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## How did we get this far?

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## How did we get this far?

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## How did we get this far?

We started with the seemingly simple idea of having our own peer-reviewed journal. Many of us had served on editorial boards of other journals, and the concept of creating a new clinical research journal was our opportunity to apply lessons learned while avoiding some of our previously experienced pitfalls—a concept that was, perhaps, blindly optimistic. Little did we know at the time how this notion would become an educational journey; teaching us the intricate nuances about the process of launching a clinical journal. We would like to briefly share our experiences here, but stay tuned for our “Step-by-Step” Guide further detailing this process.

### **Needs Statement**

A succinct needs statement provides a framework to define the scope of any problem and strategically carve out a path to success. Based at an independent academic medical center in a community health system, we saw a need for students, residents, faculty, and staff at similar facilities to have a venue in which to publish. This formed the basis of a well-defined needs statement to bring to system administration and donors, allowing us to start putting pieces of this puzzle together.

### **Mission Statement/ Goals and Objectives**

It is important to have a written mission statement which summarizes the vision, goals, and objectives of any project or for that matter any organization. The mission statement becomes guiding principle and delineated goals/objectives provide appropriate paths to achieve that vision. We used SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound) methodology to develop timelines and metrics for success in achieving the goals and objectives. Having this process was critical to be successful in the short timeframe afforded to the launch of the project.

### **Executive Board and Editorial Board**

The success of any Journal is exemplified by its leadership, editorial board and readership base. Having a well-elucidated mission, vision, and values statement enhances the ability to recruit a board that “buys into” the mission and shares the values. We were successful in achieving a vibrant board with experience in their respective disciplines; this has translated into our growing readership among 196 Institutions across 79 countries worldwide as of November 10, 2021.

### **Business Plan**

Financial viability contributes to the success of any endeavor; we developed an astute business plan with built-in strategies to obviate the costs associated with publishing and administrative overheads. The result was our fairly unique (for medical journals) platinum open-access model, where the authors do not bear any publishing costs; this is far from the norm when compared to other open access medical journals available on the world wide web. The main challenge faced by open access journals is finding innovative ways to operate in the absence of any subscription income. We were fortunate to have our health system believe in our mission and were able to execute this process with support from senior leadership and innovative strategies by our Graduate Medical Education office. Careful planning and research into additional sources of sustainable funding may be required to reassure stakeholders.

## **Publishing House**

The last piece of the puzzle is to find a publishing house which can not only provide a customer friendly platform but also support administrative operations to successfully run a cost-effective journal. Publishing houses may have access to marketing platforms which can help get the word out and maximize the electronic footprint of the journal. The path to indexing can be an uphill battle, especially in the current era where open access journals are multiplying rapidly and predatory open access publishers represent a growing threat to academic integrity. It is important to adhere to the core mission of the journal and keep marching towards the defined goal; we anticipate achieving indexing within the next 12-18 months.

Finally, we would like to thank our health system leadership, editorial board, authors, and above all our readers for their support of our exciting venture; we are grateful for their continued faith in our vision.