

COVID-19, Ramadan, Diabetes, Thyroid, and More

The present issue is the second in the 4th year of the Journal's life. From this year onward, we aim to implement the original plan of producing four issues per year. This should allow more articles to be published and also allow timely publication of accepted articles as soon as they are accepted with no significant delay in the editorial production. Nonetheless, we will strive to maintain the quality and adhere strictly to the good practices of scholarly publishing.

In this issue, the global literature production on Ramadan fasting and diabetes practice and research in the last year (2020) was narrated by Hafidh *et al.* Four original research articles are included in the issue. The relationship between diabetes and stroke remains controversial, the exploration of the interplay of hyperglycemia during admission and stroke was investigated by examining the hospital records of Rashid Hospital, Dubai, UAE. Another study examined the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on the episodes of hypoglycemia among patients with diabetes during Ramadan 2020 by Ghareeb *et al.* from Saudi Arabia. The phenotypes of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol and their relationship with glycemic status in type 2 diabetic patients were examined by Onwukwe *et al.* from Nigeria. A group of endocrinologists have been working on cataloging the patterns of engagement of common endocrine conditions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region by online surveys using validated questionnaires. In the current issue, the patterns of management of hypothyroidism were examined using an online survey of physicians from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the clinical practice relevance of the findings are highlighted in the commentary by the world renowned Hossein Gharib of Mayo Clinic (USA). Finally, a very interesting case report of curious autoimmune hypoglycemia in diet-treated patients precipitated by clopidogrel was reported by Afandi *et al.* from Al Ain, UAE.

On a different note, I was recently asked if having two journals on diabetes and endocrinology are too many for our MENA region. My response was categorical *NO*. I have looked for specialist journals based in any of the regions between Morocco and Oman; I could only find three (JDEP is included). Strangely, many of the authors from this region struggle to publish their work in internationally-indexed journals. Many of the reviewers who recommend rejections use the excuse of "perhaps, more relevant to local readers and should be submitted locally" to reject well-conducted research. On the other hand, an increasing volume

of literature-based research such as narrative and systematic reviews are conducted by Western researchers on issues relevant to this region and get published in international journals not readily accessible to the targeted readers in this region. To this end, development of specialty journals in the region with international standards is of paramount importance. Furthermore, as a loyalty gesture and a long term strategy, regionally-based researchers ought to reserve some of their work to support regional journals even if they will not get credit for academic promotion (as some do claim). On the contrary, regional universities/institutions should recognize regional journals for these purposes.

The Gulf Association of Endocrinology and Diabetes is committed to maintaining the open-access model fully funded by the Association. We again appeal to all colleagues with interest in diabetes, endocrinology, and metabolism in the Gulf, Middle East regions and world wide to submit manuscripts for consideration for publication in this journal, support our peer-review process, and let us know how we are doing by browsing our website and interacting with us.

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