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## World Association of Medical Editors: Support for the *Croatian Medical Journal's* Editorial Independence

**To the Editor:** On behalf of the Board of World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), we are writing in support of the Editors of the *Croatian Medical Journal (CMJ)*, Drs Matko Marušić and Ana Marušić. The Marušićs have been WAME members nearly since its inception and Dr Ana Marušić in particular has been an active participant, serving in many roles officially and unofficially, including as President of WAME. In addition, Dr Ana Marušić has been *CMJ's* representative to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and active in their policy setting process, as well with the Council of Science Editors, currently serving as their president, to name but a few examples of her involvement in setting editorial standards in the medical editorial community.

ICMJE has established an editorial process for ethical investigations addressing an established breach of ethical conduct (available at <http://www.icmje.org/index.html#publish>). As stated in Paragraph 5 of Section III.D.2 of that document, "If redundant or duplicate publication is attempted or occurs

without such notification [of the editor], authors should expect editorial action to be taken. At the least, prompt rejection of the submitted manuscript should be expected. If the editor was not aware of the violations and the article has already been published, then a notice of redundant or duplicate publication will probably be published with or without the author's explanation or approval." WAME does not have independent knowledge of all of the events that the Drs Marušić have described in their editorial (1), however, we have first-hand knowledge about how the *CMJ* sought and obtained independent review of the suspected redundant/duplicate publications. Dr Matko Marušić applied for a confidential consultation from our Ethics Committee as he wanted to obtain an independent review of the subject publications by Professor Kurjak. In all communications concerning this matter, Dr Matko Marušić was an exemplary editor who was committed to editorial and research integrity, fairness, and WAME independence.

WAME strongly supports editorial independence as an es-

sential component of medical journal publishing, as described in its statement "The relationship between journal editors-in-chief and owners" (available at <http://www.wame.org/resources/policies#independence>), which states that "Editors-in-chief should have full authority over the editorial content of the journal, generally referred to as 'editorial independence.'"

We strongly support the Marušićs' efforts to address ethical breaches by authors in the pages of their journal.

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### References

- 1 Marusic M, Marusic A. Threats to the integrity of the Croatian Medical Journal. *Croat Med J.* 2007;48:779-85. [Medline:18074411](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18074411/)