Contributions for the journal should be sent to the Chief Editor or the appropriate section editor listed above. See the Instructions to Authors on EASE's website (www.ease.org.uk).
The journal is published in February, May, August and November, free to paid-up members of EASE and available on annual subscription of £65 to libraries and other non-members.

ISSN 0258-3127

Printed by Qwerty Ltd, The Markham Centre, Theale RG7 4PE

From the Editors' Desks

Losing weight without losing substance

The observant among you will have noticed that this issue of *ESE* is lighter than its predecessors. We have reduced the weight of the internal pages to save cost – both on printing and on distribution. We hope that you all appreciate this move and that there is no reduction in quality.

In general, we are still looking at ways to control the EASE budget. We will hold only a single Council meeting next year, conducting the rest of our business by email and teleconference. We are also reducing the number of days we employ a Secretary: our affairs are now in good order thanks to the hard work of Sheila Evered and Samantha Jeffrey and we believe that we can manage with two days support per week. You can help by renewing your membership promptly!

Members' discount

See p 116 for details of how to get a substantial discount on the iThenticate software that powers Crosscheck.

AGM

The 2011 Annual General Meeting will be held in Barcelona next summer (exact date to be announced in the February issue of *ESE*); it will include a workshop.

Comings and goings

We welcome two new members to the publications committee: Anna Maria Rossi (see p 116) will be working on the ESE Blog and Editor's Bookshelf section, and Silvia Maina is our new website co-ordinator. But we are losing Paola De Castro, who has co-ordinated the Bookshelf section; see p 117 to read about her life as an editor.

Can you believe it?

The Membership Secretary received an online membership application in the form of an online payment earlier this year only to be informed three months later that someone had used this person's credit card fraudulently and could she please be removed from the membership! Doesn't that just reflect the desirability of EASE membership!

Contributions for next issue

The copy date for the February issue is 15 December. Please send your contributions to the relevant editor by then.

EASE Council 2009–2012

President: Joan Marsh, Wiley-Blackwell, International House, 7 High Street, Ealing Broadway, London W5 5DB, UK; jmarsh@wiley.com
Vice-Presidents: Alison Clayson, France; Reme Melero, Spain
Members: Eva Baranyiová, Czech Republic; Mare-Anne Laane, Estonia; Ana Marušić, Croatia; Petter Oscarson, Sweden; Edward Towpik, Poland; Sylwia Ufnalska, Poland; Moira Johnson, UK (*ex officio*)
Past-President: Arjan K S Polderman, The Netherlands
Treasurer and Company Secretary: Roderick Hunt, UK
Secretary: Samantha Jeffery; +44 (0)800 098 8853; secretary@ease.org.uk
Membership Secretary: Sheila Evered, EASE, PO Box 6159, Reading RG19 9DE, UK; tel +44 (0)118 970 0322; membership@ease.org.uk

EASE website: www.ease.org.uk

Correspondence about EASE should go to the Secretary; correspondence about membership, journal subscriptions, and sales of the Handbook should go to the Membership Secretary.

Articles

Readers prefer structured abstracts to end with the conclusions

James Hartley
School of Psychology, Keele University; j.hartley@psy.keele.ac.uk
Lucy R Betts
Division of Psychology, Nottingham Trent University; lucy.betts@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

Background: Although structured abstracts typically have prespecified formats, it has been suggested that they would have greater impact if the "conclusions" were placed first rather than last.

Aim: To examine writers' preferences for abstracts presented with the conclusions first (before the title) or in the traditional order.

Method: Academic authors were asked to compare two abstracts, one in each format, to express a preference, and to rate both of them out of 10 for clarity. Six abstracts from medical journal articles were used.

Results: Data from 36 respondents are reported. Twenty-eight preferred abstracts set in the traditional manner ($p<0.001$). The median score for clarity was 8 for traditional abstracts and 6 for those with the conclusions first ($p<0.005$).

Conclusion: Among this group of authors there was little support for presenting the conclusions first in structured abstracts.

Introduction

Readers of this article will have noted that the abstract is set in a "structured" manner. In such abstracts, information is typically presented in separate paragraphs under the five subheadings shown – although there are variations. Structured abstracts typically provide more details and information than unstructured ones, their standard format aids search and retrieval, and they are generally preferred to unstructured abstracts.[1-5.]

