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Editorial

“We have never resigned ourselves to be mere craftsmen of anesthesia”: past, present and future of the Colombian Journal of Anesthesia

“Jamás nos hemos resignado a ser simples artesanos de la Anestesia”: pasado, presente y futuro de la Revista Colombiana de Anestesiología

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In 2012, the Colombian Journal of Anesthesiology (RCA) will issue its 40th Edition and, at the end, will complete forty years of uninterrupted publication, this provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the events that have contributed to our history and to make decisions that will help the RCA to move forward as a leading publication in the area of Anesthesia, Resuscitation and Perioperative Medicine in Colombia, Latin America, and the world.

The RCA was published for the first time in September 1973 during the XII Latin American Congress of Anesthesia held in Bogotá, under the editorial direction of Jaime Herrera Pontón, in collaboration with Jorge Osorio Reyes, Fernando Vélez de Castro and Guillermo Ortiz Castro, who are now considered the founders of the journal.^{1,2} The RCA was created with a view to becoming the scientific organ of the Colombian Society of Anesthesiology and Resuscitation (SCARE), which was founded in September 23, 1949³ and to serve as a channel of information for the diverse academic activities developed by a handful of university centers at the time.^{1,2} Jorge Colmenares Espinosa, who was then the President of SCARE, sponsored this historical event that helped to consolidate our professional and scientific association. Dr. Colmenares authored the first editorial article of the RCA and wrote a statement that is still legitimate, and represents the relentless effort of anesthesiologists in Colombia: “(...) We have never resigned ourselves to be mere craftsmen of Anesthesia (...)”.⁴

Initially the articles published were narrative reviews aimed at contributing to the training of residents and to bring up-to-date information to the specialists in the country. Translations of articles originally published in English in renowned foreign journals such as *Anesthesiology*^{5,6} were usually included.

It was difficult then to have access to updated international publications in our country, in addition to the fact that a large group of anesthesiologists preferred reading in Spanish. In the beginning, the RCA was not a channel for disseminating the results of Colombian research.

After the first issues published, the RCA evolved in response to the national and international environment in which access to information and medical education underwent a considerable transformation.

Since the last decade of the Twentieth Century, the Internet has drastically changed the way to access information,⁷ making information widely available to everybody, as well as drastically reducing the time between the publication of the information and access to international journals and other sources of information in *Anesthesiology*.⁸ Hence, anesthesiologists in Colombia became more acquainted with basic and clinical research developed in other countries and in addition to the academic training of experts in methodology and research, encouraged the development of clinical trials, and positioned the RCA as a channel for disseminating national research in Anesthesiology.

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Members of the Cochrane Collaboration who did a manual search of the most relevant biomedical journals in Colombia until 1999, found that the RCA is by far, the national journal with the largest number of experimental trials and systematic reviews published.^{9,10} This situation still prevails.

The RCA approached this decade in an unbeatable situation. It has achieved unprecedented visibility through the A2 classification in Publindex awarded by Colciencias, in addition to being indexed in databases such as: SciELO Colombia, LILACS, EBSCO, IMBIOMED, INDEX COPERNICUS, Redalyc, LICOCS, Latindex, among others. Now it joins Elsevier-Doyma, a leader technical publisher in medicine and health sciences.

RCA recently joined the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) that has been supporting the initiative of the prospective Registry of experimental clinical trials since 2004. This enables the promotion of transparency in research and the appropriate use of scientific evidence supporting Health related decisions.¹¹

The future holds big challenges. The RCA must approach the era of scientific information via mobile devices. Certainly the iPad and other tablets have drastically changed the way in which we access information and are provided Internet access in the OR and other areas where anesthesiologists work.¹²⁻¹⁴

It is now possible to access a limitless amount of up-to-date information in real time through devices approximately the same size and weight as a printed RCA copy, and with incredible environmental and economic implications as a result of savings in printing paper.¹⁵ The RCA should join other journals in the area such as "Anesthesiology" and "Anesthesia & Analgesia" in developing applications (iPad apps) to facilitate access to recently published articles and past issues.

However, the current situation challenges RCA with a strong impact goal: Indexing in MEDLINE. If this objective is to be achieved in the short to medium term, RCA will succeed as few other journals have succeeded in Ibero-America (for instance, the "Spanish Journal of Anesthesiology and Resuscitation" and the Brazilian Journal of Anesthesiology), or as other Colombian medical journals (i.e., the "Public Health Journal" and "Biomédica").

The RCA is the result of a relentless effort of professional anesthesiologists (lead by those who have guided the process as editors and members of the editorial committee) interested in disseminating their knowledge and research.

The environment has enabled RCA to adapt to the new publishing and dissemination conditions to stand at par with

other prestigious publications that in the past RCA simply transcribed and translated.

Competing Interests

None declared.

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