemic and served as an important information source for Wisconsin's medical community. It continued to be the voice of medical professionals in Wisconsin.

As editor-in-chief of *WMJ*, Sarina Schrage, MD, MS, played an important and exemplary role in increasing the journal's impact over the last 3 years. (Longtime editor-in-chief John Frey III, MD, retired as editor-in-chief in 2019 after 13 distinguished years at the helm). After Dr Schrage accepted a position as editor-in-chief of *Family Medicine*, I was fortunate enough to

be selected as *WMJ*'s new editor-in-chief. No doubt, I had big shoes to fill. But I've followed the rule, "Success is a daily thing, and you have to succeed every day to reach your goals." My first 6 months as editor-in-chief have been terrific.

only become great doctors, but doctors with the art of leadership. Young trainees are the future of medicine and will take this field to the next level.

I wish to express my gratitude to the countless medical professionals in Wisconsin and beyond, who have committed themselves to the vision of *WMJ*...

Currently, *WMJ* operations are overseen by a publishing board comprised of representatives from each school and an ex officio member from the Society. Working under the guidance of publishing board members Jonathan Temte, MD, Elizabeth Petty, MD, and Robyn Perrin, PhD, from SMPH; and Asriani Chiu, MD, Amalia Lyons, MD, Sara Wilkins, MA, MPA, from MCW, gave me a smooth start. Further, with Kendi Neff-Parvin as managing editor and Robert Treat, PhD, as deputy editor, it has been an excellent learning experience for me.

My vision for *WMJ* is to produce cutting-edge research in all areas of medicine, promote the success of medical trainees and young professionals, and extend the knowledge and its applications beyond the boundaries of any institution. Further, I believe that it's time for us to focus on training future leaders in the field of medicine who will not

CHANGES FOR 2023

To achieve our vision and mission, under the direction of the publishing board, we are introducing some significant changes in the year ahead.

- We will increase the number of issues from 4 to 6 per year. That increase will be beneficial to accommodate the higher submission rates we have seen for the last few years.
- We will transition from offering both print and online versions to an online format only—except for "special themed issues," which will be available in both formats. With the advancement of electronic media, reader demand and expectations for print copies have waned in the past few years, and we also believe it's the need of the hour to reduce our paper usage. However, with the targeted focus of special issues on particular timely topics, we decided it will be

beneficial to continue with print versions of these issues.

- We plan to publish a special themed issue in October, 2023. The details of this special issue are included below.
- Starting in 2024, we plan to publish 2 themed issues per year. We appreciate input from *WMJ* readers and reviewers and encourage you to suggest topics for special issues. We will make a list of the fundamental problems that need to be addressed and make those issues relevant to the needs of our medical professionals.

EXPANDING EDITORIAL STAFF

To meet the increasing editorial demands that come with additional submissions and publications, *WMJ* is currently seeking 2 to 3 more deputy editors. This will help streamline the peer review process for manuscripts and also will help to familiarize new professionals with the editorial cycle. These volunteer opportunities require about 2 to 3 hours per week.

We also are looking to add members to the *WMJ* Editorial Board. This group comprises physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other health care professionals from across the state and different health systems who play a critical role in defining the journal's policy. Further, editorial board members assist the editor-in-chief in achieving the journal's vision and mission. With a few members reaching the end of their term, the journal is looking forward to filling these seats with new members who represent a broad base of medicine.

Equally important, reviewers for any journal play a critical role in the advancement of science. We are very grateful to all who served as reviewers for manuscripts in 2022, and we are continually looking to expand our reviewer pool to expedite the review process and provide more timely editorial feedback and decisions.

If you are interested in serving in any of these capacities, please email wmj@wisc.edu to learn more.

SPECIAL ISSUE IN 2023

The special themed issue planned for publication in October 2023 is titled "Post-COVID-19 Era – Lessons Learned from the Pandemic and Its Aftermath." The issue will focus on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on medical professionals, the psychological and financial impact of the pandemic on patients, and the long-term effects of the pandemic on medical education. In this special issue, we will analyze how ready we in health care were to deal with this pandemic and what essential steps we should take to be prepared for another pandemic. More information is available on our website: wmjonline.org.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to the countless medical professionals in Wisconsin and beyond, who have committed themselves to the vision of *WMJ* to spread knowledge to our colleagues and our younger generations.



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WMJ

WMJ (ISSN 1098-1861) is published through a collaboration between The Medical College of Wisconsin and The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. The mission of *WMJ* is to provide an opportunity to publish original research, case reports, review articles, and essays about current medical and public health issues.

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