

Submission Of Manuscripts To Medical Journals

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What will be covered in this workshop?

Roles and responsibilities of authors

Publishing and editorial issues

Manuscript preparation and submission

Sending the manuscript to the journal

Problems during the submission process

Roles and responsibilities of authors

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Authorship

Avoid guest- and ghost-writers

Authorship credit is based only on **substantial** contribution to:

- conception or design, **or** the acquisition, analysis, **or** interpretation of data
- **and** drafting the article **or** revising it critically for important intellectual content
- **and** final approval of the version to be published

Those who do not meet all these criteria should be acknowledged

Solely acquiring funding or collecting data does not justify authorship

All who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in criteria # 2 and 3

No one who fulfils the criteria should be excluded

Authorship

Corresponding author

Corresponding author is responsible for:

- communication during submission, peer review, and publication process
- administrative requirements (authorship details, IRB and COI forms, and clinical trial registration documentation)
- responding to critiques of the work and cooperating with any requests from the journal for data or additional information after publication

Authorship

Removal/addition of an author after submission or publication

You should provide the journal editors with:

- an explanation
- **and** signed statement of agreement for the requested change from all listed authors and from the author to be removed or added

Who should be acknowledged?

Acquisition of funding

General supervision of a research group (Honorary authorship)

General administrative support

Writing assistance (written permission should be obtained)

- technical editing
- language editing
- proofreading

Conflicts of Interest

When professional judgment concerning a primary interest (patients' welfare or the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (such as financial gain)

- Authors ([Form for Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest](#))
- Peer reviewers
- Editors and journal staff

Peer Review

True scientific peer review begins only on the date a paper is published!

Maintain the primary data and analytic procedures underpinning the published results for at least 10 years

Two studies on valsartan were retracted (Lancet. 2014;383:2111):

- The Kyoto Heart Study (European Heart Journal, 2009) retracted in February, 2013
- The Jikei Heart Study (The Lancet, 2007) retracted in September, 2013

Protection of Research Participants

Human studies

- Committee on human experimentation (institutional and national)
- If not available, then use the [Helsinki Declaration](#)

Animal experiments

- Institutional/national standards for care and use of lab animals
- International Association of Veterinary Editors' Consensus Author Guidelines on Animal Ethics and Welfare ([.pdf](#))

Written informed consent: Masking the eye region in photographs of patients is inadequate protection of anonymity.

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Scientific Misconduct and Retraction

Data fabrication

Data falsification (e.g., deceptive manipulation of images)

Plagiarism

Failure to publish the results of clinical trials and other human studies

Retraction

([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=retracted+publication+\[pt\]](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=retracted+publication+[pt]))

Copyright

- Authors should transfer copyright to the journal
- Authors should transfer publication license to the journal
- Some journals do not require transfer of copyright and rely on such vehicles as Creative Commons licenses

Overlapping Publications

Duplicate Submission/Publication

Authors should not:

- submit the same manuscript, in the same or different languages, simultaneously to more than one journal
- publish a paper overlapping substantially with one already published, without clear, visible reference to the previous publication

If already been reported in large part in a published article: the **cover letter** should clearly say so + provide copies of the related material to editor

Complete report following a preliminary report (letter to the editor, abstract or poster) is acceptable.

Correspondence

Or Letter to the Editor

On a recently published article

- Not indexed in Medline (via an online commenting system)
- Indexed in Medline (if subsequently published on a numbered electronic or print page)

On a general topic of interest

Report of an original research or a case (usually <1000 words)

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Manuscript Preparation and Submission

General Principles

- Check the journal's website for **Instructions to Authors** or **Author Guidelines** regarding specific formatting requirements for submission
- Use **double spacing** throughout
- Number all pages consecutively, beginning with the title page
- Use either American or British English throughout
- Prepare each paragraph longer than a single sentence but not longer than one manuscript page
- Begin each section on a new page (abstract, references, tables, and figures)
- Each table or figure should be on a new page

Manuscript Preparation and Submission Reporting Guidelines

- CONSORT for randomized trials (www.consort-statement.org)
- STROBE for observational studies (<http://strobe-statement.org/>)
- PRISMA for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (<http://prisma-statement.org/>)
- STARD for studies of diagnostic accuracy (www.stard-statement.org/)

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Title Page

- Within the manuscript or as a separate file
- Article title; avoid abbreviations
- Author(s)' names
- Author information; highest academic degrees, and affiliations
- Short title/Running head: usually no more than 40 characters
- Corresponding authors; telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address
- Source(s) of support; usually in the Acknowledgement section
- Word count; excluding the abstract, acknowledgments, tables, figure legends, and references
- Word count for the Abstract
- Number of figures and tables
- Article type
- Conflict of Interest declaration; usually after the Acknowledgement section

