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It is a privilege to be writing this guest editorial for the launch of a new open access, peer reviewed, “in-print and on web” journal – International journal of Surgical Cases.

~~Every surgeon is like a soldier on duty during war. He/she has to decide whether to fire, retreat or change the~~ course of events. Any surgeon is in same phase when operating on a patient despite planning in advance. He/she is the soldier who has to take an instant decision. That is what I call a case report!

Sharing experiences leads to information and the practices followed in any discipline. If we go the timeline in medical literature, most journals had editorials, original or review articles, case reports etc. The case report category is becoming extinct in most journals of repute for want of space and time. Little is realized that collection of similar/ similarly treated cases form a basis of a protocol for others to follow. Today, lead journals harp on larger volume of data population while considering publication with scant regard for demographic data. Case reports have vanished from their submission criteria.

Every treating surgeon, whichever the field may be, learning is eternal and he/she learns from good or bad experiences of “surprise” case/s he or she has treated. Socrates once said “By mastering one branch of science, a person does not comprehend science. A physician should broaden his understanding by the study of many disciplines. Specialty is like a bird with only one wing.” Surgical field though intricately integrated with other surgical fields is also dependent on the medical field. The interactivity between specialties seems to be dying with little relevance to the patient as a whole as I read journals.

The times have changed from journals that published everything irrespective of the specialty to specialty journals to “e” journals. Everything seems available on the internet – paid or free depending on the journal and the publisher. Then there is indexing, recognition, impact factor etc.

The Journal is new, has gone down to the basics in surgical field, to publish case reports. With the understanding that I have, it is not a free ride for surgeons in any field. Case reports are usually short but convey enough to enlighten any and every one to take alternative route in difficult situations. They will be peer reviewed as per guidelines and then authenticated for publication

It is going to be long journey but seems as honest attempt to bring Socrates' dying vision to reality.

Whether technology or not, like a soldier, last minute decision in life of a surgeon are final and can be based on case reports.

I wish all on the board the best.

Dr Abhay Dalvi

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