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# The EQUATOR Network

- resources and training for good reporting of health research

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The EQUATOR Network

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# EQUATOR Network

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- **International initiative that aims to improve reliability (and value) of health research publications by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of research studies**
- **Launched in June 2008**
- **'Umbrella' organisation; key stakeholders:**
  - Editors & peer reviewers of general and specialty journals
  - Researchers (authors), medical writers,
  - Developers of reporting guidelines
  - Research funders
  - .. Everyone interested in improving the quality of research publications and of research itself



# Why was EQUATOR set up? <sup>1</sup>

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- **Advances the work of CONSORT and other guidelines groups – focus on:**
  - Better implementation of reporting guidelines
  - Development of robust reporting guidelines
- **EQUATOR work objectives reflect:**
  - Reporting of much health research is not adequate
  - There are good consensus reporting guidelines which are not being widely used
  - There are many other reporting guidelines where it is not very clear how they were developed and again not used



# EQUATOR plans – five major goals

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- **Develop and maintain a comprehensive internet-based resource centre providing up-to-date information, tools and other materials related to health research reporting**
- **Actively promote the use of reporting guidelines and good research reporting practices through an education and training programme**
- **Assist in the development, dissemination and implementation of robust reporting guidelines**
- **Conduct regular assessment of how journals implement reporting guidelines**
- **Conduct regular audits of reporting quality across the health research literature**



## Welcome to the EQUATOR Network website – the resource centre for good reporting of health research studies



Too often, good research evidence is undermined by poor quality reporting.

The EQUATOR Network is an international initiative that seeks to improve reliability of medical research literature by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of research studies.

[Find out how](#), or [get involved](#).

### Highlights

#### **EQUATOR Network at the Peer Review Congress 2009**

**9 September**, Vancouver, Canada  
[Workshop](#) for editors and 2nd [Annual Lecture](#) presented by Dr Richard Horton, The Lancet

#### **EQUATOR Newsletter**

Information about new reporting guidelines, events, and other news.  
[Subscribe](#) now

### Reporting guidelines



[Library for Health Research Reporting](#)

### Authors



[Information for authors of research reports](#)

### Editors



[Resources for journal editors and peer reviewers](#)

### Developers



[Resources for developers of reporting guidelines](#)

### Latest news [more news](#)

#### **PRISMA Statement now published**

New guidance, superseding the existing QUOROM Statement, for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses is now available.

[Read the full story](#)

The EQUATOR Network is [funded by](#):



Resource Centre

► **Library for health research reporting**

[Reporting Guidelines](#)

[Reporting guidelines under development](#)

[Guidance on scientific writing](#)

[Guidance developed by editorial groups](#)

[Medical writers – additional resources](#)

[Research ethics, publication ethics and good practice guidelines](#)

[Development and maintenance of reporting guidelines](#)

[Editorials introducing RGs](#)

[Examples of guidelines for peer reviewers](#)

[Examples of good](#)

## Library for health research reporting

The EQUATOR Network library currently contains:

- An [introduction to reporting guidelines](#)
- Comprehensive lists of the available reporting guidelines, listed by study type:
  - [Experimental studies](#)
  - [Observational studies](#)
  - [Diagnostic accuracy studies](#)
  - [Systematic reviews](#)
  - [Qualitative research](#)
  - [Economic evaluations](#)
  - [Quality improvement studies](#)
  - [Other reporting guidelines](#)
  - [Sections of research reports](#)
  - [Specific conditions or procedures.](#)
- [Reporting guidelines under development](#)
- [Guidance on scientific writing](#)
- [Guidance developed by editorial groups](#)
- [Medical writers – additional resources](#)
- [Research ethics, publication ethics and good practice guidelines](#)
- Resources related to [development and maintenance of reporting guidelines](#)
- [Examples of editorials introducing reporting guidelines](#)
- [Examples of guidelines for peer reviewers](#)
- [Examples of good research reporting](#)
- Useful and interesting [presentations](#)
- [EQUATOR 'pick'](#) – comments, discussion and other thought provoking articles and interesting quotes



Download the most frequently-used reporting guidelines:

- [CONSORT checklist](#)
- [CONSORT flowchart](#)
- [CONSORT extensions](#)
- [STARD checklist & flowchart](#)
- [STROBE checklists](#)
- [PRISMA checklist](#)
- [PRISMA flow diagram](#)

