



Seventy years of the *Vojnosanitetski preglad*

Sedamdeset godina „Vojnosanitetskog pregleda“

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In September this year, 70 years since the beginning of publication of *Vojnosanitetski preglad* (VSP), scientific and professional journal of physicians and pharmacists of the Serbian Army, will be marked ranking it among the oldest medical journals in Serbia. Five years ago, when the Journal celebrated its 65th birthday, its history was presented in more detail¹, therefore on this occasion only the most significant moments that have marked its 70 years of existence will be given.

The first issue of the VSP was printed in September, 1944, in Bari, Italy, during World War II continuing the tradition of military medical scientific and professional journalism in our region which began by publishing the *Vojno-sanitetski glasnik* in the period 1930–1941. From the very beginning, to both professional and technical quality of the Journal was paid a great attention, respecting all the international standards and conventions for the scientific periodicals publishing. Even then, the articles published in the VSP, besides summaries in Serbian, had also summaries in English, Russian and French, which ensured them good international visibility. That is the reason, probably, why the VSP in the late 50s and early 60s of the last century was covered by several well-known bibliographic abstract and citation journals and, later, their electronic databases, such as Index Medicus (MEDLINE), *Excerpta Medica* (EMBASE), Biological Abstracts, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, Chemical Abstracts. From the 2002, VSP has been included in EBSCO database through which the articles published in it can be obtained in full text.

The frequency of the journal publication changed over the past 70 years. Since the founding of the Journal to 1972 it has been published in 12 issues *per* year, which was an indication of the large influx of manuscripts, since 1973 it has been published in six issues annually, and since 2005 again a monthly publication of the Journal has been established (currently the VSP is only biomedical journal in the country with such a frequency of publication). The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and the war on its territory at the beginning of the 90s of the last century had negative impact on the overall scientific production in Ser-

U septembru ove godine navršava se 70 godina od početka izlaženja „Vojnosanitetskog pregleda“ (VSP), naučno-stručnog časopisa lekara i farmaceuta Vojske Srbije, što ga svrstava u red najstarijih medicinskih časopisa u Srbiji. Pre pet godina, kada je obeležavan njegov 65. rođendan, detaljnije je prikazan istorijat časopisa¹, tako da će ovom prilikom biti izneti samo najznačajniji momenti koji su obeležili ovih 70 godina postojanja.

Prvi broj VSP-a objavljen je u septembru 1944. godine, u Bariju, Italija, za vreme Drugog svetskog rata, čime je nastavljena tradicija vojnomedicinske naučne i stručne časopisne publicistike na našim prostorima, započeta izlaženjem „Vojno-sanitetskog glasnika“ u periodu 1930–1941. godina. Od samog početka i stručnom i tehničkom kvalitetu časopisa poklanjala se velika pažnja, uz uvažavanje svih međunarodnih standarda i konvencija za izdavanje naučne periodike. Već tada, radovi objavljeni u VSP, pored sažetka na srpskom jeziku, imali su i sažetak na engleskom, ruskom i francuskom jeziku, što im je obezbeđivalo dobru međunarodnu vidljivost. Zbog toga je, verovatno, VSP već krajem 50-ih i početkom 60-ih godina prošlog veka ušao u sistem indeksiranja nekoliko poznatih bibliografskih i bibliografsko-apstraktnih časopisa i, kasnije, njihovih elektronskih baza, kao što su: *Index Medicus* (MEDLINE), *Excerpta Medica* (EMBASE), *Biological Abstracts*, *International Pharmaceutical Abstracts*, *Chemical Abstracts*. Od 2002. godine, VSP je uvršten i u bazu EBSCO preko koje se radovi objavljeni u njemu mogu dobiti u punom tekstu.

Dinamika izlaženja časopisa menjala se tokom proteklih 70 godina. Od osnivanja časopisa do 1972. godine, izlazilo je i 12 brojeva godišnje, što je bio pokazatelj velikog priliva radova, od 1973. godine prelazi se na izdavanje šest brojeva u godini, a od 2005. godine ponovo se uspostavlja mesečno izlaženje časopisa (trenutno je VSP jedini biomedicinski časopis u zemlji sa takvom dinamikom izlaženja). Raspad bivše SFRJ i rat na njenim prostorima početkom 90-ih godina prošlog veka negativno se odrazio na