Structured abstracts were introduced in medical journals in the mid-1980s. Since then, their use has grown phenomenally. Furthermore, they have appeared in journals in other disciplines and languages other than English.[1-5] All of the 50 or so management journals published by Emerald Group Publishing, for example, now contain structured abstracts.

Nonetheless, it has been suggested in *European Science Editing* that the presentation of structured abstracts might be changed. Shashok, writing to the EASE Forum, discussed the possible benefits of presenting the conclusions first as opposed to last in structured abstracts.[6] This idea was supported by some of her colleagues, and the argument was extended to the design of posters, with the suggestion that the conclusions should be "put up front" where they could be clearly seen.[7-11] Possibly the reasoning here is similar to that used in some medical journals, where the title presents the findings or the conclusions.[2]

In this study, we aimed to test this opinion about the format of structured abstracts with evidence. We asked a sample of scientific writers to compare structured abstracts with the conclusions presented first with ones set in the traditional manner. Indeed we went one step further: we prepared our structured abstracts with the conclusions first, above the title, instead of underneath the title and the names of the authors. In essence, we were continuing a tradition of making the content of scientific articles more journalistic and more accessible by putting the main findings up front.[12] Similar thinking is reflected in articles that highlight the main findings or implications of their studies in boxed asides.

Method

Six structured abstracts were adapted (with permission from their authors) from recently published articles. There were two each from three medical journals, namely the *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, the *British Journal of Health Psychology* and *Medical Education*. Two versions of each abstract were created: the original, slightly adapted for length and readability, and the revised version with the conclusions first, making 12 in all. The original abstracts were presented in the typical format, and the revised versions had the conclusions first, in italics, above the title in bold – see the example in the Appendix.

Respondents were invited to take part in the study by e-mail, to complete a consent form, and to compare two abstracts (a different one in each format) thus:

- participant 1 received the instructions followed by abstract A (in the traditional format) and abstract B (in the revised format) as shown in the appendix;
- participant 2 received the instructions followed by abstract A (revised format) and abstract B (traditional format);
- participant 3 received the instructions followed by abstract B (traditional format) and abstract A (revised format); and
- participant 4 received the instructions followed by abstract B (revised format) and abstract A (traditional format).

In the same way, participants 5-8 received abstracts C and D, and participants 9-12 abstracts E and F.

This series was run three times to enable us to have 36 participants in total, each of whom judged one abstract in the traditional format and one in the revised format, half in one order and half in the other.

The instructions asked each respondent to read and

to compare the two abstracts that followed and then, on the following page, to state which was preferred, to give each abstract a score out of 10 for clarity, and to write a brief sentence or two explaining their judgements. Respondents were asked for some demographic data, including estimates of their knowledge of research on abstracts.

This procedure allowed us to control for the content of the abstracts, and the order in which they were presented when we compared the results overall. We asked the participants to judge two different abstracts – one in each format – because previous studies have shown that presenting the same content twice in different layouts affects the judgements of the second version more than that of the first.[13]

Participants

A large number of participants was invited to take part in this study, comprising the authors of articles in the current issues of nine medical journals (including the three used in the study) and members of the Sigmetrics and the EASE Forum electronic mailing lists. The response rates to these invitations were low (we estimate about 5%) but we persevered until we had 36 participants.

Inspection of the demographic data showed that 19 of the respondents were social scientists, 15 were scientists, and two were from the arts; five were aged below 30, 17 between 31 and 50, and 14 over 50; 23 were men and 11 were women (with the sex of two unknown). Eighteen rated their experience of academia and their knowledge of research on abstracts as quite high, and nine each rated these aspects as medium or low. Twenty two said their first language was English, eight a language from another European country, and six a non-European language.

Results

Of the 36 respondents (three for each of the 12 abstracts), 28 (78%) preferred abstracts presented in the traditional manner and only eight (22%) for abstracts in which the conclusions preceded the title. This difference was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 11.11$, df =1, $p<0.001$).

The median rating for clarity was 8 (out of 10) for the structured abstracts in their traditional format and 6 for those in the novel format. Median scores of 8 and 6 are common in paired judgements of this kind and are partly an artefact of the method employed: people comparing any two things and rating each out of 10 on some feature are inclined to rate them 8 and 6.[13] Nonetheless, although the actual difference in ratings is small, it is statistically significant ($t = 154$, $z = 2.64$, $p<0.005$, Wilcoxon matched pairs test).

