

Nepal Medline-NepMed: A Beginning of New Story

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Scientific publication in Nepal does not have a long history as the official first publication began in 1963 with Journal of Nepal Medical Association.¹ In last two decades, with growing number of medical colleges in Nepal and development of subspecialty in various medical fraternity, the number of scientific journals has mushroomed partly to meet the need of academic publication for local faculty to upgrade in academia.^{1,2} Currently, there are more than 30 biomedical journals in Nepal, however the issues of visibility, indexing, reaching to proper audience, standards of publications and lack of guidance during the journal development has raised new challenges and need addressing.³ This has opened doors for predatory nature to flourish in academia, violated the ethical standards, misused the concept of indexing and allowed academia to commercialize.³

To address these challenges, Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC) along with its partner organizations Nepal Medical Association (NMA) and Nepal Association of Medical Editors (NAME) takes a step forward to pool all the biomedical journals. The idea is noble in areas of improving visibility nationally and internationally, assists and encourage in various technical issues during their academic journey with resource building, sharing and encouragement, raise ethical standards and minimize predatorship.

NepMed-Nepal Medline takes the vision to develop as a repository and national indexing body in its early phase by encouraging them to pool in the system. Second phase will be dedicated in sharing resources in terms of reducing plagiarism, improve visibility by encouraging use of Digital object identifier, train staffs and editorial in areas of information technology and editorial issues. Final phase will be development of high ethical standards in publications, regularity in issues, quality upgradation in publications, minimal tolerance to predatory nature.

It includes bibliographic information for articles from

academic biomedical journals covering medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and allied health sciences. NepMed is inspired by PubMed which is free search engine is accessing primarily the MEDLINE database of references and abstracts on life sciences and biomedical topics maintained by the United States National Library of Medicine (NLM) at the National Institutes of Health. NepMed has been developed according to the need of our country.

The concept of NepMed to develop as a database of articles published in Nepalese Medical, Dental, Nursing, and Allied Health Journals was initiated by Dr. Angel Magar at Nepal Medical Association in 2008. This idea was discussed with like-minded people and organizations over the years. After becoming the Executive Chairman of Nepal Health Research Council Prof. Dr. Anjani Kumar Jha, re-vitalize the project through NHRC in collaboration with NMA in 2017.⁴ After two years of extensive collaborative work, NepMed was launched on 31 May 2019 in premises of NHRC in presence of editorials of all journals, stakeholders affiliated to different universities, academia councils, and international organizations with all partners agreeing on common theme proposed to upgrade the academia and participate in the journey. Experiences of development of the system will be sought from different countries which have their own national indexing system, to develop locally as a sustainable project with a noble mission.

There is no doubt NepMed will ensure quality control in academia, which will help improve the local science. The journey has just started with common consensus, the role of the national stakeholders, the journals participating in the development process and the guidance from the international community is key to achieve the mission in the noble journey.

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