Letter to the Editor

Predatory Journals: Enough is Enough

Dear Editor:

We read with great interest the article titled “Open Access: Is There a Predator at the Door?” by Dr. Chandra et al. Although there are legitimate open access journals, such as Laryngoscope Investigative Otolaryngology, the editorial brings up a relevant and frustrating issue. Over the past few years, the number of e-mails from predatory journals has been incrementally increasing. The first author receives approximately 10 to 15 e-mails daily from predatory journals. Good faith attempts to reply to the journals have been unsuccessful. The first author has sent over 200 e-mails in the past 3 years asking to be removed from the e-mail distribution lists without success. Although the filters from the e-mail service providers have selected the majority of the e-mails go directly to the spam folder, there are several a day that still make it into the inbox. Despite filters, attempts to block the e-mails and unsubscribe, the messages continue to come. The authors have decided to keep their e-mail addresses.

A real-world case study on the true predatory nature of some open access journals can be seen by an invitation to submit a manuscript, which Dr. Reckley accepted. The journal had a legitimate sounding name and Dr. Reckley believed it to be indexed in PubMed. Nowhere in the e-mail or the website did they state there was a fee for publishing in their journal. After a quick review of the manuscript, the journal requested a minor revision. After making the minor revision and resubmitting the manuscript, the manuscript was accepted. The journal immediately posted the article onto their open access website and then sent an e-mail to Dr. Reckley asking for the $1,500 article processing fees (APC). She e-mailed them stating that she wanted the article removed from the website as she was unaware of the fees. They continued to send e-mails and faxes to our department. The journal did not respond and did not list a phone number, and Dr. Reckley wondered if the best thing to do was to pay the APC to avoid any problems. After several months of e-mailing and contacting the journal, they stopped sending collection notices but have not yet removed the article from their website. The entire event is frustrating and has caused unnecessary stress.

MACARIO CAMACHO, MD
LAUREN K. RECKLEY, MD
Tripler Army Medical Center
Department of Surgery, Division of Otolaryngology
Tripler AMC, Hawaii

BIBLIOGRAPHY