

PUBLISHING ETHICS: Journal of Applied Research on Children

INTRODUCTION

The Journal of Applied Research on Children (JARC), a peer-reviewed, electronic Open Access journal, adheres to ethical scholarly publishing principles and practices. Scientific progress is only possible when inquiry is conducted with integrity and research results can be trusted. Peer review forms the foundation of scholarly certification of results and ensures that the articles in the journal are of the highest quality. To ensure that editors, reviewers, and authors are guided by the highest ethical standards, the editors of JARC request that all participants adhere to the following principles.

EDITORS

JARC editors have ethical responsibilities toward authors, peer reviewers, and the public. Editors ultimately are accountable for everything that appears in the journals. They strive to meet the needs of readers and authors. Their goal is to constantly improve the journals. They are committed to ensuring that authors and peer reviewers receive the information and material required to conduct peer reviews, accept or reject articles, and publish journal editions efficiently and on time. To do this, they establish clear policies and procedures for authors and peer reviewers that

- Identify and document all conflicts of interest (author, peer reviewer, and editor)
- Protect the absolute confidentiality of every author's work and research data
- Ensure that the peer review and editorial decision-making process is impartial, fair, and timely
- Identify and prominently publish any corrections, errors, and integrity concerns about article content
- Treat all parties with fairness, courtesy, objectivity, honesty, and transparency
- Maintain the integrity of the scientific and academic record

JARC editors adhere to the editorial standards laid out by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE at www.icmje.org), The Council of Science Editors (CSE at www.CouncilScienceEditors.org), and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE at www.publicationethics.org). In case of scientific fraud, the COPE procedures for publishing a formal retraction and notifying all concerned institutions will be followed.

REVIEWERS

JARC's peer review process is double blind; neither reviewers nor authors are identified to each other. Reviewers volunteer their time and expertise. Their expert, unbiased, critical assessment of an article can result in enhancements that lead to publication. Their judgment of scientific merit protects the integrity of the scientific and academic record and the reputation of the journals for articles of the highest quality. To do this, reviewers adhere to ethical policies and procedures that

- Identify any personal or professional conflicts of interest and recuse themselves appropriately from reviewing an article where such exist
- Provide written, unbiased, and timely feedback about the scholarly merit and scientific value of the work
- Ensure that readers will be able to judge the scientific merit of the study design and replicate the work if desired
- Ensure that the article contains appropriate citations of relevant work by other authors
- Maintain strict confidentiality about the article details, author, and any data throughout the review process
- Alert the editor to any ethical concerns about violation of norms for the treatment of human and animal subjects, similarities between the reviewed material and previously published material, study methodologies, statistical analyses, or any other issues that might lead to the compromise of the ethics and integrity of the journals

Engaged in the work of scientific inquiry themselves, the journal's reviewers recognize that material submitted to them for review is a privileged communication. Reviewers guard the confidentiality of the author's identity and work, conducting constructive reviews that document both positive and negative aspects of the work with respect for the author's intellectual independence. No reviewer shall use any content for any purpose not related to the peer review process.

AUTHORS

Authors drive the advancement of scientific and academic knowledge. To do this, articles submitted to the journal should pose and test a significant hypothesis or answer an important question relevant to the needs of children. Authors submitting articles to JARC are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards of scientific communication to protect the trust of the readers, the integrity of the scientific record, and the reputation of the journal. Authors are expected to take personal responsibility to educate themselves with regard to publishing standards. Authors should thoroughly read and understand the standards found on the web sites of at least one of the publishing ethics standards bodies: ICMJE, CSE or COPE. When in doubt of practices, contact the journal editors at the following e-mail address: jarc@childrenatrisk.org.

The journal editors wish to highlight certain principles below that if violated will result in an article being refused or retracted:

- **Conflicts of Interest**

Unbiased, independent, critical assessment is an essential component of the peer reviewed publication process. All parties involved in the process must disclose any commitments that could cause a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is any personal, professional or financial relationship that could result in a bias of judgment about an article. The ICJME has identified three major sources of

conflict of interest: individual authors' commitments; project funding or other financial support; and editors', journal staff', or reviewers' commitments. Anyone suspecting a conflict of interest on their own or another's part must disclose the conflict in writing to the journal editors for review. Funding sources and any roles of funders in research should be clearly described in the article. Additionally, the regulatory status of any drugs identified or described in articles must be disclosed in the article. After review of any other identified conflicts of interest, the journal editors may require a Notification of Conflict-of-Interest at the beginning of an article.

- **Confidentiality and Privacy**

Authors and Reviewers

The journal protects the confidentiality and privacy of both authors and reviewers. Manuscripts are the private property of authors and kept strictly confidential. The identity of authors and reviewers is confidential; each party remains anonymous to the other. Reviewers' identities are not revealed to any other party without their express written permission. Reviewers' comments are confidential, unsigned, and will never be published without the express written permission of the author, reviewer, and editor. Any communication between the author and the journal editors is also considered confidential and should not be disclosed by either party.

Patients and Study Participants

The journal protects the confidentiality and privacy of patients and study participants. All identifying information in articles should be anonymized or informed consent obtained from the individuals concerned. The journal requires that the author retain all informed consent copies and notify the journal in writing that informed consent has been obtained. The published article must include a statement that details the means of removing all identifying information or that informed consent has been obtained. The journal encourages authors to remove all nonessential details that could result in any violation of anonymity. Even with informed consent, only information that is essential for scientific purposes should be included in an article.

