

Publindex Categorization

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In the first half of December 2013, we were informed of the outcome of the review and classification of the magazine by the state system of classification and standardization of scientific publications.

The report, laconic and uninspiring, sent as an email to the person who had been Director and Editor of the review 4 years ago rather than to the current Director and Editor, informed us that the magazine's conditions and characteristics had fallen below their previous standards and that, as a result, it was being reclassified into the lowest category. The report invited us to begin a process of improvement focused on achieving an appropriate number of doctors on our Editorial Committee, demonstrating that the members of our committee have published in indexed journals, correcting the name of some review and opinion articles within arbitrary categories of the system, including an index of every volume published, and demonstrating the visibility of the journal.

That email was devastating. It tossed the entire effort of the magazine and its editors from the start of Publindex system into the trash can. Dumping the magazine into Category C meant the disappearance of the magazine.

The report's observations were so irrelevant and contrary to reality that they gave the impression that one of two situations must have existed : either the report was about another magazine or the report had not been done rigorously.

With the support of the administrative staff we prepared this communication:

Bogotá, December 20, 2013

Gentlemen
PUBLINDEX
City

Subject: Protest of results of IBN Update I of 2013

Dear Sirs:

Please receive the cordial greetings of the Colombian Review of Gastroenterology of which I am the Director and Editor. We have received with surprise the results of the 2013 Update of National Bibliographic Index in which we fall from category A2 to category C with which we had been listed since 2008. Since 2008, the year the magazine received the A2 listing, the magazine has improved significantly. It has

maintained the quality that it had achieved, and improved upon it, complying with the conditions suggested by you.

Of the 3 recommendations suggested in the First Update of 2011, it was possible to achieve two of them for this volume. More than 50% of the members of the Editorial Board already have doctorates and 30% of the referees used have master's degrees, and we have presented the index of this volume. Regarding the third recommendation, our magazine is indexed by SciELO, Publindex and Lilacs. Elsevier and EBSCO are working to place our magazine in other indices.

As for the conditions of this update, we disagree with the following opinions and ask that they be reviewed again:

1. Magazine Editor: Jaime Alvarado Bestene, MD
2. Scientific quality: B4 and B8: The members of the Editorial Committee as well as the referees have published Type 1, 2 and 3 articles in peer reviewed journals within the last 2 years.
3. Editorial quality: Volume 27 presents the magazine's index newspaper. Please review Volume 27 No. 44 again.
4. Visibility: We continue on the bases and indices mentioned above and we have sent the documentation necessary to be listed on REDALYC. In addition, this year (2013) the Colombian Association of Gastroenterology, and thus the Colombian Review of Gastroenterology, was certified by ICONTEC (Colombian Institute of Technical Standards and Certification - Instituto Colombiano de Normas Técnicas y Certificación) as having met all of that institution's standards and formats.

We politely request that this update be revised in consideration of the great efforts that every member of the Editorial Committee and of the Association has made to maintain and improve the quality of the magazine in order to maintain its A2 classification and to attain the A1 classification that we aspire to.

Sincerely,

Jaime Alvarado Bestene, MD.
Director - Editor

It was clear that the system was not appropriate or consistent with the efforts of many people. The system is unscientific, unobjective and subject to the personal interpretations of state officials.

The categorization on one level or another has a profound impact on the life of a scientific publication and on the academic lives of those who submit their research papers to be considered for publication and who accept that, as the expression of a bureaucratic fact, the categorization has not been the most appropriate.

A few days later, and here I must recognize the speed of the response although it was probably due to the items listed in our request, we received the following response:

PAO Publindex Protest of First Preliminary Update Results 2013

December 23, 2013

Cordial greetings.

Below we respond to your request:

Gentlemen
COLOMBIAN REVIEW OF
GASTROENTEROLOGY

Dear sirs:

Following your request regarding the preliminary results of First Update of 2013, be informed that we reviewed unfulfilled conditions and adjusted your magazine's category to category A2. Consequently, the COLOMBIAN REVIEW OF GASTROENTEROLOGY is indexed in category A2 for the period between December 1, 2013 and December 31, 2014.

Sincerely,

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Keeping the magazine in category A2 is almost consistent with what our magazine does every 12 months in which time we conduct continuing and complex assessment suitable to continued improvement. Someday we will be in category A1, but this process leaves current concerns unanswered: Is this the right system? Does its standards and requirements correspond to the reality of the country? Will the process be done in an impartial and technical way, or is it merely a superficial check list?

The magazine will continue to make every effort to move up in the system or at least to stay in the current category.