## Resource Centre

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### Library for health research reporting

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### ▶ Authors of research reports

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### Editors and peer reviewers

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### Reporting guidelines developers

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### Monitoring use of our resources

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### Links

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## Resources for authors

The following resources will help you to produce high quality research publications:

- [Planning and conducting your research](#)
- [Writing up your research](#)
- [Medical writers – additional resources](#)
- [Ethical guidelines and considerations](#)
- [Other resources](#)
  
- [What can I do to support the EQUATOR Network's effort](#)



### Planning and conducting your research

It is important to be aware of reporting requirements and think about reporting when you are planning and conducting your research study:

- UK National Health System [Research Flowchart](#) (tool providing resources and points for consideration for all stages of the research process: from formulating a research question to the reporting and dissemination of new findings)
- UK MRC [Route Map](#) (Medical Research Council guidance through the legal and good practice requirements when designing conducting and disseminating experimental medicine studies)

### Writing up your research

A good scientific article combines clear writing style with a high standard of reporting of the research content:

- [Guidance on scientific writing](#)
- [Reporting guidelines](#) (comprehensive lists of the available guidelines appropriate to each study type)
- [Examples of good research reporting](#) (specific examples showing why and how to correctly describe important aspects of your trial or other types of research studies)

#### Tip: **When you finish your writing ...**

When published, your article will start a new independent life – it will be read and critically appraised, and it may contribute to systematic reviews, inform clinical guidelines, and influence clinical practice, etc. So, before you submit your paper to a journal, try to consider whether the article is 'fit for purpose' and able to pass this future scrutiny, e.g.

## Resources for editors and peer reviewers

The following resources will help you to produce high quality research publications:

- [Developing a journal's policies on research reporting](#)
  - [Guidance for peer reviewers](#)
  - [Other resources](#)
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- [Do you want to write an editorial about EQUATOR?](#)
  - [What can I do to support the EQUATOR Network's effort](#)



### Developing a journal's policies on research reporting

The following resources will be useful for developing or updating a journal's policies and instructions for research reporting:

- [Guidelines developed by influential editorial groups](#) (WAME, ICMJE, etc.)
- [Research ethics, publication ethics and good practice guidelines](#)
- [Reporting guidelines](#)
- [Editorials](#) introducing reporting guidelines and new reporting policies into a journal
- [Instructions to Authors](#) (collected by the Mulford Library, University of Toledo; note that not all listed instructions provide good guidance on research reporting)

### Guidance for peer reviewers

Reporting guidelines are useful tools for strengthening the peer review process. Here are a few examples of how to implement this in your journal:

- [Examples of guidelines for peer reviewers](#)

### Other resources

[International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication](#) (link to materials from all congresses held so far)

*Nature* [Peer Review Debate](#) (22 articles of analyses and perspectives from leading scientists, publishers and other stakeholders)

**Hames, I.** (2007) Peer Review and Manuscript Management in Scientific Journals.

# What can editors do to support our effort?

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- **Link to EQUATOR / RG & checklists in your I to A**
- **Alert authors to the available RG and motivate their use:**
  - Clearly describe purpose of RG
  - Clearly formulate how you expect authors to use them (degree of compliance)
- **Alert your peer reviewers to the available RG and ask them to consider them during the review**
- **Maintain the knowledge of principles of good reporting and available resources in your editorial office (new editors, etc.); EQUATOR newsletter**



# How can EQUATOR help editors

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- **Developing and maintaining useful resources, including better information on reporting guidelines**
  - New database in development
- **Educating research authors to produce better manuscripts**
- **Providing practical tools for authors, editors and reviewers ('How to ..' guides, templates, ..)**
- **Providing practical examples**
  - Good research reporting
  - Sharing editors experience with implementation of RG (forum)
- **Better promotion of EQUATOR and good research reporting practice**
- **...you need to tell us what you want and need**



# EQUATOR Steering Group

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**Doug Altman, Centre for Statistics in Medicine,  
University of Oxford, UK**

**John Hoey, University of Toronto, Canada**

**David Moher, Ottawa Health Research Institute,  
Canada**

**Kenneth F. Schulz, Family Health International,  
Chapel Hill, USA**

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**Thank you for supporting  
EQUATOR Network**

**[www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org)**