bia, and it was not spared either the VSP. However, despite the reduced inflow of manuscripts and difficulties in regular publication, the Journal "survived". In order to provide a large number of papers, in 1995 Editorial Board and Publisher of the VSP decided to award author(s) who in the last year published the most articles in the Journal. This led to a large influx of papers, but most authors were from the Military Medical Academy (MMA) in Belgrade. Since the members of the Editorial Board of the Journal, as well as reviewers were mainly from the MMA, too, there was a possibility of bias and consequently publishing less quality articles. This is the reason why in the early 2000s it was decided that experts outside the military health care institutions be included as members of the Editorial Board of the Journal, as well as reviewers with the provision of at least double anonymous peer-reviews. In addition, it was also decided that, according to the opinion of the reviewers, especially significant papers except in Serbian could also be published in English in order to become more "visible", with a tendency to extend this practice to other papers. These measures, along with maintained regular publication frequency, at the time when publication of other biomedical journals in the country has been late for several months, have resulted in an increasing influx of papers by authors from the so-called civilian medical institutions providing the possibility to publish the Journal monthly again. The practice of monthly publication of the VSP began again in 2005 during which the process of forming the International Editorial Board was finished. In this manner, formal requirements for inclusion of the Journal into international journal society was fulfilled. At the same time, the Journal was enriched with new sections (Letters to the Editor, Comments, Critical Reviews, etc), received a logo and a new, modern look. Also, the influx of papers by authors from abroad has been increased, as well as a growing number of articles published in English (eg. in 2007 every fifth, and in 2008 every fourth article). In addition, the selection criteria for acceptance of papers have got more strict, and previous peer-review procedure have been established during which the authors have been advised how to technically, professionally and in English writhing improve their papers before officially sent to reviewers. A special attention was paid to prevent the occurrence of plagiarism and self-plagiarism adopting a series of measures for their detection and sanctioning. All this contributed to the increase in the quality of papers published in the VSP and increase their visibility on the international level resulting in 2008 by its inclusion into the famous citation databases *Science Citation Index Expanded* (SCIE) of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), Philadelphia, USA, now a part of the Thomson Reuters company, and obtaining the first impact factor (IF) in 2010.

Having in mind that the first IF of any journal can be obtained three years after inclusion into ISI databases such as SCIE, as in the case of the VSP meant in 2011, but for 2010, the Editorial Board of the Journal continued working to improve its quality. Increased influx of papers, especially after the publication of news about the inclusion in SCIE database, not only by authors from Serbia, but from all over the world, as well as the involvement of foreign reviewers with consequent rigorous selection of manuscripts received, further contributed to improving quality of articles selected for publication in the VSP. Along with the increase in the number of papers received for publication (between

ukupnu naučnu publicistiku u Srbiji, pa toga nije bio pošteđen ni VSP. Ipak, uprkos smanjenom prilivu radova i poteškoćama u redovnom izlaženju, časopis je opstao. U cilju obezbeđenja većeg broja radova, uredništvo i izdavač VSP-a 1995. godine odlučuju da svake godine nagrade autora kome u protekloj godini bude objavljen veći broj radova na stranicama časopisa. To je dovelo do većeg priliva radova, ali uglavnom od autora iz Vojnomedicinske akademije (VMA) u Beogradu. Kako su i članovi uredništva i izdavačkog saveta časopisa, kao i recenzenti bili, uglavnom, iz VMA, postojala je mogućnost da se zbog „linije nezameranja“ u časopisu počnu objavljivati i manje kvalitetni radovi. Ovo je bio razlog što je početkom 2000-ih odlučeno da se Uredivački odbor časopisa, kao i krug recenzenata, prošire i na stručnjake izvan vojnog saniteta uz obezbeđenje najmanje dvostruke anonimne recenzije. Osim toga, bilo je predviđeno da se, na osnovu mišljenja recenzenata, posebno značajni radovi, osim na srpskom, objave i na engleskom jeziku da bi postali „vidljiviji“, sa tendencijom da se ta praksa proširi i na ostale radove. Ove mere, uz obnovljenu redovnost izlaženja, u vreme kada su drugi biomedicinski časopisi u zemlji kasnili sa izlaženjem i po nekoliko meseci, imale su za posledicu sve veći priliv radova i od autora iz civilnih zdravstvenih institucija, tako da je ponovo bilo omogućeno izlaženje časopisa svakog meseca. Praksa mesečnog izlaženja VSP-a započeta je 2005. godine, tokom koje je završen i proces formiranja Međunarodnog uredivačkog odbora. Ovim su se stekli i formalni uslovi za ulazak u društvo međunarodnih časopisa. Istovremeno, časopis je obogaćen novim rubrikama (pisma uredništvu, komentari, kritički osvrti i sl), dobio je logo i novi, moderniji izgled, a povećao se i priliv radova autora iz inostranstva, kao i sve veći broj radova objavljenih na engleskom jeziku (npr. u 2007. godini svaki peti, a u 2008. svaki četvrti rad). Osim toga, pooštreni su kriterijumi za prihvatanje radova, a uveden je i postupak predrecenzije, tokom koga je autorima ukazivano na koji način da tehnički, stručno i jezički poboljšaju rad pre nego što se zvanično uputi recenzentima. Posebno se vodilo računa o sprečavanju pojave plagijarizma i autoplagijarizma donošenjem niza mera za njihovo otkrivanje i sankcionisanje. Sve ovo, doprinelo je povećanju kvaliteta radova objavljenih u VSP-u i povećanju njihove vidljivosti na međunarodnom nivou, što je 2008. godine rezultiralo i prijemom VSP-a u sistem praćenja čuvene citatne baze *Science Citation Index Expanded* (SCIE) Instituta za naučne informacije (ISI) iz Filadelfije, sada u sklopu kompanije Thomson Reuters i dobijenjem prvog impakt faktora (IF) u 2010. godini.

