

A thriving health system with an evidence-based culture: The potential catalytic role of Sri Lanka Journal of Health Research (SLJHR)

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Over the last few decades, there have been very few low- or middle-income countries in the world that have simultaneously achieved strong health outcomes, good financial protection by low cost and Sri Lanka stands tall amongst them [1]. Moreover, the Sri Lankan health system was well in line with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time of combating the COVID-19 crisis on many fronts, the country often witnessed a concerted effort from the health sector to maintain its current achievements while improving the quality of the existing health services. The launching of the Sri Lanka Journal of Health Research is one such endeavor.

Healthcare is a large, complex and adaptive system. Health systems are inherently dynamic, constantly facing new challenges. When developing interventions to address these challenges, it is often witnessed that ad-hoc, non-scientific mechanisms will not be sustainable. While interventions based on non-scientific phenomena may get wide publicity in short term, as evident by the recent events too, what last long are those based on scientific rationale.

There can be many definitions for science according to different philosophies. However, in real life, it can be considered to be the embodiment of the most reliable knowledge about the world humankind has hitherto acquired [2]. Science requires exercising critical intelligence on the best available evidence generated by a systematic method. Evidence-based scientific practices are regarded as the cornerstone for the success of any progressive health system.

The three elements of these evidence-based practices include integration of best available evidence, clinical experiences and the perspectives of the clients. The “best available evidence”, synthesized both globally as well as locally, paves the way for addressing health challenges, as discussed above.

Transforming scientific evidence for its use in practice, commonly known as research translation, involves many processes and strategies [3]. Dissemination, health communication and implementation are some such processes. Dissemination of evidence generated in the field of health, especially set about by the Ministry of Health, in the form of a journal, has been a long felt need. Sri Lanka Journal of Health Research (SLJHR) intends to fulfil this need. It is the official journal of the Ministry of Health, representing all categories of its staff. Such a journal could create a common platform by being open for all health staff categories island-wide and even beyond. The SLJHR was designed to fulfil the key mission of efficiently and promptly publishing rigorous, accessible, and relevant material that will help health professionals in Sri Lanka in their practice, lifelong learning, and career development. The editorial board wishes the SLJHR to be guided by the best possible standards and norms in the world and to achieve the status of an indexed journal in due course.

The SLJHR has come into the existence following a series of stakeholder meetings and discussions. The SLJHR is proud to have an editorial committee and an editorial panel representing a cross-

section of the categories of healthcare staff in the country and abroad. We sincerely thank all of them for their unstinted contributions. A special thank is due to the authors and the others who have supported in making this a reality. To ensure accessibility across all the staff categories and the quality outputs, this will remain an open-access peer-reviewed journal.

We sincerely hope that SLJHR will thus play a catalytic role in the dissemination of scientific evidence within and beyond Sri Lanka. As the editors in chief, we warmly invite you to submit manuscripts to the SLJHR. We are looking forward to completing a quick and comprehensive review process in the future, thus doing justice to each article you submit.

References

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