



The Galle Medical Journal

Journal of the Galle Medical Association

Volume 22: Number 2, September 2017

Editors; Galle Medical Journal

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@ The Galle Medical Journal,
2017 September
The Galle Medical Association
GMA Office
Teaching Hospital Karapitiya
Galle
SRI LANKA

ISSN 1391-7072

Tel/Fax: +94 91 2232560
E-mail: gmathk@gmail.com
gmjgalle@gmail.com

Web Site: www.gma.lk

Internet Home Page:

<http://www.sljol.info/index.php/GMJ>

Editorial

Authorship issues

It is not uncommon to find problems related to authorship in the manuscripts submitted for the GMJ. More than in original articles, this problem is frequently seen in case reports submitted.

Management of some patients nowadays requires multi-disciplinary approach with significant contributions from specialists in many disciplines. This applies mainly for complex clinical situations and case reports generally address these complex clinical problems. In some instances the list of authors does not reflect this multi disciplinary contribution despite very clear evidence that many specialties have involved in solving the particular clinical problem addressed in the case report.

Person who qualifies to be nominated as an author has been clearly stated. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) has stated that “*an author must be validated for: a) conception and design of the study, or analysis and interpretation of data; b) drafting of the article or critical revision of its content; c) final approval of the version to be published; d) responsibility for all the aspects of the work.*” All authors listed in the paper must meet the four criteria and those who have made contributions in other ways should only be acknowledged.

Although it is clear that the above definition has been made focusing articles based on research projects, the basic concepts addressed in the definition can be applied for case reports. Based on the contribution made in solving the clinical situation, in the patient management, drafting the paper and critical revision of the content, the decision has to be made whether to include such contribution under authorship or acknowledgement.

Finally, authorship reflecting the multi disciplinary approach in the management of the patient addressed in the particular case report only enhances its validity and perhaps acceptability for publication.

Sarath Lekamwasam
Eisha Waidyarathne
Editors / GMJ