The participants expressed various views on the advantages and disadvantages of the two ways of presenting the abstracts, although some commented more on the quality of the abstracts than on the format, for example:

> The first abstract is probably the better of the two since it uses less technical language.

Some of the comments made about the two formats were:

> This format [conclusions first] might be more appropriate for applied research – as in the sample abstract. Practitioners especially might prefer to see the practical implications set apart from the methods used in the study.
>
> I like the way that the conclusions are up front and it makes it all very much easier to use…. My concern is that it could set up an unreflective frame whereby one is more likely to agree with the conclusion when it is set out up front – as a kind of "truth" rather than when it follows from the research.
>
> Two studies might have the same conclusion but they have very different weights if one comes from a multi-centre randomized controlled trial, but the other study is merely a small retrospective case series. By putting the conclusion first, the reader does not yet have any basis for knowing how much stock to put in it.
>
> The problem with presenting the conclusion first is that when it is seen as separate from the substantiating information, there's too much of a disconnection between the conclusion and the rest of the information in the abstract. I had to go backwards to read the text above the title which felt awkward – but of course this has to do with the way you are used to reading abstracts.
>
> I guess I am just a bit of a traditionalist. I preferred the standard format, and found that having the findings up front broke the flow and narrative of the abstract.
>
> Placing the conclusions before the title strikes me as a distraction, and doing so has the potential that readers might overlook them altogether.
>
> Reading the conclusion first felt odd.
>
> If someone really wants to read the conclusions first, there is nothing stopping them from skipping ahead to it.
>
> It's just wrong. The conclusion belongs at the end. Plain and simple.

Discussion

The results of this study are clear. Most of the respondents preferred the conclusions of a study to be placed at the end of the abstract, rather than before the title of the article. Before accepting this as a valid conclusion, however, we must consider the limitations of this study. The response rate was low, a small number of abstracts was studied, the abstracts came from medical journals, and the respondents were asked to compare familiar formats with unfamiliar ones, with no experience of the latter.

The response rate may have been low because many of those invited were not interested in research on medical abstracts, or because the Keele University ethics committee required that they be asked to complete and return a consent form *before* receiving the texts for judgement.

We used the abstracts of recent medical articles because structured abstracts are most common in medical journals. We thought that putting the findings up front might

appeal to busy readers interested in practical issues. It is possible, of course, that the medical texts might have been hard to read for participants who were not native speakers of English.[14–15] In fact, five of the 14 whose first language was not English preferred the new layout for a structured abstract, while this was the case for only 2 of 22 whose first language was English (χ^2 =2.36, df =1, not significant).

The participants who favoured the traditional arrangement of structured abstracts gave three main reasons for their preference. The first was a dislike of change and a preference for the status quo. Indeed one respondent commented that readers did not like change and another, a journal editor, reported that he did not notice the conclusions when they were placed above the abstract, saying later, "I think as an editor, I skipped straight to the title". Other respondents made similar remarks once the final results had been communicated to them. It is likely, of course, that had the participants been more familiar with the new layout – finding it, for example, in every structured abstract in particular journals – then this limitation would be reduced.

The second main reason given for preferring the traditional structure was a more conceptual one. These participants thought that the proposed format (conclusions first) could distort a reader's appraisal of a paper. They felt it was not possible to judge the validity of a conclusion before reading the method and results.

The third main reason given for preferring the traditional structure was a logical one. Several participants considered that it was illogical to start a text with the conclusions.

Whatever their reasons, almost 80% of the participants in this study preferred the traditional structured abstracts to versions with the conclusions presented first.

We thank our colleagues and referees for their helpful contributions to this paper.

