

Transparency in Scientific Publishing is essential-Kh. Salman Rafique Medical Journalism Dept. established at University of Health Sciences Lahore Intercollegiate Journalism Consortium also inaugurated to standardize editorial practices and enhancing collaboration among Journals

LAHORE: Department of Medical Journalism, first of its kind in Pakistan, has been finally established at University of Health Sciences, Lahore. August 6th was in fact a unique day since UHS also inaugurated an Intercollegiate Journalism Consortium (IJC) with the objective of standardizing editorial practices and enhancing collaboration among the medical journals published by UHS affiliated medical and dental colleges. It will also serve as a network of editors of UHS affiliated institutions. This Consortium will help promote policy alignment, Journal Indexation, Peer learning and collaborative research publishing.

Punjab Minister for Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education **Kh. Salman Rafique** was the chief guest on this occasion. Others who graced the occasion with their presence included Prof. Javed Akram former VC of UHS, Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal VC FJMU, Dr. Zahid Pervaiz besides Principals, editors of various medical journals and faculty members. Facilitators of CME Courses Prof. Jamshed Akhtar Editor Journal of Surgery Pakistan, Prof. Akhtar Sherin, Chief Editor of Khyber Medical Univer-

academic excellence and global integration in medical publishing.



Dua being offered after the formal inauguration of the First Department of Medical Journalism at University of Health Sciences Lahore on August 6th 2025. Seen in the picture from (R to L) are Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal VC FJMU, Kh. Salman Rafique Punjab Minister for Specialized Healthcare & Education (Chief Guest), Dr. Zahid Pervaiz, Prof. Arshad Waheed Rathore VC UHS, Prof. Jamshed Akhtar, Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid & Prof. Akhtar Sherin.

Establishing this department of medical journalism is a vital part of our mission to lead ethical and globally respected scientific publishing in Pakistan. He extended an invitation to all the stake holders to become a part of this academic journey.

publishing in the country.

Prof. Javed Akram President of PSIM and former Vice Chancellor of UHS expressed concern over Pakistan's limited visibility in International publishing. We had just three Impact Factor Journals which has now increased to twelve because of the CME courses being run by UHS. Pakistan is going to be the third largest populous country in the next two decades. Hence we

and sustained training to uplift the editorial standards.

Prof. Nadia Naseem Pro Vice Chancellor of UHS who is also Chief Editor of Biomedica official Journal of UHS and Focal Person for CME courses in her welcome address pointed out that so far two hundred twenty-five editors, editorial board members and Faculty from all over Pakistan have been trained through this

UHS administration and its team for establishing the department of medical journalism which he hoped will play an important role in promoting the discipline of medical journalism in Pakistan.

It may be mentioned here that the project was conceived when **Maj.Gen. Muhammad Aslam** was the Vice Chancellor of UHS. It was finally started when **Prof. Javed Akram** was VC of UHS who supported this programme and also conceived the establishment of Dept. of Medical Journalism at UHS. After his retirement, the present Vice Chancellor **Prof. Ahsan Waheed Rathore** played a commendable role in implementing this initiative and provided all

and Scientometrics, Different Databases, Scientific misconduct, publication ethics, Editor's role in improving patient care, the end of life issues, how to effectively use media to communicate with public besides how to Write Research Grant proposals. Curriculum of these courses, Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid stated was a living document which is being constantly revised. From next year how to write qualitative studies will be added while a presentation from one of the Alumni will also be included. Some Alumni's will also be inducted as Co-facilitators with the objective of preparing a local faculty so that the UHS can run these courses independently though PAME

We are aiming to establish UHS as a regional center of excellence in medical journalism- Prof. Nadia Naseem

help and assistance to realize this dream of setting up the Dept. of Medical Journalism. **Prof. Nadia Naseem** and her team worked hard to pursue this project and eventually got it implemented for which the present Vice Chancellor provided the required funding. It is the result of a few years struggle, determination and dedicated work of Prof. Nadia Naseem and her team. This academic programme is being run in collaboration with Pakistan Association of Medical

members will continue to support this academic activity. Participants were encouraged to forward any comments and suggestions to Prof. Nadia Naseem regarding the curriculum and facilitators which will be given due importance.

In the second contact session of CMJE Batch-3, the internship was organized at the Dept. of Medical Journalism of UHS. Editorial staff of the three Impact Factor Journals in Karachi i.e., Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences, Journal of Pakistan Medical Association and Journal of College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan described the working of their respective journals on Zoom link. Prof. Akhtar Sherin shared the working of Khyber Medical University Journal while the participants were also exposed to the work flow at Biomedica. Later the facilitators Prof. Jamshed Akhtar, Dr. Fatema Jawad, Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid and Prof. Akhtar Sherin engaged them with hands on training, giving them some manuscripts which had gone through pre-submission review, peer review reports of different manuscripts and how the authors revised them and submitted with a covering note, how they had responded to the reviewer's comments and suggestions to have an idea of the whole editorial workflow from submission to peer review and final publication.