- **Protection of Humans and Animals During Research**

Humans

The journal requires that articles dealing with research using human subjects describe the institutional review board (IRB) process to approve the research or contain a statement that the research adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki and/or relevant NIH forms. Researchers must conduct studies using approved protocols and acceptable research standards and include a description of these in the article.

Journal editors may request a copy of the IRB determination letter or any relevant NIH forms during the manuscript review process.

Animals

When animals are used in research, the journal requires written confirmation that the research was approved by an institutional animal care and use committee. The article should contain a description of the research protocols and methods used along with the research standards set by the institutional or national guides for the care and use of laboratory animals.

- **Article Originality and Multiple Submissions**

By submitting an article to the journal, the author certifies that it is original and has never been previously published. Further, the author certifies that the article is not scheduled for publication in any other archival journal or book, printed or electronic. Additionally, the author stipulates that the material is not currently under review at any other journal, either printed or electronic. The author agrees that he or she will not submit the material to another electronic or print journal until the completion of the editorial decision process at the journal.

The publication of an article in a dissertation or working-paper series does not constitute prior publication. The reuse of research data, images, or other material created by the author may not constitute a violation of the policy against multiple submissions but must be disclosed to the editors in writing for review. Authors are responsible for obtaining and retaining written permission from all parties to reuse previously published or copyrighted material in an article submitted to the journal. All prior publications of research results in meeting presentations or in trial registries should be disclosed to the editors in writing. Additionally, authors should alert the editors if the article includes a subject which the author has written about in prior articles published in other journals, print or electronic. The journal editors may request a copy of such previously published materials for review.

Authors who publish an article that arises from National Institute of Health (NIH) funding are responsible for uploading the final peer-reviewed manuscript to the PubMed Central archive upon acceptance for publication in the journal and once the final copy-edited version of the article is approved. Submission to PubMed Central does not constitute a multiple submission.

- **Authorship**

As the number of investigators and contributors of all sorts involved in any given scientific inquiry increase, who should be included as an author is sometimes difficult to determine. The journal adheres to the ICJME definition of authorship.

To be listed as an author in a submitted article, an individual must meet all of the three ICJME conditions listed:

- Substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content
- Final approval of the version to be published

Any other contributor that does not meet all three authorship criteria should be listed in the acknowledgement section of the article. In cases of many multiple authors, the journal editors may require that one author be designated by the group in writing as the “guarantor” or the person that takes responsibility for the integrity of the article from inception to publishing. The journal editors take no responsibility for any authorship decisions. The journal editors will not arbitrate or participate in any disputes about authorship.

The journal does not recognize guest authors, authors included solely to increase the chance of an article’s publication, as authors. Similarly, honorary and gift authors, who have only a remote affiliation with a study (e.g.: heads of departments) are discouraged. The journal considers ghost authors, such as undisclosed contributors from pharmaceutical or device companies, medical writers, marketing and public relations writers, and junior staff writing for elected or appointed officials, to be unethical. All contributors should be disclosed in an article either as an author or in the acknowledgments section. Articles listing anonymous authors will not be accepted. Pseudonyms cannot be used for the journal’s articles.

Should an author become deceased or incapacitated prior or during the publication process, co-authors must obtain disclosure and copyright documentation from a familial or legal proxy.

- **Research misconduct**

The journal adheres to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services-The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) definition of research misconduct. Any evidence of research misconduct in submitted articles will result in the article being refused for publication and may result in notification to the author’s institution.

The ORI defines research misconduct as “fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results” and states that “research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.” The ORI defines the three types of research misconduct as

- Fabrication: making up data or results and recording and reporting them

- Falsification: manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record
- Plagiarism: appropriating another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit

Article Corrections and Retractions

The journal editors are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the scientific record as well as the journal’s reputation. Corrections to published articles resulting from honest error will be prominently published as soon as the error is identified. Once an error in the research or the article is discovered, the author is responsible for notifying the editors immediately and providing a written correction to the article.

At the sole discretion of the journal editors, an article may be retracted if the identified errors significantly compromise the article’s purpose. Articles will be retracted immediately upon identification of research misconduct.

- **Clinical Trials**

In concert with the ICJME, the journal editors support the effort to foster a comprehensive, publicly available database of clinical trials. The ICJME defines a clinical trial as “any research project that prospectively assigns human subjects to intervention or concurrent comparison or control groups to study the cause-and-effect relationship between a medical intervention and a health outcome.” As a condition of publication in the journal, all clinical trials should be registered in a public trials registry. Several acceptable registries are provided below. Trial registration with missing or uninformative information in the minimum data elements is inadequate even if the registration is in an acceptable registry.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration Act of 2007 (FDAAA) also requires researchers to register trial results. Adhering to ICJME practice, the journal editors will not consider the registration of results as prior publication so long as both the trial and the results are registered in the same registry and the results are posted in the tabular form dictated by the FDAAA.

Articles should include the trial registration number at the end of the abstract. Additionally, authors should list the trial registration number with a trial acronym the first time that it is used in the article for either the trial they are reporting or to other trials mentioned in the article.

Acceptable Clinical Trial Registries (ICJME)

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www.ISRCTN.org

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www.trialregister.nl

<https://eudract.ema.europa.eu/>

Any primary registries participating in the WHO International Clinical Trials Portal (see <http://www.who.int/ictrp/network/primary/en/index.html>) Because for profit entities manage some associate registries, the journal requires registration in a WHO primary registry.