References

1 Hartley J. Current findings from research on structured abstracts. *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 2004;92(3):368–371.
2 Hartley J. *Academic writing and publishing: a practical handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2008.
3 Hartley J, Betts, LR. Common weaknesses in traditional abstracts in the social sciences. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 2010;60(10):2010–2018.
4 Hartley J, Sydes M, Blurton A. Obtaining information accurately and quickly: Are structured abstracts more efficient? *Journal of Information Science* 1996;22(5):349–356.
5 Nakayama T, Hira N, Yamazaki S, Naito M. Adoption of structured abstracts by general medical journals and format for a structured abstract. *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 2005;93(2):237–242.
6 Langdon-Neuner E. EASE-Forum digest. *European Science Editing* 2009;35(2):49–51.
7 Alexander D, Burrough J, Lees D, Verpoorte R. On turning posters upside down. *European Science Editing* 2010;36(1):17.
8 Johnson M. There are times when the bottom line should be the top line. *European Science Editing* 2009;35(4):108.
9 Norris C. Let's turn posters upside down. *European Science Editing* 2009;35(3):75–76.
10 Norris C. Who can resist the logic? *European Science Editing* 2010;36(1):18.
11 Svensson L. The "2 minute, 2 metre" rule, and another recruit. *European Science Editing* 2010;36(1):17.
12 Berkenkotter C, Huckin TN. *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1995.
13 Hartley J, Ganier F. Which do you prefer? Some observations on preference measures in studies of structured abstracts. *European Science Editing* 2000;26(1):4–7.
14 Cantillon P, McLeod P, Razack S, Snell L, Steinert W. Lost in translation: the challenges of global communication in medical education publishing. *Medical Education* 2009;43(7):615–620.
15 Salager-Meyer F. Textual familiarity, structured abstracts, and reading performance. *European Science Editing* 2010;36(1):18.

Appendix

An abstract with the conclusions first (adapted from and reproduced with permission of the authors and the *British Journal of Health Psychology*, copyright The British Psychological Society.)

The findings provide partial support for using 'natural frequencies' rather than verbal descriptions or percentages when presenting information about side-effects to patients.

A study of the use of natural frequencies, percentages and verbal descriptors to convey information about side-effects to patients

P Knapp, PH Gardner, N Carrigan, DK Raynor, E Woolf

Objectives. Research into the provision of patient information has demonstrated that, under certain conditions, patients overestimate the risks of medicine side-effects. Gigerenzer and Edwards (2004) argue that 'natural frequencies' are a less confusing way of expressing risk information.

Design. Participants were randomly allocated to one of three conditions for representing risk information–a form of natural frequency (e.g., 'about 75 people in a hundred'), percentages (e.g., '75%'), and verbal descriptors (e.g., 'fairly common').

Method. In Experiment One 137 participants, recruited from users of the Cancer Research UK patient information website, were asked to estimate the risks of three side-effects occurring if they took the painkiller *Ibuprofen*. In Experiment Two 148 participants were similarly asked to estimate the risks of two side-effects occurring if they took the chemotherapy drug *Taxol*.

Results. In both experiments the verbal descriptions led to significantly higher estimations of risk compared to the other two formats. There was some evidence that people given information as frequencies were more accurate in their estimations than those given information in percentages.

Essays in Editing

Toward a common standard for conflict of interest disclosure policies for scientific and medical journals

Thomas F Babor
Professor and Chairman, Department of Community Medicine, University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Farmington, Connecticut, USA; Babor@nso.uchc.edu

Conflicts of interest in science and medicine have come under increasing scrutiny in recent years. Failures to disclose conflicts of interest have become and a major embarrassment to publishers, editors, and professional societies, especially after the news media have identified lapses in oversight that have compromised patient safety or scientific integrity.[1] The positive association between conflicts of interest and the outcomes of research has been documented in a substantial body of research covering a variety of fields.[2] Virtually all of this research has focused on financial conflicts of interest, in part because these are easier to report and to document.

With increasing concerns expressed by the scientific community, health and welfare advocates, government officials, and the general public, several organizations and self-appointed groups have developed blanket prohibitions, ethical analysis procedures, disclosure guidelines, and reporting procedures to deal with conflicts of interest and related issues.

In some cases universities have decided to prohibit all contacts with particular industries. For instance, the Stockholm University administration decided in January 2003 that no research supported by tobacco money should take place at the university because it was not considered to be in accordance with the overall goals of the university. The prohibition was also implemented to prevent the industry funding agency from using the name of the university to gain legitimacy in society at large. Because blanket prohibitions are difficult to implement, a less extreme approach has been to specify "conflict management" through research regulation or oversight by a neutral, third-party or organization.[2]

Another way of addressing conflicts of interest and other ethical problems that arise in relationships between science and industry is to conduct a systematic analysis of "moral jeopardy".[3] This refers to a method of assessing the individual and social risks associated with accepting funding from "dangerous consumption industries" such as corporations that produce alcohol, tobacco, and other harmful commodities. Three kinds of risk are considered:

- Reputational risks, which refers to the negative perceptions of relevant stakeholders regarding the decision to accept such funding;
- Governance risks, where industry funding affects an organization's capacity to make choices about their future, as when such funds are viewed as increasingly necessary to an individual's or organization's survival;
- Relationship risk, which is the potential damage done to an individual's or organization's working relationships over disagreements about industry funding.

