

EDITORIAL



Medical Journals and the 2019-nCoV Outbreak

Eric J. Rubin, M.D., Ph.D., Lindsey R. Baden, M.D., Stephen Morrissey, Ph.D.,
and Edward W. Campion, M.D.

At the *Journal*, we work with authors to craft their messages to provide readers the best information from rigorous medical practice and basic science. The process can take time, with careful peer review, editing, and graphics often involving multiple rounds of revision. This work fulfills our mission: to provide our readers with the highest-quality information to guide the care of patients.

But some situations call for a different approach. The current outbreak of coronavirus infection is a threat to the health of the public and a breaking news story that changes hour by hour. We can eventually take a long view of how to manage and prevent epidemics, but today practitioners and public health authorities need actionable information as soon as possible.

We are therefore putting in place a set of practices that we will apply to all submitted manuscripts describing the 2019-nCoV outbreak.

- We expect authors to share important information with public health authorities as early as possible. In the case of the current coronavirus outbreak, we will, with authors' approval, share appropriate manuscripts in confidence with the World Health Organization. We also encourage authors to submit their work for posting on preprint servers.
- We will rapidly evaluate submitted manu-

scripts and, if we plan to publish them, will expedite all editorial steps to make them available as quickly as possible. We encourage authors to share with other researchers the original data that underlie all reports on 2019-nCoV that we publish.

- As with all work with immediate public health significance, articles about the coronavirus outbreak will be made freely available at NEJM.org from the day of publication. A special page has been created at NEJM.org for all coronavirus articles (www.NEJM.org/coronavirus), along with links to essential resources for clinicians.
- Because we cannot publish everything we receive, we will, on manuscript submission, offer authors the opportunity for rapid transfer of their manuscript to other participating journals, with reviewer comments when available.

The rapid pace of infectious disease outbreaks can be frightening. Our aim is to transparently bring readers the best information available in a highly expedited manner.

Disclosure forms provided by the authors are available with the full text of this editorial at NEJM.org.

This editorial was published on January 27, 2020, at NEJM.org.

DOI: 10.1056/NEJMe2001329

Copyright © 2020 Massachusetts Medical Society.