

# Editorial - 1982

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## **A New Journal is Born** **The Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal** **MARCH, 1982 - VOL. 1 NO.1**



Lillian Haddock, MD

**A** long time dream of a group of faculty members of the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine is seeing the light in the publication of the first issue of the Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal. The School of Medicine and the Medical Sciences Campus emerged from the School of Tropical Medicine, which attained worldwide recognition for the clinical and basic research conducted by its faculty on the tropical diseases prevalent at the time in our country. The Puerto Rico Journal of Public Health and Tropical Medicine was the main forum used for the publication of their scientific work, thus it also attained worldwide reputation. With the conquest and control of the tropical diseases, the government and the University focused their attention in providing the health manpower needed to provide the medical and paramedical services to the Puerto Rican people. This policy led to creation of the School of Medicine in 1949 and the organization of other health schools and academic programs that constitute the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus.

Along the years clinical and basic research has had its peaks and nadirs. The present administration, despite the hard times and scarcity of funds for research, has committed itself to provide an environment which will propitiate research in all the faculties represented in the Medical Sciences Campus. The publication of the Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal is one of the additional steps taken to promote this endeavor.

The main goal of the publication of this journal is to provide a forum for the early publication of scientific work conducted by our investigators and other professionals conducting research studies in the health sciences in Puerto Rico. This includes the contribution of investigators in our university system, private universities and the results of health related research conducted in the public and private agencies. Other objectives include: to help young investigators in the publication of their research findings by providing constructive critique of their writings and secretarial help, to provide a forum for publication of articles which may not have had acceptance in mainland journals, for whatever reason, but which have scientific merit and should be published, and to stimulate the interest of the faculty to publish the findings of their scientific work.

It is the hope of the Editorial Board that an endeavor has been started which can be sustained by the faculty and is not subject to changes in the administration.

In order to fulfill our objectives an interested and qualified group of faculty members of the Medical Sciences Campus was appointed to the Editorial Board. An office was set aside in the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs for the Editorial Board and for use by contributors if so needed. A secretary has been appointed to attend all matters pertaining to the journal. The support of \$10,000 per year for the next five years has been received from Merck, Sharp and Dohme Química de Puerto Rico to help defray the cost of the publication of the journal. To them our thanks and deepest appreciation.

The Editorial Board decided to adopt the Guidelines for Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals as published in this our first issue with the permission of the Editor of the Annals of Internal Medicine. The document on Information for the Contributors, also published in this issue, give specific recommendations applicable to this journal in particular.

When a contributor sends an article for publication to a Journal they are always interested in knowing which distribution the Journal has. Conscious that this Journal should be given the widest possible distribution, a free copy will be sent to all the libraries of the main academic health centers in the United States, Canada, Latin and Central America, the Caribbean and the Western Hemisphere. The Journal will be listed in the Index Medicus.

The articles published in this first issue are representative of the research programs that are being carried out in our school and its affiliated institutions.

The success of this publication depends on you, the faculty and the students of the Medical Sciences Campus from whom we expect the majority of the contributions. The Editorial Board expects that a sizable group of you subscribe to the Journal so as to help the institution defray the cost of its publication.

The contribution of your manuscripts for publication is the most important way in which you can promote the success of this new Journal.

This is your Journal and the Editorial Board invites you to join us in making this new venture a worthwhile endeavor for our academic community and our country.



**Lillian Haddock, MD**  
Editor-in-Chief

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**N***ote from the Editor: This Editorial was written and published 25 years ago in the first issue of the Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal by its Founding Editor, doctor Lillian Haddock, Dean for Academic Affairs of the Medical Sciences Campus of that time. The articles in this Special Issue to commemorate 25 years of continuous and active existence of the Journal have been written mostly by members of its Editorial Board. A “follow-up Editorial” seems to be pertinent, critically looking back to the life of the Journal during these years. Doctor Delia M. Camacho, current Dean for Academic Affairs seemed to us to be the right person at the right moment to carry-out this endeavor. What follows is her vision and her hopes.*



**Jorge L. Sánchez, MD**  
Editor-in-Chief

## The Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal: Twenty-five Years of Sustained Growth



Delia M. Camacho, PhD

In 1982, when the first issue of the *Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal* was published, our campus was making a considerable effort to promote research and encourage its faculty to publish findings in scholarly journals. There was a need to facilitate the process for younger faculty members, particularly those researching local health problems and conditions that were not a publication priority for mainland and international journals. The foresight of the Journal's founders proved to be right. First indexed in Index Medicus in 1985, the Journal has grown into an interdisciplinary publication that reflects the research interests of our faculty, as well as priority health issues across time.

The Journal's twenty-five years of existence evidence the sustained support of the administration and the academic community, although this growth has not taken place without challenges. Perhaps the most rewarding accomplishment has been the gradual inclusion of articles on health fields other than medicine, particularly a wealth of publications on public health, which truly mirrors our campus composition. The faculty of the Schools of Medicine, Public Health, and Pharmacy are regular contributors. The Editorial Board will continue to encourage more submissions from the Schools of Dentistry, Nursing, and Health Professions.

All along, the Journal has tried to promote publications while maintaining high standards of quality. In 1982, it adopted the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals* of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Every effort is made to submit each article to two reviewers besides the Editor, and plans are underway to expand the pool of reviewers internationally, so that the Journal can be classified as a fully peer-reviewed publication. The Journal is distributed to approximately 250 universities, government agencies, and health organizations in the United States, Latin America, and Europe, including the National Library of Medicine which continues to index it.

An examination of the tables of contents of the 25 volumes published thus far reveals an initial preponderance of basic science subjects, the steady increase of clinical studies and case reports in the late eighties, and a considerable and sustained inclusion of public health research since the late eighties and early nineties. In 1984, the Editorial Board decided to publish the abstracts presented at the campus' Annual Research Forum, as an additional incentive to researchers and a way to further link the Journal to the campus research enterprise. Other features have been added though the years, including review articles, and, in 1991, articles pertaining to the campus Annual Education Forum, which later became part of the Annual Research Forum. With the inclusion of articles on education, the Journal broadened its scope to address issues on teaching the health sciences besides conducting research in them. The Journal has also published issues on specific subjects, such as: The Caribbean Primate Research Center (April 1989),

Women's Health (April 1990), HIV/AIDS (April 1993), Diabetes (June 2001), Public Health (March 2003), and Hepatitis C (June 2004).

It is my hope that as the Medical Sciences Campus continues to consolidate itself as a research institution, so will the Journal continue to grow and remain an attractive forum for publication for all faculty members. We are currently in the process of restructuring the Editorial Board to include international members and, thus, broaden our perspective and pool of reviewers. In tune with the times, we expect to offer the electronic version of the Journal in the near future. I am certain that its new editor, Dr. Jorge L. Sánchez, will build upon the work of the founders and all past editors and contributors to transform a good journal into an even better one.



**Delia M. Camacho, PhD**  
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