

## CSP: a common good in Public Health

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What purpose does a scientific journal serve? Although it may sound obvious, the answer to “what for” depends on “whom for”. A journal may have different meanings for different people. In general, readers expect the journal to publish quality articles that contribute both to the advancement of knowledge and are socially relevant. Meanwhile, authors turn to the journal as a conduit for their research results and a broad channel for ideas, fostering both the academic debate among peers and qualified decision-making by policymakers.

Equally important is the journal’s maintainer institution. The objectives vary according to the institution’s nature. Commercial publishing houses necessarily incorporate profits into their objectives. Their main approach for expanding profit (since authors and reviewers work for free) is to increase their subscription sales and/or charge to publish articles, by augmenting their prestige among readers and researchers. Although the impact factor has been widely criticized <sup>1</sup>, it has been used as an indicator to measure a journal’s relevance, regardless of any real impact on society. Publishing articles by the field’s leading researchers is also important, as is primacy in publishing major discoveries. It was no coincidence that the large commercial journals granted open access to articles on Zika: if they hadn’t, they would have lost academic space and thus prestige. All the researchers wanted their articles on Zika published quickly and openly to allow others to draw on the initial results.

However, non-commercial journals are expected to follow a different logic. While sustaining the pursuit of academic prestige, their role should include the publication of relevant themes for their field of activity, considering knowledge production and its impact on society. An example is the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ), which maintains its tradition of academic publishing with excellence while also spearheading public-interest campaigns (<https://www.statnews.com/2016/01/04/bmj-editor-fiona-godlee/>) featuring key issues such as open data, climate change, over-diagnosis, and waste of unnecessary healthcare resources (<http://www.bmj.com/campaigns>).

CSP, with the support of the Sergio Arouca National School of Public Health/Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, the journal’s home institution, strives to meet the demands of authors and readers, thereby fulfilling its role in the field of Public Health at the national and international levels. Our responsibility as editors is to present the editorial policy transparently to all the actors involved in the journal’s production and use as a source of knowledge.



Our editorials serve as a prime channel for this dialogue, and the December edition in particular is dedicated to critical reflection on the editorial policy's achievements and challenges. But the year 2016 was different. In a context of widespread perplexity in the face of Brazil's economic crisis and political and institutional upheaval, the December *Editorial*<sup>2</sup> presented the *Thematic Section* on "fiscal austerity, rights, and health", a fundamental theme given the budget constraints imposed on social policies and their repercussions for health in the country.

Aiming to fill this gap, we prepared a presentation (supplementary material) in which we summarize our editorial policy's underlying principles and the various current CSP indicators. The latter include data from the four-year evaluation published in 2017 by the Brazilian Graduate Studies Coordinating Board (Capes), which lists CSP as the journal with the largest number of articles published (6.7% of the total) by permanent faculty members in the country's graduate studies programs in Public Health from 2013 to 2016 (Werneck GL, 2017, personal communication). Based on the volume of articles published and the fact that CSP does not limit references and is indexed in the leading bibliographic databases, we are also responsible for a relevant share of the citations received by other publications in the field, thus contributing to strengthening this ecosystem of journals and, therefore, Science and Public Health in Brazil and the world.

CSP is thus a *common good of Public Health*, shared by all those involved in the production and dissemination of knowledge and interested in the debate on relevant issues for improving the living conditions and health of populations.

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1. Stephan P, Veugelers R, Wang J. Reviewers are blinkered by bibliometrics. *Nature* 2017; 544:411-2.

2. Lima LD, Travassos C, Carvalho MS, Coeli CM. 2016: a year of perplexity. *Cad Saúde Pública* 2016; 32:eED011216.