

Template for eResearch Africa 2017

Poster Submissions

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ABSTRACT

Notes:

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Improving Publication Quality and Quantity for Acute Care Authors From Low- and Middle-Income Settings

Background: Researchers from low- and middle-income countries have limited access to publishing and editing resources. This study describes a journal-initiated platform to improve publication quantity and quality in Sub-Saharan Africa emergency care research: Author Assist.

Methods: This is a descriptive report of a quality improvement project of referrals to the African Journal of Emergency Medicine's (AfJEM's) Author Assist program between January 2011 and December 2015. After either pre- or post-peer review rejection, authors are matched to an experienced volunteer assistant to revise and resubmit their article in a process that blinds handling editors and reviewers, but not the editor in chief, to participation. Participant data were collected from an Author Assist coordination database and linked to Scopus (Elsevier, Amsterdam, The Netherlands) and the journal's online submission platform.

Results: Of the 47 articles referred for Author Assist, 12 (26%) were originally rejected in the pre–peer review stage and 35 (74%) after peer review. Twenty-eight (60%) authors offered Author Assist enrolled. Of the 14 resubmissions during the study period, 12 (86%) were accepted for publication. For comparison, 37 of 40 regular revisions (93%) (without assistance) were accepted for publication during the same period.

Conclusion: Author Assist reversed 1 in 4 rejection decisions through a process that unavoidably but minimally biases peer review. Of the few free publication-improvement services targeting researchers in low- and middle-income countries, AfJEM's Author Assist is the only journal-led initiative, and the only one specific to emergency medicine. To continue to refine the design of the program, we recommend further qualitative research exploring author decisions to pursue or forgo enrollment in Author Assist and research examining author and assistant experiences once enrolled

ABOUT THE AUTHOR(S)

1. Stevan Bruijns

Stevan Bruijns is a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town. His interests include triage, research mentorship and the emergency care knowledge gap. He is the editor-in-chief for the African Journal of Emergency medicine and has held this position since the journal was founded seven years ago. He lives in Wellington with his family.

2. Gabrielle Jacquet

Dr. Jacquet is an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine and an Attending Physician in the Emergency Department at Boston Medical Center. She focuses her work on medical education and strengthening emergency care in resource-limited settings. She has taught Emergency Medicine, assisted in developing systems, or conducted research in India, Ghana, Sudan, Rwanda, South Africa, Haiti, and Colombia.

3. Megan Banner

Megan Banner is from Rhode Island in the US, and has a background in microbiology and wilderness first response. She has recently completed an MSc in Emergency Medicine from the University of Cape Town. She is the services coordinator for African Federation for Emergency Medicine, and works primarily as the manager of the Author Assist program and as AfJEM's technical editor.