How the Work Is Done

Periodically I am asked about the manuscript submission and review process. Usually the question comes from someone serving on our Journal

Committee or someone has concerns about the time it has taken before a decision is made on their manuscript. I thought it might be informative to review this process in an editorial.

When a manuscript is first received through our electronic portal, it is reviewed by our managing editorial staff for compliance with JNEB guidelines in a broad sense (institutional review board approval, for instance). Next, the Editor-in-Chief reviews the manuscript to decide whether it should be passed on to an Associate Editor for managing. Reasons that a manuscript might be rejected by the Editor-in-Chief include issues such as the topic being out of JNEB's scope, serious design or methodology flaws, or extremely limited external validity. Once in the hands of the Associate Editor, they decide whether a manuscript should move on to review. Many of the same concerns as previously mentioned could cause a manuscript to be rejected without further review. If the manuscript passes this phase, the editor will use a program called

CrossCheck to evaluate whether substantial parts of the paper have already been published.

If the manuscript has not been previously published, the editor will invite 2 to 3 reviewers, 1 being a member of our Board of Editors. Members of our Board of Editors are selected based on the quantity, quality, and timeliness of reviews. They are voted on by our Journal Committee and then the SNEB Board of Directors. We also have statistical reviewers who may be invited to look at statistical aspects of a paper. Once all reviews are received, the editor will make a decision and write the decision letter adding to, or highlighting, comments from reviewers. We strive to have no more than 2 rounds of reviews. Occasionally, new issues arise as responses to reviewers' comments are received, and this might require another round of reviews. Once in a while there is disagreement between the reviewers and author, and it is the editor's responsibility to decide the direction of the decision on the manuscript. When the manuscript is at the "Accept with Conditions" stage, the Editor-in-Chief also reviews the manuscript and adds any additional comments that would align the manuscript best with JNEB guidelines for authors.

After acceptance of a manuscript, the paper goes to our publisher for transformation into a typeset proof.

The publisher's copyeditors might have questions or suggestions for the authors or editor at this point. That proof is reviewed by the authors, the Editor-in-Chief, and the Managing Editor, answering any copyeditor queries and making any additional corrections. After all the changes have been made, the paper goes to "AiP" or Article in Press. At this time, the paper is available online at www.jneb.org, but has not yet been placed in an issue. The issue lineup is decided monthly by the Editor-in-Chief, denoting those articles that will be mentioned on the cover. Once the issue is compiled, the issue is reviewed again by the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief before being printed and shipped to you.

I mentioned the Journal Committee, which is separate from the editors and Board of Editors. The Journal Committee consists of SNEB members with experience in both the society and the journal. It is within this committee that many of the policies and procedures of the journal are discussed and decided.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many eyes that look upon each JNEB paper. It truly takes a community to raise a journal.

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