Znajući da časopis svoj prvi IF dobije posle tri godine od ulaska u sistem praćenja citatnih baza ISI, što je u slučaju VSP značilo 2011, ali za prethodnu 2010. godinu, uredništvo časopisa nastavilo je da radi na poboljšanju njegovog kvaliteta. Povećan priliv radova, pogotovo posle objavljivanja vesti o uključenju u SCIE, i to ne samo od autora iz Srbije, već iz celog sveta, kao i angažovanje inostranih recenzenata s posledičnom rigoroznijom selekcijom primljenih rukopisa, dodatno su doprineli poboljšanju kvaliteta radova odabranih za objavljivanje u VSP-u. Uporedo

2005 and 2007 225–235 papers, and after 2008 about 350), the interest of readers for articles published in it has also been increased. According to data obtained from the EBSCO database, through which the articles published in the VSP were available in full text, in 2008 when the VSP was included in SCIE database, the number of accesses and downloads of articles published in the VSP was 2,340, and in 2009 it was already five times higher (11,562), with a continuous increase in the coming years (in 2012 the number was 38,376, in 2013 39,436 or slightly more than 100 accesses daily).

In the period after the VSP was included in SCIE database the number of published articles that are commonly cited (Original articles, General reviews, Current topics, Case reports, etc) have also been increased. As an illustration, a total of 145 articles was published in 2005, 160 in 2008, 170 in 2009 and 2010, each, and more than 180 in the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. This increase is the result of attempts that papers successfully passing the peer-review process as soon as possible make available to the scientific and professional community, although in this manner, because of the way of IF calculation (IF for any year is the quotient of the number of citations in that year of articles published in the last two years and the total number of articles published in these two years), its value, despite the increase in the number of citations, can be reduced. This is, at the same time, the best proof that the Editorial Board of the VSP has not wanted by reducing the number of published articles to reduce the denominator in the formula for calculating IF and in a such way to affect its value. Besides, by placing electronic version of the Journal on its web-site (www.vma.mod.gov.rs/vsp), with the possibility of free access to the content of each article, visibility and accessibility of published articles have additionally been increased.

The first IF of the VSP (IF for 2010) was 0.199 classifying it, at that moment, on the 135th position among the 153 most influential journals in the field of General and Internal Medicine. Its value for the 2011 dropped to 0.179, but for 2012 it rose to 0.210. The latest IF of the Journal, for 2013, was released in late July this year, amounting 0.269, which is an increase of 35.7% in relation to the value of the first IF. Since from the inclusion of the VSP in SCIE database a number of articles that have been published in the Journal increased by more than 10%, taking into account the method of calculating IF, it can be concluded that this increase in the IF value is the result of the actual increase in citations of these articles.

Joining a scientific journal in citation system of ISI databases does not mean, by default, a permanent status as one of the most influential journal in the world in a particular scientific field. On the contrary, only then begins the real struggle for "survival", constantly proving that this privileged status is really deserved. Having this in mind, the Editorial Board of the VSP, after obtaining the first IF, continued with activities to improving the Journal quality in all domains²⁻⁵.

