

Challenges for *Polish Archives of Internal Medicine* in 2021: what is new in 2022?

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Over the last 10 years, *Polish Archives of Internal Medicine* (*Pol Arch Intern Med*) has established itself as a premier internal medicine Polish journal of international repute and ranks among the top scientific journals in Poland. A continuous increase in the journal's impact factor (IF) over the recent years reflects its status. In 2021, the journal achieved the IF of 3.277 and notably, based on the estimation in mid-December 2021, the predicted 2021 IF will exceed 4.5, which will strengthen the standing of *Pol Arch Intern Med* in the field of general medicine. We pride ourselves in publishing high-quality peer-reviewed clinical research on all aspects of internal medicine and its subspecialties with the content covering topics ranging from epidemiology and disease prevention to late-stage interventions.

The current 2021 year has been challenging and strange. The raging global COVID-19 pandemic, with 3.9 million cases and 91 000 deaths in Poland so far, not only has caused complex and interrelated health challenges, but also substantially increased submission rates. As the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic draws to a close, the world opened up, with lockdowns lifting, the submission rates has decreased but still, they are higher than in 2019. In 2021, 64 papers on COVID-19 were published in our journal and many are well cited, such as those on the same topic from 2020, including the first cases of vaccine-induced thrombotic thrombocytopenia reported in Polish patients, published in peer-reviewed journals. As in 2020, we were the leader in publishing first peer-reviewed reports on patients with COVID-19 in Poles. The Polish guidelines on the management of COVID-19 (2 updates) also appeared in *Pol Arch Intern Med*. Other COVID-19-related articles that got noticed by readers and were highly cited were related to neurological symptoms of this disease and to Polish, multicenter, real-world SARSTer study evaluating efficacy of remdesivir-based therapy.

Pol Arch Intern Med faces immense challenges in the current competitive publishing landscape. Our basic strategy is to maintain high publication quality by focusing on attracting and wisely choosing innovative and methodologically sound studies not only from Polish centers. To show how our editorial efforts have looked like in 2021, some figures will be informative: number of submissions, 870; manuscript acceptance rate, 22%; mean time from submission to the first decision, 2 days; mean time from submission to first reviews, 22 days; mean time from acceptance to final publication (online only), 82 days.

We are aware of the fact that the early access content in 2021 will be added to Journal Citation Reports by Clarivate, affecting the next journal IF calculation. In *Pol Arch Intern Med*, the quick online availability of the accepted articles has always been our priority. That included immediate publication of the accepted, peer-reviewed versions of the articles in just a few days. As "early access" for Clarivate is the version of record that will not change, aside from the final assignment in a volume / issue, it requires substantial editorial work including final language editing, typesetting, layout, before making it available online to our readers. In 2022, we are going to gradually adapt that online publication policy.

As of January 1, 2022, all new manuscripts will be charged with higher publication fees and this change was announced in mid-November 2021 on Facebook and Twitter. In contrast to more than 10 previous years, there has been no financial support from the government and keeping the publishing standards at the current level requires additional funds. The publication fee of a full-length original article is set at EUR 1000 (PLN 4000). The corresponding fee for research letters is now EUR 500 (PLN 2000). We believe that this change will help *Pol Arch Intern Med* grow in impact and influence among scientific journals.

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As a whole team, including Professor Grzegorz Gajos, Professor Tomasz Stompór, and myself, supported by the Scientific Boards headed by Professor Andrzej Januszewicz (since March 2021) and Professor Roman Jaeschke, we have made progress, but we have got a long way to go. As *Pol Arch Intern Med* is the flagship journal of the Polish Society of Internal Medicine since the inception in 1923, all internal medicine specialists from Poland and abroad are encouraged to submit their research to our journal.

Given a growing number of submissions, we strongly encourage all experts, who have published their articles and/or read the content of *Pol Arch Intern Med*, to accept our invitations to review the submitted work. Rapid competent peer reviews are at the heart of the publishing process and are of key importance to enhance the quality of manuscripts.

My thanks go to the journal's readers, authors, reviewers, and friends around the world who have kept us informed and supported us in efforts aimed at improving *Pol Arch Intern Med*.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year 2022!

ARTICLE INFORMATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST None declared.

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