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SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

The Pediatric Residency journal and the dissemination of information in times of COVID-19

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Abstract

Objectives: To present the procedure adopted by the PR journal on providing quick and agile visualization of the content of articles on COVID-19, sent and accepted for publication, immediately after being approved by the reviewers. **Methods:** Preparation of a copy specially focused on COVID-19 themes, with the establishment of a priority flow to speed up the peer reviews of the submitted manuscripts. **Results:** Readers benefit from the opportunity to read relevant topics in advance, which will still require a certain amount of time to be made available, given the routine of the entire publishing process. **Conclusions:** A simple initiative, such as the "pre-publication visualization", may serve as a stimulus for other open access journals to follow this simplified model, expanding the communication network between researchers.

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The Pediatric Residency Journal and digital communication

The Pediatric Residency Journal (PRJ)¹ is an electronic journal of the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics (BSP), published in Portuguese and English, with a four-monthly periodicity, in continuous flow, and it is intended for medical residents of the specialty and those from associated fields. The journal's content can be freely accessed and the priority is to contribute to the academic training of residents and encourage them to participate actively in scientific production on pediatric and adolescent care-related topics. The evaluation process of the submitted studies is done by peers.

The PRJ¹ adopted the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY) and is indexed by the Regional Information System in line for scientific journals in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, and Portugal (Latindex), in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database (CNKI), Editorial Policy Directory of Brazilian Scientific Journals (Diadorim), Google Scholar, CAPES/MEC Journals Portal, Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico (REDIB), Open Access Journals (LivRe), and Brazilian Journal Summaries (Sumários.Org). As for its archiving, the journal uses the Controlled LOCKSS (CLOCKSS) system.

Today, with the technological advances achieved and the huge amount of scientific papers that are published daily, there is an increasing demand for easy and quick access to updated scientific information². It is the practicality, associated with the immediate retrieval of the stored information that causes an increasing demand for information in the electronic environment.

In this sense, the scientific journal plays a fundamental role in the dissemination of knowledge^{3,4}, in the exchange of experiences, in the sharing and replication of research, in addition to enabling dynamic communication between academic members.

The PRJ, aware of the importance of its role in the digital process of scientific communication, has been vigilant to socio-epidemiological themes which contents will meet the expectations of its target audience and, thus, contribute to the advancement of science.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the medical literature

We are now, in 2020, experiencing a challenging period for medical science^{5,6}. Since the last epidemic caused by the influenza virus in the last century, we have not faced such a frightening scenario. By disrupting healthcare systems and the economies of the affected countries, the new COVID-19 disease has become a huge social, economic, and medical burden in modern times. In view of the emergency and the uncertainties caused by this coronavirus, many journals have enabled open access to its contents⁷. Thus, sharing the outcomes of

research carried out and other clinical, epidemiological and preventive information that emerge daily - in an agile and real-time manner - is essential to inform the public, save lives and it must be a priority initiative of the editorial policy of scientific journals^{8,9}.

In order to numerically identify publications whose sample selections involved the pediatric age group, a survey was carried out on August 20, 2020 of the relevant literature. We used exclusively PubMed¹⁰ data, as it has registered, since the beginning of 2020, articles on COVID-19 with the most varied study designs, including experimental ones, clinical reports, protocols, expert opinions, and observational studies, among others. Applying filters by "age", "within the last year" and the keywords: "COVID-19" OR "coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "pandemic" a total of 1,713 articles were found, corresponding to only 3.75% of total publications. In this context, it is understood that an exponential increase in research and publications in the pediatric area is still necessary so that new knowledge can add more significant benefits to public health in general and to the pediatric population in particular.

The Pediatric Residency and information dissemination: "pre-publication view"

The objective of this paper is to present the procedure adopted by the PRJ in order to provide a quick and agile view of the content of articles about COVID-19, sent and accepted for publication, immediately after being approved by the reviewers.

The PRJ editorial board's initial step to materialize this initiative was the elaboration of a copy specially focused on themes about COVID-19. The next step was to establish a priority flow to streamline peer-reviews of submitted manuscripts, that is, the period between submission and publication was significantly reduced for works related to COVID-19. The editors and reviewers, together, began to prioritize the articles in the special edition.

Due to the fact that the PRJ does not work with a preprint repository or a post print publication system, which speed up the dissemination of manuscripts, a new form of quick access to the newly approved material was devised, which was called "pre-publication preview". It is about making all approved material immediately available online, but not yet diagrammed and without the corresponding DOI. In this way, readers benefit from the opportunity to read in advance relevant topics that will still require a certain amount of time to be made available, given the routine of the entire editing process.