Although this consciousness-raising approach is laudable, it relies on individual initiative and applies mainly to financial conflicts associated with industry funding.

Ethical guidelines

The third and most popular approach to conflict of interest is the development of ethical guidelines. These pronouncements provide a logical basis for identifying and managing conflict of interest situations. For example, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has issued a call to the scientific community to adopt more consistent policies and practices for disclosing and managing financial relationships between academia and industry in biomedical research.[4] Representatives from 21 scientific societies participated in developing the FASEB Toolkit and expressed support for a set of guidelines that they could use to better manage financial relationships between academia and industry. The guidelines speak specifically to journal editors responsible for disclosure policies for authors, and scientific and professional societies that have a role in promoting professional ethics.

Another example of an ethical guideline is the code of conduct proposed by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).[5] The code states that the readers of scientific and medical journals should be informed about the sources of funding for all research reported in a journal and the role of the funders in the publication. Regarding conflicts of interest, COPE recommends that

1) submission policies for journal staff "receive an objective and unbiased evaluation" ;
2) reviewers be required to disclose potential competing interests;
3) authors disclose relevant competing interests;
4) journals have policies to handle the competing interests of its editorial staff and members of editorial boards.

In the addiction research field, the Farmington Consensus is an ethical guideline adopted by the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors.[6] It states that all sources of funding and possible conflicts of interest should be declared when a scientific manuscript is submitted for editorial review. The consensus statement also requires that journal editors declare any associations with the alcohol, tobacco, and pharmaceutical industries.

To the extent that these kinds of ethical pronouncements are designed primarily to serve as a useful guide to action, journal editors have begun to translate recommendations into more specific disclosure policies and reporting procedures. Typical disclosure policies require authors to report sources of research funding and financial arrangements that may constitute a real, potential, or apparent conflict of interest. These policies are often translated into procedures requiring signed declarations of conflicts of interest to be submitted with each journal article prior to review, and the inclusion of relevant information on conflicts if the article is published.

How extensive are disclosure policies in scientific and medical journals?

Many scientific and medical journals seem to have adopted some form of disclosure policy, and many others require authors, reviewers, and editorial staff to declare conflicts of interest. Nevertheless, there are sharply diverging views about what kinds of conflicts should be reported, who should report them (authors, editors, reviewers, editorial board members), which types of communication they apply to (research articles, review papers, editorials, letters, books, book reviews, etc), and how the information should be organized so that the consumer of a scientific communication receives the kind of information needed to evaluate the quality of the science.[2,7] Moreover, the extent to which ethical guidelines regarding conflict of interest that are endorsed by journals are actually applied in routine publication practices has received little documentation.

Building on the survey conducted by the Center for American Progress, the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors commissioned an email survey of its member journals to evaluate the field's compliance with the Farmington Consensus[6] and COPE guidelines.[5] Of the 45 member journals that were asked to participate, 28 responded for an overall response rate of 62%. English-language journals had a higher response rate (81%, 25/31) than journals published in other languages (57%, 8/14). Although the response rate is not optimal, the sample includes a wide range of journals, most of which are listed in the major indexing and abstracting services.

Regarding conflict of interest policies for authors, 71% (20/28) of the journals reported having a policy. Of these, 54% (15/28) said the policy addresses financial interests and 50% (14/28) said the policy includes a definition of conflict of interest. Sixty eight percent (19/28) had a policy asking authors to describe the amounts given by the funding source or the nature of the in-kind contribution, and 25% (7/28) had a policy asking authors to describe funding received from third party organizations that are in turn funded in whole or in part by the alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceutical, and gambling industries. Only two journals had a policy requesting authors to describe the role of the funding source in the work to be published, and two of the journals questioned authors about their freedom to access data or materials under the control of the funding source.