In the 2011 VSP entered into the so-called DOI (Digital Object Identifier) system that allows identification of documents in electronic form and establishes a permanent connection to the Internet site where the original document is located. In this manner, articles with DOI number published in an electronic form can be found and cited even before their publishing in printed version

sa porastom broja pristiglih radova za objavljivanje (između 2005. i 2007. godine, 225–235 radova, a posle 2008. oko 350), porasla je i zainteresovanost čitalaca za članke objavljene u njemu. Prema podacima stručnih službi baze EBSCO, preko koje su članci objavljeni u VSP dostupni u punom tekstu, 2008. godine kada je VSP uvršten u bazu SCIE, broj pristupa časopisu i preuzimanja članaka iz njega iznosio je 2 340, da bi već 2009. godine bio pet puta veći (11 562), uz stalni porast u narednim godinama (2012, taj broj je iznosio 38 376, a prošle, 2013, 39 436 ili nešto više od 100 pristupa dnevno).

U periodu posle ulaska VSP u sistem praćenja baze SCIE povećan je i broj objavljenih članaka koji se najčešće citiraju (originalni članci, opšti pregledi, aktuelne teme, prikazi slučajeva i sl). Ilustracije radi, u 2005. godini objavljeno je ukupno 145 članaka, 2008. godine 160, 2009. i 2010. 170, a od 2011. godine broj objavljenih članaka u VSP-u prelazi 180. Ovaj porast objavljenih članaka rezultat je nastojanja da se radovi koji uspešno prođu postupak recenziranja što pre stave na uvid naučnoj i stručnoj javnosti, iako se na ovaj način, zbog načina izračunavanja IF (IF za određenu godinu predstavlja kvocijent broja citata u toj godini za radove objavljene u prethodne dve godine i broja radova objavljenih u te dve godine), njegova vrednost, uprkos porastu broja citata, može smanjiti. Ovo je, ujedno, i najbolji dokaz da uredništvo VSP nije želelo da smanjenjem broja objavljenih radova, a time i imenioca u formuli za izračunavanje IF, utiče na njegovu vrednost. Osim toga, postavljanjem elektronske verzije časopisa na njegovu Internet stranicu (www.vma.mod.gov.rs/vsp), sa mogućnošću slobodnog pristupa sadržaju svakog članka, dodatno se povećala vidljivost i dostupnost objavljenih radova.

Prvi IF VSP (IF za 2010. godinu) iznosio je 0,199 svrstavši ga, u tom momentu, na 135. poziciju između 153 najuticajnijih časopisa iz oblasti Opšte i interne medicine. Njegova vrednost za 2011. godinu smanjila se na 0,179, da bi u 2012. godini porasla na 0,210. Najnoviji IF VSP-a za 2013. godinu, objavljen krajem jula ove godine, iznosi 0,269, što je porast od 35,7% u odnosu na vrednost prvog IF. S obzirom da je od ulaska VSP u bazu SCIE broj radova koji se objave na njegovim stranicama porastao za više od 10%, a uzimajući u obzir način izračunavanja IF, može se zaključiti da je ovaj porast vrednosti IF rezultat stvarnog porasta citiranosti radova objavljenih u njemu.

Ulazak časopisa u sistem praćenja citatnih baza ISI ne znači, po automatizmu, i trajno rešenje njegovog statusa kao jednog od najuticajnijih časopisa sveta u određenoj naučnoj oblasti. Naprotiv, tek tada počinje prava borba za opstanak, neprestano dokazivanje da je taj privilegovani status zaista i zaslužen. Imajući ovo u vidu, uredništvo VSP nastavilo je i posle dobijanja IF sa uvođenjem novina čiji je cilj unapređenje časopisa u svim domenima²⁻⁵.

U 2011. godini VSP je ušao u tzv. DOI (Digital Object Identifier) sistem koji omogućava identifikaciju dokumenta u elektronskom obliku i uspostavljanje stalne veze do Internet stranice na kojoj se originalni dokument nalazi. Zahvaljujući DOI broju članak u elektronskom obliku može da bude pronađen i citiran i pre nego što izađe štampana verzija

of the VSP. Thanks to this, the VSP for more than two years has been publishing 4–6 articles each month in electronic form as On-Line First. Also, since the beginning of 2011 only manuscripts prepared in English have been accepted for publications in the VSP in order to get their content as close as possible to readers from abroad. The exception to this are some articles on the history of medicine which, by quoting the text in Serbian in its original form could lose the authenticity by translating in English. Publication of articles in English have probably contributed to their higher citation as data from the EBSCO database indicate that articles in the VSP published in English have the greatest number of approaches from institutions around the world.

