

Forty Years of History: Science, Academia, and Transformation

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The year 2025 marked a significant milestone for *Revista Colombiana de Gastroenterología*: forty years of uninterrupted scientific, academic, and editorial work. This endeavor was formally consolidated in 1985 with the publication of the first issue, although its origins date back to the early 1980s, when the presidents of the Colombian Association of Gastroenterology, Dr. Alberto Orduz Suárez (1981–1983) and Dr. Juan Francisco Di Doménico Buraglia (1983–1985), began shaping a vision that ultimately materialized during the presidency of Dr. Paulo Emilio Archila Falla (1985–1987). He appointed Dr. Germán Liévano Rodríguez as the first editor, who would later serve as president between 1987 and 1989. Together, they became the founders and first editors⁽¹⁾.

Throughout these forty years, the Journal has had fifteen editors. Few journals celebrating their fourth decade can claim the privilege of continued engagement with one of their two founding editors. Last year, an interview was conducted with Dr. Germán Liévano (available at: https://youtu.be/QnwHg6b_324), in which he recounted the circumstances surrounding the Journal's founding. In addition, during the ACADI Congress, he participated in a panel discussion alongside other editors. Each editor, shaped by their respective context and historical moment, has contributed a distinctive vision that has strengthened the quality, scientific rigor, and clinical relevance of the published content.

Reaching forty years is not merely a symbolic milestone. It represents evidence of sustained continuity, collective commitment, and renewed responsibility. For four decades, *Revista Colombiana de Gastroenterología* has served as a fundamental academic and scientific reference for the specialty in Colombia and the region. It has consolidated its role as a platform for knowledge dissemination, rigorous scholarly debate, and the development of a professional community.

Since its founding, the Journal has both witnessed and actively contributed to the evolution of gastroenterology in Colombia. Its pages document diagnostic and therapeutic advances, shifts in clinical paradigms, the strengthening of local research, and the progressive integration of the discipline into the international scientific community. Each volume constitutes a living archive of recent medical history and reflects the collective efforts of authors, reviewers, editors, and readers who recognize the value of shared knowledge.

Commemorating these forty years necessarily involves looking back with gratitude and recognition. It requires honoring those who promoted the editorial project in its early years, when publishing scientific research in the country posed even greater technical, logistical, and academic challenges. It also entails acknowledging the generations of gastroenterologists who found in the Journal a means to communicate their findings, reflect on clinical practice, and contribute to the advancement of the specialty. However, any meaningful commemoration must also include a critical perspective on the present

and a clear vision for the future. As Dr. David Benigno Páramo Hernández noted in the editorial of the previous issue⁽²⁾, significant commitments and challenges lie ahead if the Journal is to remain a relevant scientific publication in the twenty-first century. How can editorial processes be modernized without losing institutional identity? How can emerging technological, methodological, and collaborative tools be integrated to ensure continued relevance for authors and readers? These are not rhetorical questions. Rather, they represent strategic considerations necessary to continue transforming the Journal into a platform with meaningful influence on professional practice and public health.

Across these four decades, and under the guidance of those who have assumed editorial responsibility, *Revista Colombiana de Gastroenterología* has demonstrated that science is built through reflection on the past and steady progress toward the future. Beginning with this issue, the current President of the Colombian Association of Gastroenterology, Dr. Alejandro Concha, has honored Dr. Gerardo Puentes as Associate Editor and the author as Editor-in-Chief, supported by Ms. Olga Mejía, who has served as editorial assistant for the past twenty-three years. Together, they assume responsibility for this important undertaking with the objective of ensuring that the Journal continues to contribute high-quality knowledge capable of advancing gastroenterology in Colombia and beyond national borders.

The current context of scientific communication differs profoundly from that of four decades ago. Digital transformation, open access, open science, the application of artificial intelligence to research, new models of academic evaluation, and increasing demands for visibility and impact pose unavoidable challenges for contemporary scientific journals. Within this context, *Revista Colombiana de Gastroenterología* has both the opportunity—and the responsibility—to implement changes that enable updating and modernization without compromising its identity. Modernization does not imply abandoning tradition; rather, it strengthens it. It does not mean compromising rigor, but rather enhancing it through new tools, formats, and strategies for scientific communication. Updating editorial processes, optimizing review and publication timelines, strengthening transparency and editorial ethics, expanding international visibility, and promoting the participation of new generations of researchers are essential steps to ensure the Journal's continued relevance. Furthermore, exploring innovative formats—including visual articles, multimedia content, integration

with academic networks and digital platforms—may bring knowledge closer to broader and more diverse audiences without compromising scientific quality.

Modernization also entails rethinking the role of the journal as a space for critical reflection. Beyond the publication of results, the journal may consolidate its position as a forum for addressing current challenges in gastroenterology, including equity in access to healthcare, evidence-based medicine in local contexts, continuing medical education, translational research, and the social impact of scientific knowledge.

These forty years serve as a reminder that the history of *Revista Colombiana de Gastroenterología* must continue to be written. The past provides roots, the present demands action, and the future calls for responsible innovation. Embracing change as a natural component of editorial evolution represents the most appropriate way to honor the legacy established by preceding generations.

May this anniversary therefore represent not only a celebration, but also a pause for reflection—a moment to reaffirm commitment to academic excellence while promoting the transformations necessary for the Journal to remain relevant, influential, and valuable to the specialty in the years ahead.

Forty years of history provide a strong foundation. The willingness to evolve and modernize constitutes the key to continued progress.

Informed consent

This article does not require approval from an Institutional Ethics Committee and is not subject to informed consent requirements. It represents the personal opinion of the author.

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