The survey also asked questions about the journal's policies for editors, editorial staff, peer reviewers, and editorial board members. Of the reporting journals, 21% (6/28) had a conflict of interest policy for editors and editorial staff; two had a policy to ensure that submissions from members of the journal's staff or editorial board receive an objective and unbiased evaluation; 18% (5/28) had a policy for peer reviewers; and one reporting journal had a policy for editorial board members.

These results suggest that despite the general principles established by ISAJE, COPE, and FASEB, many journals in the addiction field still do not have adequate conflict of interest policies, and even more do not have specific procedures in place to implement these policies. Whereas most journals have policies for authors that cover financial interests, less than half are able to discriminate among organizations established by industry sources (alcohol, gambling, tobacco, pharmaceutical) to advance commercial interests without clearly acknowledging the role of a particular industry. Even more troubling, only a quarter of the reporting journals require information about the extent to which the funding source had an influence on the work to be published, such as controlling access to the data or freedom to publish.

The findings for editorial staff, peer reviewers, and editorial board members are also of concern. Most of the reporting journals had no reporting procedures governing submissions by editors and editorial staff, and only a few had declaration procedures for peer reviewers and editorial board members. In general, the findings of this audit suggest the need for greater attention to the implementation of journal disclosure policies and procedures in addiction specialty journals.

The common standard

To address the need for a more consistent set of disclosure policies, the Center for American Progress, a non-profit organization engaged in public policy research and advocacy, sponsored a meeting on disclosure of conflicts of interest in June, 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to establish a consensus within a large group of editors, publishers, bioethicists, and other academics regarding how best to define, report, and disclose conflicts of interest in the scientific literature. Following the meeting, a "common standard" was drafted by a group of collaborating authors to stimulate discussion and to provide guidance to authors, editors and peer reviewers in reporting real, apparent and potential conflicts of interest.[7] The common standard was designed to address the following issues:

- What constitutes a disclosable conflict of interest?
- When is a financial conflict relevant?
- When should editors and peer reviewers exclude themselves from considering a submission?
- Should there be restrictions in who can carry out certain research tasks when reporting industry-funded studies?
- Should journals prohibit authors with conflicts of interest from writing reviews and editorials?
- Should there be penalties imposed for failure to disclose?

In its recommendations for authors, the common standard states that all articles, original research reports, editorials, comments, reviews, book reviews, and letters *submitted* to a journal should be accompanied by a disclosure statement, or a declaration by the authors that they have no conflicts of interest to declare. In addition, all articles that are *published* in the journal should be accompanied by a disclosure statement, or a statement that the authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. If the journal prints unsigned editorials, they should not be written by anyone with a conflict of interest.

To facilitate this policy, all authors should be required to privately disclose to the editors of the journal at the time of their submission all potential conflicts of interest. These include financial and non-financial interests and relationships, direct employment with a private sector entity, and service on private sector and non-profit boards and advisory panels, whether paid or unpaid. Authors should also disclose to editors any conflict of interest that may have influenced either the conduct or the presentation of research, including close relationships with those who might be helped or hurt by the publication, academic interests and rivalries, and any personal, religious, or political convictions relevant to the topic at hand.

Because authors may have strongly-held views about the article being submitted for publication, the common standard encourages them to consider disclosing (and editors may choose to print) any affiliations or expressions of these views that may be relevant. These may be personal, political, or intellectual and may include any expression of strongly held views relevant to the subject of the submission. Such disclosures may be original, or they make reference to opinions previously expressed in books or monographs, editorials or public comments, or to sworn testimony before or lobbying of legislators or legislative bodies. Disclosable non-financial conflicts of interest would also include membership or affiliation with non-governmental organizations that have an interest in the submission.

The common standard for editors encourages journals to require all senior editorial personnel (editors-in-chief, managing editors, full-time assistant editors) to avoid all financial relationships that might constitute a conflict of interest. As a general principle, there should be a "firewall" separating editorial decision-making from publishers, advertisers, and anyone connected with the business side of the journal's operations. Readers of the journal and authors who submit articles have the right to know that the choice of articles, reviewers, and editorial or commentary writers was made by senior editorial managers whose judgment was not influenced by financial or ideological bias. The same rules that govern authors' disclosures should govern editors' disclosures.

If a journal editor has a conflict of interest, it should be disclosed in each edition of the journal and be found easily in the online edition. Peer reviewers should follow the same rules as authors for disclosing COIs, even though this information does not appear in the publication.

