

## Peer Review and Scientific Citizenship

### Revisão pelos Pares e Cidadania Científica

Helena Donato<sup>1</sup> , José Mariz<sup>2</sup> 

At the launch of the first issue of the journal *Medicina Interna*, it is unavoidable not to reflect on the previous year's issues. And we never tire of repeating it every year: there is a hidden work, without which there is no quality editing – the work of the reviewers. First, it is up to us, the Editorial Board, to sincerely thank all the Reviewers who contributed to the quality of the scientific edition of the *Journal Medicina Interna*. We count on 81 Reviewers, who rated a total of 116 Articles. The process is complex, given the diversity of both the typology of the articles and the subjects. It forces you to carefully choose experts in different areas, constantly dialogue with them, keep the process fluid without losing scientific rigor and controlling all biases.

Therefore, this gratitude is felt and is also the recognition, within the international panorama of scientific publishing, of the editorial work that the journal *Medicina Interna* has been doing. Let's look at the importance of peer review scientific work.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (2025) states that "Peer review is the critical assessment of manuscripts submitted to journals by experts who are usually not part of the editorial staff. Because unbiased, independent, critical assessment is an intrinsic part of all scholarly work, including scientific research, peer review is an important extension of the scientific process."<sup>1</sup>

Peer review is a voluntary, time-consuming and ethical contribution, which makes it difficult to find good reviewers available, especially for those who are already overloaded with their usual professional practice, to carry out this demanding task. Furthermore, they are often not compensated for their work, because it is assumed that being invited to take part in a review process should be seen as an honour, a privilege and a responsibility, as it reflects peer recognition of competence in a specific area.

However, carrying out a review is often a time-consuming and labor-intensive process. Peer review is also considered an act of scientific citizenship.<sup>2,3</sup>

It is clear that reviewers need to be incentivized to avoid so-called 'reviewer fatigue', which manifests itself in successive refusals from reviewers overwhelmed by excessive and unrewarded invitations. Facing the challenge of finding qualified reviewers is a growing reality for all scientific journals.<sup>3</sup> Experienced reviewers are not an endangered species, but they can feel demotivated and are undoubtedly often overworked.

That is why, at *Medicina Interna*, we organize workshops to provide skills for internists interested in the peer review process.<sup>4</sup>

We also believe that recognizing and thanking reviewers is essential, and therefore it is time to properly recognize reviewers for their important contributions to the progress of research:

- Publication of the list of reviewers in the first issue of each year, as a way of publicly expressing the commitment and dedication of these professionals to the quality of our journal
- Sending a Certificate of Review to each reviewer, formally recognizing their work and allowing documentation of this contribution for professional and curricular purposes;
- Listing reviewers at the end of articles, with their consent, to give visibility to their fundamental role in the review process, valuing the collaborative work that guarantees the quality of the publication;
- Public recognition through the ReviewerCredits platform - As *Medicina Interna* will be registered on the ReviewerCredits platform. It will provide a form of recognition for reviewers for their scientific contribution, and *Medicina Interna* reviewers will automatically benefit from this platform by registering on ReviewerCredits (<https://www.reviewercredits.com/what-we-offer-to-peer-reviewers>) and receiving credit for their reviews.

In this new year, we are once again counting on everyone's collaboration to continue improving the quality of our publications and speeding up the review process, in order to promote and publicise the excellence of Portuguese Internal Medicine on the international scene.

And once again, thank you very much to all the Reviewers of *Medicina Interna*! ■

Published / Publicado: 2025/03/31

<sup>1</sup>Diretora Serviço Documentação e Informação Científica, Unidade Local de Saúde de Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal.  
Editora Técnica Revista de Medicina Interna

<sup>2</sup>Editor-Chefe  
Serviço de Urgência e Unidade de Cuidados Intermédios, ULS Braga, Braga, Portugal  
Escola de Medicina da Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal

<https://doi.org/10.24950/rspmi.2723>

Alexandra Bayão Horta	Elisabete Monteiro	Jorge Castro	Pedro Leuschner
Alexandre Marques	Emilia Louro	Jorge Fernandes	Pedro Caiano Gil
Alfredo Martins	Ester Ferreira	Jorge Leitão	Rafael Silva
Aline Zimmermann de Azambuja	Fátima Leal Seabra	Jorge Martins	Ricardo Fernandes
Ana Ferro	Fátima Pinto	José Paulo Araújo	Ricardo Louro
Ana Paiva Nunes	Fernando Guimarães	José Pedro Pinto	Ricardo Pereira
Ana Raquel Rodrigues	Fernando Salvador	Liliana Carneiro	Rui Carneiro
Ana Sá	Filipa Rocha	Luísa Fonseca	Sandra Morais
Anabela Oliveira	Francisca Beires	Luís Brito Avô	Sara Leitão
Andrea Mateus	Francisco Gonçalves	Luís Campos	Sara Rocha
António Carneiro	Francisco Moya	Maria Amélia Pereira	Sofia Amálio
António Gaspar	Francisco Morgado	Maria do Céu Rocha	Sofia Pinheiro
Arsénio Santos	Francisco Parente	Marta Sousa	Stefanie Scalco
Carlos Vasconcelos	Francisco Rosário	Miguel Afonso Filipe	Susana Fernandes
Bárbara Lobão	Giovanni Cerullo	Mónica Caldeira	Teresa Medeiros
Carolina Teles	Helena Donato	Murilo Martini	Tiago Valente
Cátia Carmona	Inês Rodrigues	Natália Loureiro	Tomás Fonseca
Cláudia Brazão	Isabel Lavadinho	Nídia Pereira	Vânia Gomes
Cristina Ângela	Isabel Madruga	Paula Alcântara	Verónica Guiomar
Cristina Teotónio	João Araújo Correia	Paulo Chaves	
	João Porto	Paulo Gouveia	

## REFERENCES

1. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Responsibilities in the Submission and Peer-Review Process [accessed Feb 2025] Available at: <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/responsibilities-in-the-submission-and-peer-pevew-process.html>
2. Donato H, Cardim N. Open letter to our reviewers: Justice is needed! *Rev Port Cardiol.* 2021; 40. doi: 10.1016/j.repc.2020.12.008
3. Liang W, Zhang Y, Cao H, et al. Can large language models provide useful feedback on research papers? A large-scale empirical analysis. *arXiv*, 2310.01783; October 3, 2023. doi: 10.48550/arXiv.2310.01783 8.
4. Mayer D, Eastin C, Kane B, Lee S, Davis J, Chan TM. The importance of peer review skills: Value and necessity of training residents to ensure continued scientific excellence. *AEM Educ Train.* 2024;8:S76-S79. doi: 10.1002/aet2.10940.