In 2012 the VSP moved to the system of electronic editing (so-called e-UR) which allows easier communication between the Editorial Board of the Journal and the authors on the one side, and the Editorial Board and reviewers on the other, facilitates the monitoring of the status of a paper from the moment of its receipt in the Editorial Office to the final status, and provides checking of plagiarism and self-plagiarism, which has already on several occasions prevented publication of such articles, and, we hope, will reduce such misconduct in future and discourage those authors prone to dishonesty in science. Since July, 2012 we have been using the improved version of the system called ASEESTANT which offer some additional benefits: the control of references correctness, as well as the selection of appropriate keywords according to the Thesaurus of the U.S. National Library of Medicine from Betesda, which as standardized terms are used in all medical scientific publications. Another novelty is the requirement that the authors in accordance with the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors - ICMJE) ⁶ provide a signed statement on the contribution to the research and manuscript preparation and the absence of conflict of interests in order to ensure the transparency of information about authorship and funding and, thereby, strengthening ethical principles in scientific publications.

Earlier this year, domestic and international Editorial Board of the Journal was renewed with a few new members, recognized experts in various fields of biomedicine, from home and abroad who, we believe, will significantly contribute to further development of the Journal ⁷.

In their and my own name, I wish all the best and longevity to our septuagenarian with the desire that its future anniversaries be crowned with even greater successes!

časopisa, što VSP već više od dve godine koristi objavljivanjem svakog meseca po 4–6 članaka u elektronskom obliku, kao *On-Line First*. Takođe, od početka 2011. godine primaju se isključivo radovi na engleskom jeziku da bi se njihov sadržaj što više približio i čitaocima iz inostranstva. Izuzetak od toga su pojedini prilozi iz istorije medicine koji bi, zbog navođenja teksta u izvornom obliku, prevodenjem na engleski izgubili na autentičnosti. Objavljivanje radova na engleskom jeziku verovatno je doprinelo i njihovoj većoj citiranosti na šta nas upućuju i podaci iz baze EBSCO da članci iz VSP-a napisani na engleskom jeziku beleže, već godinama, i najveći broj pristupa i to iz institucija širom sveta.

U 2012. godini VSP je prešao na sistem elektronskog uređivanja (tzv. e-UR) koje je omogućilo jednostavniju komunikaciju između Redakcije časopisa i autora s jedne strane, odnosno Redakcije i recenzenata s druge strane, olakšalo praćenje statusa rada od momenta njegovog prijema u Redakciju do dobijanja konačnog statusa, proveru na plagijarizam i autoplagijarizam, što je, već u nekoliko navrata, sprečilo objavljivanje takvih radova, a nadamo se da će obeshrabrili pojedine autore da pokušaju izvršiti takvu vrstu zloupotrebe autorstva. Od sredine 2012. godine koristimo unapređenu verziju tog sistema pod nazivom ASEESTANT koja omogućava i kontrolu ispravnosti referenci navedenih u prijavljenim radovima, kao i izbor odgovarajućih ključnih reči prema Tezaurusu američke Nacionalne medicinske biblioteke iz Betesde, jer se te ključne reči, kao standardizovani termini, koriste u medicinskim naučnim publikacijama. Novina je i zahtev autorima da u skladu sa preporukama Internacionalnog komiteta urednika medicinskih časopisa (*International Committee of Medical Journal Editors* – ICMJ) ⁶ dostave potpisane izjave o doprinosu radu i nepostojanju konflikta interesa, kako bi i na taj način obezbedili transparentnost podataka o autorstvu i finansiranju, a sve u cilju učvršćivanja etičkih principa u naučnoj publicistici.

Početkom ove godine, obnovljen je domaći i internacionalni Uređivački odbor časopisa sa nekoliko novih članova, priznatih stručnjaka iz različitih oblasti biomedicine, iz zemlje i inostranstva koji će, verujemo, značajno doprineti daljem razvoju VSP-a ⁷.

U njihovo i svoje ime, želim mnogo sreće i dugovečnosti našem sedamdestogodišnjaku, sa željom da njegove buduće godišnjice budu krunisane još većim uspesima!

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