Four difficult issues

Four difficult issues that the common standard attempts to deal with are ambiguous funding sources, the "look-back" period for financial declarations, setting monetary levels and non-financial competing interests.

Trade associations, social advocacy groups, and non-profit research foundations have proliferated in the USA and other countries.[8] They not only fund and conduct research, but may be involved in recruiting scientists to engage in advocacy for regulatory policies favourable to industry. Some of these groups receive grants from private firms, whereas others are entirely funded by industry. Yet the main purpose of these organizations and their industry affiliations is not readily apparent to the general public, scientists, and editors, especially when the organization's name implies a public interest theme. Typical examples include the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest, which receives funds from the pharmaceutical industry; the Foundation for Lung Cancer Detection, Prevention and Treatment, a non-profit affiliated with Weill Cornell Medical College and funded by Liggett & Myers, a tobacco firm; and the International Center for Alcohol Policies, funded by major alcohol producers. What level of industrial support qualifies one of these non-profits or advocacy groups as industry-funded? Is it clear to the scientists who receive funds from these organizations that their research is part of a larger strategic vision to portray an industry donor as a "good corporate citizen"? The common standard recommends that if such an organization receives more than 50% of its support from industry sources, it should be listed as a potential conflict of interest.

Another issue that must be addressed is how far back to look in determining conflicts of interest. Look-back periods range from one to five years. Given the long lead time between the onset of scientific work and publication, a three-year look back period is considered to be a reasonable minimum standard.

Some journals and organizations with disclosure policies also set dollar levels below which conflicts need not be declared. This is probably unwise for disclosures by authors to editors because this could hide potential conflicts that, while small, are still relevant. Even small gifts and payments can affect clinical and scientific decision-making.[9] Thus, the common standard states that in no case should a relevant conflict of interest remain undisclosed to readers.

Finally, there is the question of whether to report non-financial competing interests such as academic rivalries or political and religious beliefs. There is a general consensus that while they do exist and can influence research outcomes, they are hard to identify and difficult to describe for purposes of disclosure. Many researchers are unaware of their own biases or are unconcerned about their potential impact on research outcomes, believing that the scientific method will be self-correcting even though many experiments are too expensive, complicated, or narrowly conceived to be confirmed through the traditional safeguard of replicating results. Yet in recognizing that some effort is warranted to disclose non-financial conflicts as a source of potential bias, there is as yet no objective basis for establishing a standard.

The relationship between financial conflicts of interest and research results is well documented. Similar research about non-financial conflicts does not exist. Therefore, a voluntary approach to disclosure of relevant non-financial conflicts has been included in the model policy.

Dissemination of the common standard: a test case

The common standard was considered to be particularly relevant to addiction specialty journals because of the potential conflicts of interest associated with funding from the alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceutical, and gambling industries.[10] For this reason, it was thought that addiction journals would provide fertile ground for rapid dissemination and uptake, under the leadership of the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors, the field's editors' society. Following appropriate vetting of the common standard within the society's ethics committee, it was expected that member journals would adopt disclosure policies and reporting procedures that were consistent across journals.

Reports of the development of the common standard were made at the society's annual meeting in 2008, and the society's ethics committee was asked to conduct a survey of conflict of interest policies of the member journals (described above). One of the society's member journals, *Addiction*, agreed to publish the common standard along with an editorial and commentaries from a cross-section of editors and other experts. The editorial stated that the proposed standard is part of a broader trend toward the professionalization of the scientific publishing enterprise, and at the same time an attempt to deal with the growing influence of conflicts of interest in addiction science.[11] It announced that *Addiction* is studying the proposal closely to see whether and how far it would want to adopt its provisions, and at the same time supported its adoption by the society's member journals.

The commentaries to the common standard suggest the challenges involved in standardizing disclosure policies across a wide variety of independent journals and equally independent-minded editors.[12-15] Robert West, editor-in-chief of *Addiction*, noted that his journal is reviewing its disclosure policies to determine whether to bring them into greater compliance with the common standard.[12] But he also noted that "bias is endemic in research and is not always a bad thing", as in the case of hypotheses guiding the interpretation of research findings. Davies and Rotgers, editors of the journal *Addiction Theory and Research*, argued that the minimal standards adopted by most addiction journals are sufficient to provide the transparency needed by the scientific community, and that further requirements would be burdensome.[13] Moreover, they asserted that disclosure policies are part of a "moral crusade" designed to separate the good from the bad.