Independently and simultaneously, these articles go to the English version and layout in both languages (Portuguese and English). When they are ready for publication in the final version, the presentation in the form of "pre-publication preview" will no longer exist and will give rise to the special edition in the continuous flow model Figure 1.

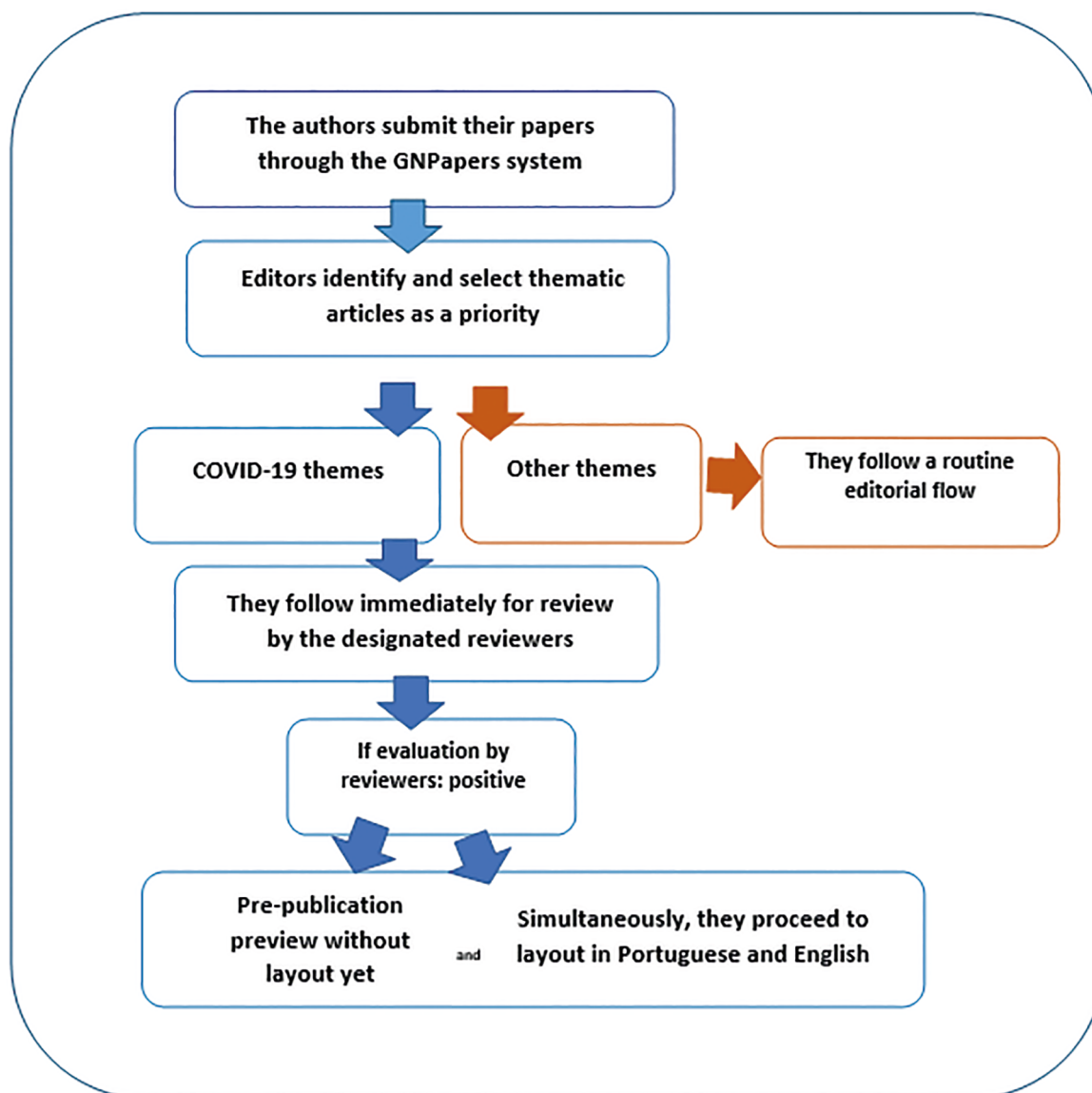


Figure 1. “Viewing before publication” process for COVID-19 papers in the Pediatric Residency Journal.

Final comments

The objective of this paper, despite the limitations, was to contribute to the advancement of knowledge about COVID-19, where uncertainties and questions still need clear, safe, and immediate answers. A simple initiative, such as the “pre-publication visualization”, can serve as a stimulus for other open access journals to follow this simplified model, expanding the communication network between researchers, and thereby helping the scientific community with evidence-based decisions, always with updated information on diagnosis, treatment, and prevention - essential resources also for health professionals who work on the front line of the epidemic, and seek to increasingly improve daily medical practice.

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