The participants were divided in three groups by Prof. Jamshed Akhtar and the group leaders were invited to make a presentation comparing the functioning of the five journals i.e. PJMS, JPMA, JCPSP, KMJ and Biomedica. Presentation by Group-3 which was made by Prof. Maryam was judged as the most comprehensive. The points the participants had missed were also highlighted. This provided the participants a rare opportunity to familiarize themselves with the functioning of these medical journals and how they can improve the functioning of their own journals. The feedback was very positive and participants of both the courses were excited at the opportunity they had of learning and networking with other colleagues. They were all encouraged to get themselves affiliated with any medical journals and start practicing what they had learnt.

urgently need more biomedical journals which enjoy Impact Factor. We desperately need to increase

UHS led initiative. About thirty UHS affiliated medical colleges, she stated, are currently publishing



Kh. Salman Rafique along with Prof. Ahsan Waheed Rathore VC UHS and Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal VC FJMU chairing a meeting after the formal inauguration of Dept. of Medical Journalism at UHS on August 6th 2025.

our share in medical research and scientific publishing. He further stated that the subject of scientific writing and research should be introduced as a formal subject at the undergraduate level.

Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid Chief Editor Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences and Advisor to

scientific journals. The newly established Dept. of Medical Journalism and Journal office will offer hands-on training to students, postgraduates and faculty in editorial workflow. Intercollegiate Journalism Consortium will serve as a new platform for research, publications and development of

Editors (PAME) and Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME)

Second Contact Sessions

According to another report the Second Contact Sessions of CME Batch-7 and CMJE Batch-3 successfully concluded on August 9th 2025. The facilitators in the



Prof. Nadia Naseem Pro Vice Chancellor of UHS who is also the focal person for CME courses at UHS and Chief Editor of Biomedica briefing the Provincial Health Minister and other guests about the Dept. of Medical Journalism on August 6th 2025.

sity Journal and Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid Chief Editor Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences, Secretary EMEME who is Advisor to the UHS Dept. of Medical Journalism were also present.

Speaking on this occasion Kh. Salman Rafique called upon ensuring transparency in scientific publishing. He lauded the initiative taken by UHS and underscored the importance of transparent, ethical scientific publishing in improving healthcare outcome. Continuing the health minister remarked that academic publishing is the back bone of evidence based healthcare. The initiative taken by UHS will hopefully set new benchmarks for editorial transparency and research integrity in Pakistan. Ethical scientific communication, he further stated, has become indispensable in today's world. Despite challenges, healthcare professionals in Pakistan are doing a commendable job. Theme of the meeting was "Strengthening Editorial collaborations" and it focused on standardization in editorial processes, upgrading publishing standards besides creating networking opportunities for Editorial Board Members of various journals.

Earlier **Prof. Ahsan Waheed Rathore** Vice Chancellor of University of Health Sciences giving details of Dept. of Medical Journalism said that this reflected UHS's long term commitment to

Tracing the history of UHS's journey in medical journalism he said, we started the structured Certificate in Medical Editing in 2019 and later introduced another structured Certificate in Medical Journalism for Editors (CMJE). In 2024 it evolved into a WHO-EMAME accredited postgraduate



Diploma in Medical Journalism. The dedicated Biomedica Journal office at UHS is fully equipped and staffed to train students and faculty in editorial workflow with support from distinguished editors from PJMS, JPMA, JCPSP and other leading journals.

Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal in his speech opined that there should be no compromise on quality and standards of research and scientific publications. He commended the UHS initiative and termed it a major step forward for academic

UHS's Journalism programme commended the UHS leadership for establishing the Dept. of Medical Journalism. He also recalled that he had introduced the then Vice Chancellor of UHS Maj. Gen. Muhammad Aslam to ISC in Shiraz Iran. We visited their offices and in return the President of ISC and their Director International Affairs also visited UHS. A formal Memorandum of Understanding for collaboration was also signed between the UHS and ISC. He called for institutional investment

editors and associated staff. We are aiming to establish UHS as a regional center of excellence in medical journalism.

Earlier a video recorded message from **Dr. Behrooz Astanah** former Chief Editor of Iranian Journal of Medical Sciences who started a programme for training of Editors at Shiraz Medical University many years ago and who is also former Council Member of Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) UK and is currently in Canada was screened. He congratulated

CME Bath-7 included Prof. Akhtar Sherin, Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid, Prof. Jamshed Akhtar, Dr. Fatema Jawad. Prof. Tayyaba Waseem Principal of Allama Iqbal Medical College was also invited as a guest speaker in one of the sessions who described how she was able to improve the **Esculapio** official journal of Services Institute of Medical Sciences and eventually got it approved from Pakistan Medical & Dental Council. The different topics discussed by the facilitators included Indexation



Kh. Salman Rafique was the chief guest at the formal inauguration of Dept. of Medical Journalism and Intercollegiate Journalism Consortium aimed at standardizing editorial practices established at University of Health Sciences Lahore. Photograph shows from (L to R) the chief guest presenting a memento to Mr. Shaukat Ali Jawaaid Chief Editor of Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences who is Advisor at UHS, to Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal VC FJMU and Prof. Nadia Naseem Pro VC and focal person of CME courses at UHS. On extreme right Prof. Ahsan Waheed Rathore along with Prof. Javed Akram are presenting memento to the chief guest Kh Salman Rafique.