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Centro Latino-Americano e do Caribe de Informação em Ciências da Saúde

Organização Pan-Americana da Saúde | Organização Mundial da Saúde

Área de Gestão do Conhecimento e Comunicações - KMC

BIREME/PAHO/WHO

Minutes of the II Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Scientific Communication in Health VHL (SCH VHL)

April 30th, 2013 via *Blackboard Elluminate*

Participants:

- Damián Vazquez – Editor of *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública* (RPSP), PAHO
- Eliane P. dos Santos – Regional Advisor, Scientific Communication (KMC/PAHO)
- Regina F. Castro - Former-editor of *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública*, special guest
- Representatives from Scientific Editors Associations, LILACS and VHL Coordinators, and personnel from PAHO/WHO country offices (circa 40 participants from 10 countries)
- BIREME/PAHO/WHO

Adalberto Tardelli, Director

Veronica Abdala, Manager SCI and *interim* Manager PFI

Lilian Calò, Coordinator, Scientific Communication in Health

Joanita Barros, Librarian MIP/PFI

Sueli M. Suga, Librarian FIR/PFI

Lilian welcomed the participants, explaining that the official language of the meeting would be Spanish, considering that the majority of participants from Latin America and the Caribbean (LA&C) understand the language. She apologized to the participants from the English Caribbean, noting that summaries in English would be made during the meeting and that the minutes and presentations would be translated into the three languages and made available at the Scientific Communication in Health VHL ([SCH VHL](#)) website.

Lilian opened the meeting on behalf of the Director of BIREME Adalberto Tardelli, who would come later due to an appointment. Lilian stressed the importance of the participation of different actors, considering the strategic issue of strengthening scientific communication in the region.

BIREME's presentation began by recalling the [recommendations of Editors Meeting in VHL6/CRICS9](#) and describing the role of BIREME in the implementation and development of these recommendations. The LILACS Submission system, for example, aims to optimize data transfer from information sources produced and published by the Cooperating Centers and BIREME and facilitate the management and interoperability between the institutional and/or local databases and BIREME. Additionally, Lilian spoke about the open access resources available online as publishing guides on ethics and scientific writing and publication, which can be used to increase the quality of scientific journals published in the region. The resources from the World Association of Medical Editors ([WAME](#)), and Enhancing the QUALity and

Transparency Of Health Research ([EQUATOR](#)), are of great value, the latter being available also in Spanish, due to a PAHO initiative, as well as other sources such as [STROBE](#) and [CONSORT](#).

Lilian also shared the new SCH VHL portal; the new iAHx-provided thematic areas, the indexing criteria to the most relevant regional and international journals databases. She also pointed out the need to update the data on editors' associations and societies in the countries. According to the minutes of the creation of the SCH VHL, the Advisory Committee consists of LILACS journals editors or associations of scientific editors in the countries.

Veronica Abdala, SCI manager and *interim* PFI manager highlighted the importance of LILACS to the visibility of scientific and technical information in LA&C, as the most important and comprehensive index of the region. Veronica highlighted the methodological and technological developments undertaken by the network in order to have a more representative and updated LILACS. She also said that criteria are important, but it is essential to integrate the specific national databases in order to retrieve this information in the search on the Virtual Health Library (VHL). Today there are over 60 national databases interconnected on the Information Sources of the VHL.

Adalberto Tardelli, director of BIREME, joined the meeting, and after being introduced by Lilian, agreed with Veronica and reinforced the importance of LILACS and especially the role of BIREME and the SCH VHL in reestablishing and promoting more frequent communication between editors, authors, publishers and other actors involved in the scientific communication process through regular meetings. Adalberto stressed that the issues raised at the Editors' Meeting at VHL6/CRICS9 are among the challenges and goals of BIREME. Addressing the participants of the Caribbean he apologized for conducting the meeting in Spanish and shared recent actions with the Caribbean, such as the meeting with CARPHA (Caribbean Public Health Agency) and a course on LILACS Methodology, which happened on May 6- 10, in Barbados, aiming to rescue the proposal of an establishment of a VHL for the Caribbean Region. Lilian translated into English the words of the director of BIREME, summarizing the meeting so far.

Following the agenda, Lilian invited Eliane Santos, Scientific Communication Regional Advisor at PAHO to present "The Scientific Communication in PAHO". Eliane described the project area, which resulted from the union of Libraries and Information Networks with the area of Editorial Services, which includes the Pan American Public Health Journal (RPSP), and also shared the main goals of the area, such as to establish the concepts of scholarly communication in PAHO; work on the continuous improvement of RPSP; improve the editorial process of scientific and technical publications of the Organization; develop more efficient and integrated services to respond to information needs of technical fields, and start a project on how to broadly disseminate information from PAHO and PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centers.