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Abstract

- Original article, Review article, Case report, Hypotheses, Short communication
- Structured vs. unstructured abstracts
- Clinical trial registration number at the end of the abstract
- Keywords (usually 3-5 words)
- Word limit (usually 250-300 words)

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

References

- [Vancouver](#) reference style (author-number system)
- [Harvard](#) reference style (author-date system)
- Sample References (www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html)
- **Journal titles** in the reference list either
 - spelled out *fully* (New England Journal of Medicine)
 - written in *abbreviation* (N Eng J Med)

Manuscript Preparation and Submission Tables

- Each table should be cited in the text
- Place explanatory matter in **footnotes**, not in the heading
- Explain all nonstandard abbreviations in footnotes
- Use symbols to explain information if needed
- Include Tables in the manuscript file (**after References**), unless otherwise indicated

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Figure Legends

- Figure legends for illustrations should be on a **separate page**
- Use **Arabic numerals** corresponding to the illustrations
- Identify and explain each symbol, arrow, number, or letter clearly in the legend

Manuscript Preparation and Submission Figures

- Titles and detailed explanations in the legends (**not on the illustrations**)
- **Permission** is required irrespective of authorship or publisher
- Color figures (**Fee?!**)

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Abbreviations

- Use only standard abbreviations
- Use of nonstandard abbreviations can be confusing to readers
- Avoid abbreviations in the title of the manuscript
- The spelled-out abbreviation followed by the abbreviation in parenthesis should be used on first mention unless the abbreviation is a standard unit of measurement

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Authors' Contributions

- Study conception and design
- Acquisition of data
- Analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting of manuscript
- Critical revision

Authors' Contributions

Helen C Eborall, Simon J Griffin, A Toby Prevost, Ann-Louise Kinmonth, David P French, Stephen Sutton

Contributors: SS, DPF, ATP, A-LK, and SJG conceived and designed the original protocol. All authors were involved in amending the protocol. HCE coordinated the study throughout. Data entry was carried out by Wyman Dillon Ltd, Lewis Moore, and HCE. HCE cleaned the data and ran preliminary analysis with input from Tom Fanshawe. ATP analysed the data. ADDITION trial data were supplied by Lincoln Sargeant and Kate Williams. HCE wrote the first draft of the manuscript with ATP and SS. All authors contributed to subsequent and final drafts. HCE is guarantor of the paper.

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Sending The Manuscript To The Journal

Cover Letter

- Corresponding author's postal and e-mail addresses, and telephone/fax numbers
- State that the manuscript is original, not previously published, and not under concurrent consideration elsewhere
- Inform the journal editor of the existence of any similar published manuscripts written by the author
- Mention any supplemental material you are submitting for the online version of your article

Sending The Manuscript To The Journal

Suggested Reviewers

- Preferred/Non-preferred
- Provide the journal with suggested reviewers' names, affiliations, and e-mail addresses
- Reviewers must be from a different institution or department than your own
- The Editors do not guarantee that they will contact the reviewers you suggest

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Problems During the Submission Process

What Happens?

- “Unsubmit”
 - the author should fix the problem(s)
 - The author should resubmit it before the peer-review process can begin

- “Reject”
 - Ghost Authorship/Honorary Authorship
 - Lack of Institutional Review Board approval

Problems During the Submission Process

Common Problems

- Word counts
 - Be sure to check the instructions to authors
- Figures
 - Wrong formats (.pdf, .ppt)
 - Too low resolutions
 - Lumped together into one file such as a PowerPoint file
 - Imbedded within the manuscript file
 - Omission of a figure legend

Problems During the Submission Process

Common Problems (*cont'd*)

- Conflict of Interest and Disclosures
 - Single form signed by authors **or**
 - Each author submits a COI disclosure form **or**
 - E-mail confirmation by each author
 - Potential COI or even an actual conflict **does not mean that your manuscript submission will be adversely affected**

- Ghost Authorship/Honorary Authorship
 - Any assistance with writing a paper should at the very least be acknowledged
 - If substantial assistance is provided, then the writer's contributions should be evaluated

Problems During the Submission Process

Common Problems (*cont'd*)

- Lack of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval
 - results in rejection (including retrospective chart studies)
- Lack of Title Page, Structured Abstract
 - Include the abstract in the body of the manuscript
 - Structured/unstructured abstract
- Cover Letter provides opportunity to tell the journal
 - why the manuscript is important
 - how it differs from other studies in the literature

Thank you