

JRCS: The beginning and beyond

A reminiscing note from the Founding Editor

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Continuing a provincial medical journal for over a quarter century is a great achievement. It is with great pleasure that I send greetings to the readership of the Journal of Ruhunu the Clinical Society (JRCS).

A Journal for the Ruhunu Clinical Society was an aspiration I had when I was the President of the Ruhunu Clinical Society in 1993. My working life as a Consultant Dermatologist started at Matara General Hospital. It was also very significant for me as Matara is my hometown. I have very fond memories of my period as a dermatologist in Matara, and my association with the Ruhunu Clinical Society and the JRCS.

We initiated work on the JRCS in early 1994 and published the first Volume of the journal in 1994. It was officially launched during the Joint Meeting with the Sri Lanka Medical Association. The Council of the Ruhunu Clinical Society supported me fully in this endeavor. We received sufficient advertisements from pharmaceutical companies to cover the costs. At the time there were only a few functioning medical journals in the country, let alone in the provinces. Matara being a vibrant city with an educated populace and an academically minded medical fraternity, there was a need and a desire to further medical education and medical writing. This journal gave an opportunity for many young doctors to get their articles published and feel proud about it. Many clinicians and academics outside the province were also happy to publish in the JRCS.

Continuing the journal was the next task. I was the chief editor the journal for several years. The subsequent editors have done a marvelous job in maintaining a high standard in the journal. A special mention should be made of Dr Sunil Seneviratne Epa, a physician practicing in Matara for over 3 decades, who was a pillar of strength for continuation of the JRCS.

Editing a journal can be a challenge. JRCS was no

exception. There was no secretarial assistance. The Editor did everything from sourcing articles, editing, checking corrections, finding advertisements, designing the cover, proofreading etc. Sometimes prospective authors were not happy if the articles were not accepted in the form they want them. Sometimes it was not easy to get a good balance of articles for a particular issue. Sometimes prospective authors promised to send articles, but they could not keep to the deadlines. But these are familiar issues to many editors. My experience with the JRCS encouraged me to continue editorial work in several other national and international medical and dermatology journals in my career beyond Matara.

Interestingly Ranasinghe et al discusses costs of publishing medical journals in Sri Lanka, including the JRCS in an article published in the BMJ Open in 2011. It is very creditable that the JRCS has recently become accessible freely online on the internet.

I would like to share a few images from the first copy of the JRCS (Fig 1). The First editorial was on 'Continuing Medical Education in the Provinces'². Over a quarter century the JRCS has no doubt helped the medical fraternity in Sri Lanka in that regard.

Inaugural issue of the JRCS (1994)

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Current Editor In Chief, the Editorial Team and the Council of the Ruhunu Clinical Society for continuing the Journal of the Ruhunu Clinical Society.

I hope the JRCS will grow from strength to strength!

References:

1. Ranasinghe P, Perera YS, Abeygunasekara AM. The process and costs of publishing medical journals in Sri Lanka: an economic evaluation. *BMJ Open* 2011;1:e00057.
2. Kumarasinghe SPW. Editorial: Continuing medical education in the provinces. *Journal of the Ruhunu Clinical Society* 1994; 1:1.

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