Strengthening RPSP is being done by redefining its editorial policy and creating special issues on specific topics. Then, Damián Vásquez, editor of RPSP commented on the recent actions regarding the journal. Vásquez welcomed the opportunity and informed that PAHO seeks to support the scientific quality in its publications, which are the basis for decision-making in public health. This support is focused on programmatic priorities of the Organization, such as non-communicable diseases, nutrition, diabetes, health equity, vaccinations, etc. The editorial policy of the Organization seeks to strengthen all PAHO publications, as well as RPSP regarding its editorial quality and content, but also on its international scope, aiming to reach more

readers in more countries. Damián Vázquez reminded that RPSP is 90 years old, and publishes articles in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Lilian then asked the participants to nominate representatives for the Advisory Committee of the SCH VHL. Catalina Ianello (PAHO Argentina) said that the Ministry of Health and the *Comisión Nacional Salud Investiga*, responsible for the publication of *Revista Argentina de Salud Publica*, could assume this role. At this point, Regina Castro, former editor of RPSP and special guest, recalls the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee:

- Define policies in the area of Science Communication VHL;
- Support BIREME to improve communication between the editors; and
- Help develop VHL products and services to strengthen scientific communication in the region.

Regina also reminded that the Advisory Committee is formed by institutions or journals which designate editors or representatives to serve at the Committee. Thus, in order to nominate their representatives, the countries need to have the selection criteria defined. It is also important, said Regina, to update the directory of associations of scientific publishers in the VHL, what will be done with the countries' support.

Adalberto Tardelli reminded that the duties of the Committee are defined in [VHL Model](#), however, the SCH VHL is a particular case, and the number of members should be between eight and twelve institutions or LILACS indexed journals. In a message to be sent after the meeting, a deadline for the countries to inform the representative institutions in the Advisory Committee shall be informed.

Lilian suggested, then, as it has occurred prior to VHL6/CRICS9, the creation of a working group to discuss the restructuring of the Advisory Committee of the VHL and start implementation of the recommendations of the Editors Meeting. Regina Castro recalled that the [Mulford Health Science Library](#) database gathers instructions to authors of most health journals in the world, which could serve as a basis for defining the minimum criteria to be adopted by LILACS journals. It is also important to consider an updated list of members of the Virtual Community (VC) of Scientific Editors.

Catalina Ianello (PAHO Argentina) agrees with Regina's comment and says that in the absence of associations, other institutions could play this role, for example in Argentina, CONICET and CAICYT that possess directories of scientific editors, not just in the health area. She also commented that despite GIFT and HINARI being important access tools to scientific literature, it is important to support open access publication, meeting the initiative of LILACS Brazil, in which this form of publication is mandatory to the indexed journals.

Fernando Ardito (Peru) informed that his country relies with the Peruvian Association of Science Editors and also with the National Assembly of Rectors. Both of them support the strengthening of scientific journals. The national database LIPECS recommends that the Peruvian journals follow LILCAS and SciELO quality criteria, besides adopting the Open Journal System. There is also a recommendation to professors of Peruvian universities to publish in LILACS and/or SciELO indexed journals. Fernando also said the SciELO Peru collection is obtaining certification, and the national VHL relies with the support of PAHO representative

office in Peru through Martha Bryce, librarian at the Knowledge and Information Management Center.

Virginia Siles (BINASSS, Costa Rica) reported that in her country there is a Commission of Journal Editors working with SciELO criteria. Virginia drew attention to the fact that it would be important to train LILACS editors to improve the quality and strengthen the Costa Rica scientific journals, as well as Scientific Communication events and training activities in Central America.

Adalberto Tardelli pointed out that the main mission of the SCH VHL portal is to become a referential space for scientific communication professionals in the region. He also reported that there is an ongoing study of a model to assess the relationship between BIREME and SciELO within LA&C, based on what is being coordinated in Brazil. Adalberto highlighted the important role of VHL Costa Rica, which is almost 15 years old and BINASSS through Virginia Siles both regional and sub-regionally.

Lilian reported the following next steps:

- Elaboration of a mailing list. Interested participants shall send an e-mail calolili@paho.org;
- Indication of countries representative to the Advisory Committee of the SCHVHL (criteria will be specified in due course);
- Update the directory of Scientific Editors' Associations or Societies in the countries of the region
- Create one or more working groups to implement the recommendations of the Editors' Meeting at VHL6/CRICS9;
- Initiate the first of the recommendations of the editors' meeting, which is jointly develop minimum criteria of instructions to authors. A wiki page might be used for that purpose.

Adalberto thanked the participants, in particular the support of the area KMC/PAHO in its programmatic and legal aspects.

Lilian, addressing the Caribbean participants, made a brief report in English on the final recommendations and next steps and adjourned the meeting, emphasizing that communication will be followed up through a mailing list.