

# Assessment of the peer-reviewers' selection process in the journal Pharmacy Practice

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## Objectives

To analyze the effectiveness of an external peer-reviewers selection process in the journal Pharmacy Practice.

## Methods

A prospective analysis of the effectiveness of an external peer-reviewers selection process in Pharmacy Practice since the journal was accepted for indexation in PubMed Central in September 2013 was carried out. To assign, at least, two external reviewers to each manuscript, a PubMed search of similar articles to the one being submitted was conducted. Email addresses of authors presented in the most recently published articles among the retrieved records were appraised and gathered in a list of potential reviewers. A set of three external reviewers was selected and a standardized email containing the metadata of the manuscript was sent. If no response was obtained within 5 to 7 days, a reminder email was sent. In case a reviewer declined or 7 days since the reminder have elapsed, a new potential reviewer was selected from the list.

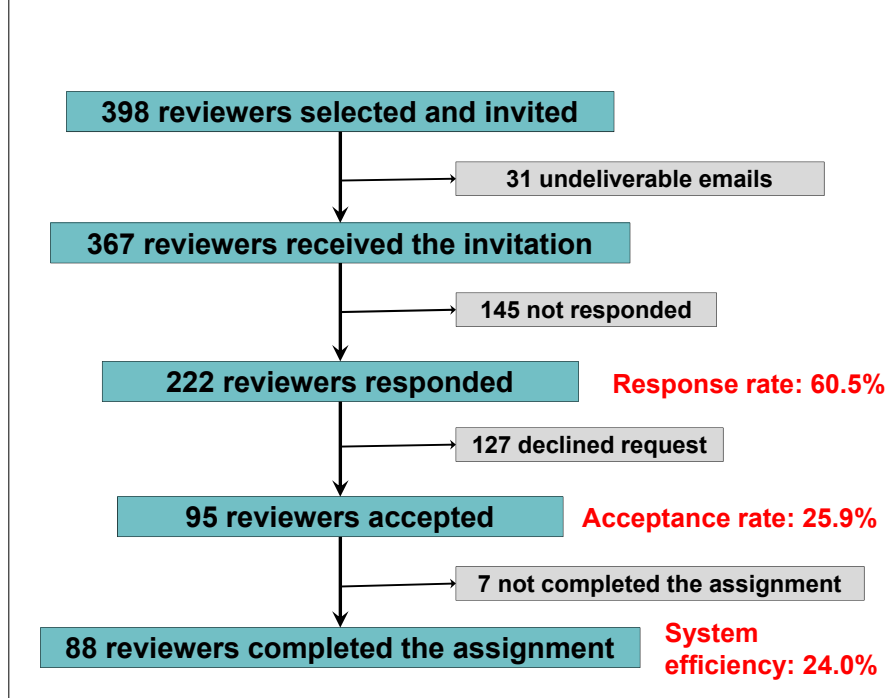
## Results

Over a 9-month period (Oct-Jun 2014) a total of 54 manuscripts passed the Editorial Board filter and initiated a peer-review process. At the time of the analysis, five manuscripts had not completed the process and were excluded. For the 49 manuscripts with a concluded reviewers' selection process, a mean of 8.29 (SD=4.0) peers had to be contacted (range 3 to 20) for an assignment of at least two reviewers. A total of 398 potential reviewers were contacted but 31 (7.8%) emails were returned as undeliverable. Response rate was 60.5% (222/367), with an acceptance rate of 42.8% (95/222) which reflects an efficiency rate of the process of 25.9% (95/367). Response rate was significantly higher (67.3% vs. 54.8%; p=0.015) and acceptance rate was also significantly higher (49.6 vs. 35.8%; p=0.038) among non-US peers. Time needed to deliver the review amongst the 87 reviewers who completed assignments was 23.0 (SD=15.0) days.

## Conclusions

Peer-reviewers selection process was shown to be a complex task in the Editorial Process. However, we consider that the method for peer-reviewers' selection in the journal Pharmacy Practice is the best possible strategy to identify real peers with similar research interests.

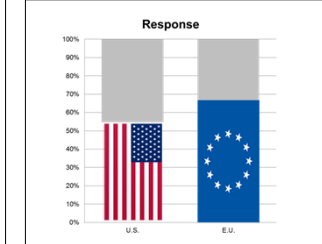
## Efficiency of the reviewers selection process (Oct-2013 – Jun-2014)



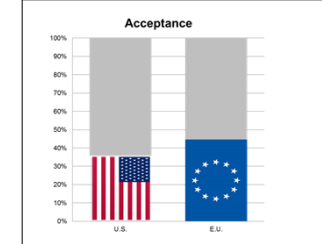
## Geography of the invited reviewers (Oct-2013 – Jun 2014)



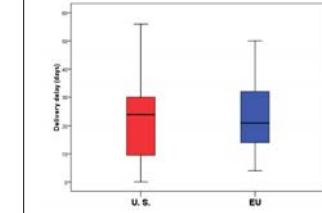
## Reviewers response rate (chi-square p=0.109)



## Reviewers acceptance rate (chi-square p=0.328)



## Reviewers acceptance rate (Mann-Whitney p=0.685)



## First problem identified:

Selection of reviewers from a referees database is not always the best option

Sometimes reviewers are sent articles whose subjects do not match their interests or expertise.



**EDITORIALS**

Canadian Family Physician's peer reviewers  
Unsung heroes

Anthony J. Reid, MD, MSc, CCPP

During the past year we updated Canadian Family Physician's peer reviewer database, and in September 1997, a world congress on peer review.

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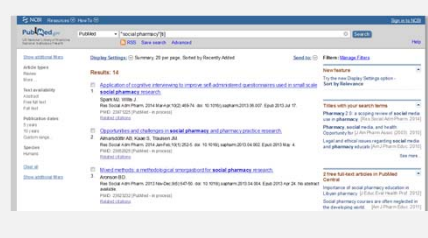
training in critical level of writing expert machines were jammed days, as more than 90 returned their survey reviews. The results Table 1.

What can we conclude? Canadian Family Physician's peer reviewer database, and in September 1997, a world congress on peer review.

poor quality, or downright malicious reviews. Unsung heroes are well known that they are all

## Solution proposed:

Searching PubMed for related articles...



Search results for 'Pharmacy Practice' showing related articles and their abstracts.

and inviting authors of related articles as reviewers:


- Facts:**
- The system is feasible and is currently in use by Pharmacy Practice
  - Overall System efficiency is 24% which is somewhat medium-to-low
  - Low acceptance rate of reviewers is a common issue across journals

## Second problem identified:

Collaboration is lower than expected

In an ideal world, if every contributing author of every published article would be able to review one manuscript per year, the IJCP would enjoy a luxury situation of having too many reviewers. This is easy math.

In practice, however, the IJCP suffers from time to time with a shortage of reviewers. Does this mean that there is too much pressure on people's time or is there a lack of feeling of responsibility in returning the favor? I have to publish my research but I feel no obligation to review papers for other authors.




Editorial  
J. W. Foppa + van MB

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## Solution proposed:

Considering manuscript review as CV credits



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Project to include referee reports in ORCID profiles  
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypres.2014.04.017

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