The responsibility of Editors and Publishers in Reporting of Research: Changing current practice – how to ACT

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Chair, COPE
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Some assumptions…

• In its widest sense the full and complete reporting of papers is an ethical imperative
• Poor reporting of research has the potential to lead directly to incorrect decisions being made on patient care and on future science
• Scholarly journals are at the sharp edge of reporting
• Editors are the gatekeepers to the published literature – pre and post publication
Who’s involved?

- EQUATOR
- Guideline developers
- Journals
- Editors
- Reviewers
- Publishers
- Funders
- Professional Bodies
- Bulk purchasers of research e.g.
  - Libraries
  - Health services
  - Companies
What about these assumptions?

• In its widest sense the full and complete reporting of papers is an ethical imperative.
• Poor reporting of research has the potential to lead directly to incorrect decisions being made on patient care and on future science.
Atul Gawande: heroes use checklists

• simple checklists turn out to be extraordinarily powerful tools for marshaling knowledge and for ensuring its correct use.

• the biggest roadblock is pushback from highly-trained experts who are offended by the idea.
... and what about this assumption?

• Editors are the gatekeepers to the published literature – pre and post publication
  – Many authors don’t accept this gatekeeper function
    • The lines between editors and academics are blurring
  – Many journals, despite the best of intentions, are increasingly struggling with this concept
    • Resources
    • Attitudes
    • Technology
  – Journals are rarely autonomous
    • Where are the publishers in this debate?
Publishing is no longer (if it ever was) top down

“The concept of elite journals surely belongs to a past, when scientists had easy access only to a limited number of paper journals, and when ‘breakthrough’ science was comprehensible to a wide audience.”

“the excessive power of editors in deciding on suitability for journals is corrupting”

*PLOS Medicine* author survey, June 2009
Isabelle Boutron
University Paris Descartes
FRANCE
Expertise: Research integrity, Clinical trials, Research validity, Phase III, Clinical research design,... Show all

An-Wen Chan
Women’s College Research Institute, University of Toronto
CANADA
Expertise: Research integrity, Epidemiology, Clinical trials, Evidence-based medicine, Research validity,... Show all

Erik von Elm
IUMSP, University Hospital Lausanne
SWITZERLAND
Expertise: Research integrity, Clinical trials, Clinical epidemiology, Clinical research design, Reporting guidelines,... Show all

Joel Joseph Gagnier
University of Michigan
UNITED STATES
Expertise: Research integrity, Systematic reviews, Evidence-based medicine, Research methodology, Epidemiology,... Show all
This assumption is true at least

- Scholarly journals are at the sharp edge of reporting…
The literature is vast

has more than

22 million bibliographic citations and abstracts

from 5000+ core Medline journals plus various others
This is the world that we live in....
Results for #equatorACT

Tweets Top / All / People you follow

Trish Groves @trished
Iain Chalmers #equatorACT patients shouldn't enter RCTs unless registered, with protocol that reviews previous evidence testingtreatments.org
Retweeted 4 times
Expand

Iain Hz @aiinh_z
So tomorrow I get a flight to an airport that is in both France and Switzerland and then get a bus Germany. #ithinkigetitnow #equatorACT
Expand

Trish Groves @trished
From floor at #equatorACT Steve Goodman #PCORI (he's on methodology ctte) should cooperate with European initiatives discussed here today
Expand

Ginny Barbour @GinnyBarbour
#equatorACT Paula Williamson from @COMETinitiative on outcomes in clin trials. Guess what, parents have diff priorities from professionals
Expand

Trish Groves @trished
Paula Williamson #equatorACT #coreoutcome sets for RCTs are better when clinicians involved in development, even more so with pts+carers
Expand
TweetReach Report for

#equatorACT

reach

23,211
accounts reached

exposure

75,395 impressions

43
1 tweet

20,661
2-4 tweets

280
5-7 tweets

2,227
8+ tweets

activity

50 tweets

10 contributors

4 hours

1 reply

18 retweets
Roles of Editors and Publishers

• Be aware of why good reporting matters
  – Similarities with COPE
  – Make it a core part of business as usual
• Think differently
  – Enable integration of guidelines in current practice
  – Keep it simple
  – Target the right people
• Collaborate
  – EQUATOR
  – Each other
  – Other interested organisations
The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) was established in 1997 by a small group of medical journal editors in the UK but now has over 7000 members worldwide from all academic fields. Membership is open to editors of academic journals and others interested in publication ethics. Several major publishers, including Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Palgrave Macmillan and Wolters Kluwer, have signed up their journals as COPE members.

COPE provides advice to editors and publishers on all aspects of publication ethics and, in particular, how to handle cases of research and publication misconduct. It also provides a forum for its members to discuss individual cases (meeting four times a year in the UK and once a year in North America). COPE does not investigate individual cases but encourages editors to ensure that cases are investigated by the appropriate authorities (usually a research institution or employer).

All COPE members are expected to follow the Code of Conduct for Journal Editors. COPE will investigate complaints that members have not followed the Code.

COPE also funds research on publication ethics, publishes a quarterly newsletter and organises annual seminars in the UK and the USA. COPE has also created an audit tool for members to measure compliance with its Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

What guidance is available on this website (for members and non-members)?

- COPE Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors
- Flowcharts on how to handle common ethical problems
- Other COPE guidelines (eg on retractions)
- Sample letters (to adapt for use)
- Database of all cases discussed at COPE Forum (including podcasts of the discussion (where available), the advice given and the outcome of cases)
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Welcome to ORCID

ORCID is an international, interdisciplinary, open, and not-for-profit organization created for the benefit of all stakeholders, including research institutions, funding organizations, publishers, and researchers to enhance the scientific discovery process and improve collaboration and the efficiency of research funding.

ORCID aims to solve the name ambiguity problem in scholarly communications by creating a registry of persistent unique identifiers for individual researchers and an open and transparent linking mechanism between ORCID, other ID schemes, and research objects such as publications, grants, and patents.

For more information on:

- Creating an Individual ORCID Record
- ORCID Newsletter and Events
- ORCID Developer Tools
- ORCID Membership for Organizations
- ORCID Launch Partners Program

Blog

ORCID Announces its Launch Partners
August 31, 2012

ORCID Job Postings: Lead Developer and Technical Support Specialist
August 14, 2012

New Participants

Edilage - Cactus Communications
August 16, 2012

University of Southern California
June 12, 2012

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
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• Nudge authors to do the right thing
Research Information Network report 2010: *If you build it, will they come? How researchers perceive and use web 2.0*

“Researchers themselves are the most important enablers and communicators of emerging best practice. It is important that they should consider the full range of available tools and services as an intrinsic part of the research and scholarly communication process, and seek to learn from each other about new developments and practices that prove beneficial.”