

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives us immense pleasure to share this JPMA special supplement with our readers, published as an appurtenance to the 8th AKU Annual Surgical Conference of the Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan. The theme of the conference is 'Stem Cells: A New Frontier in Surgery,' and submissions were invited keeping this theme in mind.

We are grateful for the enormous response from both national and international contributors. A total of 41 manuscripts were received which were reviewed and processed as per JPMA's stringent publication criteria. Each submission was first evaluated for plagiarism through specialized computer software. No manuscript was rejected at this level. This was followed by blinded peer-review based on standard JPMA policy. Each manuscript was reviewed by two independent reviewers, one of which was a subject specialist while the other was a stem cell expert. In case of discrepancy in the two reviews for any article, a third editorial review was also sought. Complete confidentiality of the authors as well as reviewers was ensured. All reviews were carried out on standard JPMA review forms. Articles that were found to be publishable by both reviewers in their present form; or with minor changes only, were selected for publication in the supplement. Articles requiring major revisions were not considered for publication.

A total of 26 articles were accepted for publication. The final list of articles was forwarded to JPMA for final editorial review, along with the reviewer's comments. We must mention that some of the rejected articles were actually of reasonable quality but could not be accepted either due to deviation from the theme or requiring major revisions in either format or language, which given the short time-line was not possible to edit for this particular supplement. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Departmental Chair: Prof. Saleem Islam, Conference Chair: Dr. Fazlur Rahman, Scientific Chair: Prof. Syed Ather Enam, and Publication Committee Members: Drs. Sana Zeeshan (Chair), Syed Muhammad Nazim (Co-Chair), Zia ur Rehman (Co-Chair), Amber Sultan, Safdar Ali Shaikh, Nida Zahid, Rashna Aga and Shiraz Hashmi for their tireless efforts and dedication in bringing the JPMA supplement to its final form.

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In the end, we would whole heartedly appreciate the efforts of our administrative staff, Mr. Shariff Charania, who diligently worked day and night and made this herculean task possible. We hope you will appreciate the quality of the papers in this supplement.

We look forward to welcoming you all and we hope for your active participation in the 8th AKU Annual Surgical Conference to be held on February 17-19, 2023.

**Publication Committee**  
**8th AKU Annual Surgical Conference**  
**Stem Cells: A New Frontier in Surgery**