

From the Editor's Desk

At HSR, we are fortunate to receive a steady flow of outstanding submissions from investigators interested in disseminating new knowledge about the methods and results of health services research. As editors, we aim to ensure that the best of this work is published in a timely manner. We track our acceptance rates and our decision times closely, but it has been several years since this information has been published in the journal. In an effort to increase transparency and accountability with the health services research and health policy community, we are providing this summary of key journal statistics corresponding to calendar year 2018.

In 2018, we received 873 submissions and the outcomes for all, but 7 of them were resolved by the time this article was prepared in December 2019. To date, we have accepted 128 (15%) of the 873 papers for publication (Figure 1). Each of these accepted papers underwent one or more revisions in response to comments from reviewers and editors. As a result, it took 265 days on average from the time of the original submission for authors to receive an acceptance.

The selective nature of HSR's work takes a great deal of effort not only from our editorial team but also from the hundreds of reviewers who donate their time to evaluate the manuscripts and offer advice on how to improve them. We are grateful for these contributions and believe that the combined efforts of authors, reviewers, and editors help to make HSR one of the most significant journals in

the field. In 2018, HSR had an impact factor of 2.706 which was the 15th best among 81 health policy and services journals.

Being selective means we end up sending a lot of rejection letters. No author likes to receive these, but we assume it is better to communicate our decision sooner than later. With this in mind, we rejected two thirds of submissions in 2018 (576 of 873) based on a screening performed by our editorial team without ever sending them for external review. We do this on average within 24 days and typically with a note explaining why so that authors can consider how best to revise their paper prior to submitting it to another journal.

When we decide to send papers for external review, the chances for acceptance are just under a half. Of the 297 manuscripts we sent to external referees in 2018, 154 (52%) were rejected within an average of 108 days after one or more rounds of reviews. In almost all of these cases, this decision was informed by the input of at least two external referees.

We recognize that authors have choices about where to submit their work, and at HSR, we aim to have authors send us their best work. We produced this report to help inform that decision. We plan to update it and share it with our readership annually with the thought that it might help you to help us to better understand how the journal can best serve its intended audience.

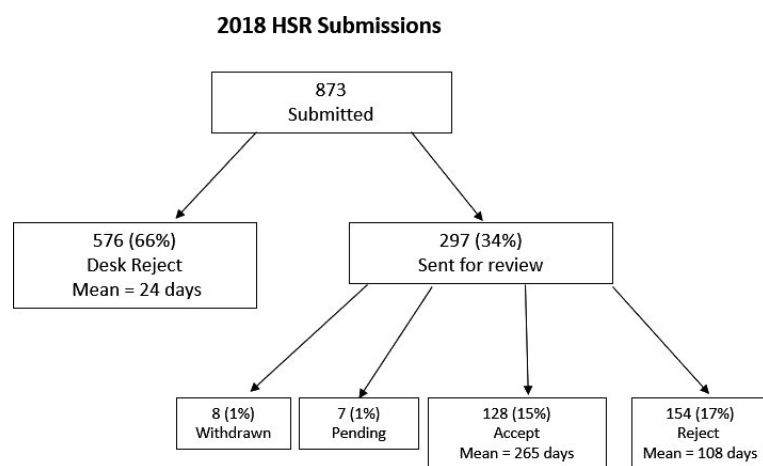



FIGURE 1 2018 HSR submissions

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