Isidore Obot, editor of the *African Journal of Alcohol and Drug Studies*, noted in his commentary that conflict of interest is not just a problem for the developed countries.[14] Low and middle income countries have become a major target of the multinational companies that market tobacco and alcohol, and addiction science is often seen as a commodity that can be purchased for the purposes of controlling the knowledge generated, influencing the policy process, and silencing potential expert opinion. According to him, a common standard may be merely a symptom of a larger trend in the "knowledge development" enterprise, one that suggests the need for a new emphasis on training in publication ethics. In the final commentary, Jennifer Sass explained why she believes our current conflict of interest policies are inadequate: the absence of thorough and consistent disclosure of financial conflicts can have real and significant consequences on people's health, independent of the quality of the science.[15]

In my capacity as associate editor-in-chief of *Addiction*, and a co-author of the common standard, I responded to the commentators on behalf of the authors.[16] I argued that disclosure is important to the addiction science field. There are growing threats not only to the integrity of the science, but also to the important agenda-setting function that has been traditionally set by government agencies, often in the public interest. With the growing involvement of alcohol producers and tobacco companies, as well as the pharmaceutical and the gambling industries, in addiction research, huge financial interests are being brought to bear on addiction scientists. I noted that the individual's moral culpability is not the most appropriate unit of analysis to focus on. It is often only at the system level that the more subtle but disturbing trends become apparent, when the cumulative effects of small amounts of bias seem to be manifested.[1,2] Far from a moral crusade, the record suggests that it would be immoral to ignore the way financial interests have corrupted the scientific enterprise.[8,10]

The modest recommendations proposed in the common standard are no more onerous than what many of the leading high impact journals already require. To the extent that simple disclosure policies and procedures can be incorporated across addiction journals, they will not only help to prevent problems, but will also discourage individuals with conflicts of interest from "journal shopping" to avoid disclosing them.

Subsequent to the publication of the common standard, the executive board of the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors decided to develop a model set of procedures that would resemble the uniform format for disclosure of competing interests published by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.[17] The extent to which this uniform format will be adopted by the individual member journals remains to be seen.

Raising the standard: lessons learned

The process of establishing the need for a common standard of disclosure of conflicts of interest, developing its components, and attempting to implement it in the context of a small journal editors society provides some important insights into how science journal editing responds to threats to scientific integrity. Although progress may appear to be slow, there is also evidence that these issues are being taken more seriously now than ever before. The following maxims summarize the lessons learned from our initial attempts to develop and disseminate the common standard.

1) *Things take longer than they take*. The process of building consensus, drafting policies and securing agreement from a diverse group of journal editors is difficult and time-consuming, even when working within the organizational structure of an established society of journal editors.

2) *A common standard for disclosure of conflicts of interest is perceived by many as unnecessary and onerous*. Many editors recognize the threat of conflicts of interest to the integrity of science, and support ethical guidelines on disclosure. A few consider such policies part of a "moral crusade". Most consider disclosure procedures onerous. These differences of opinion about the nature of the problem and what to do about it can prolong debate, limit consensus, and prevent concerted action.

3) *Disclosure of conflicts of interest other than financial may be equally important but infinitely more difficult to implement*. But non-financial disclosures should be emphasized nevertheless for their educational and symbolic value.

4) *Verification and enforcement of the common standard may be difficult*. Disclosure relies on the honour system. Editors do not have the time, resources, or inclination to serve as financial or ideological arbiters. Even if implemented, it is likely that disclosure policies will not have universal compliance due to a lack of understanding about the rules for disclosure, and deceit.

5) *Procedures may be more important than policies*. Almost all journal editors subscribe to ethical guidelines, but many do not develop meaningful procedures to apply them consistently in the daily routine of processing manuscripts and managing a journal. In addition to the common standard, what may be needed is a common set of reporting procedures that collect the data needed for the relevant consumers of scientific information and present it in a way that suits their "need to know".

6) *Endorsement of a common standard for disclosure is only the first step in the development of an effective set of policies on conflicts of interest for a particular field of science.* Each field may require fine tuning of disclosure policies to address the particular threats to the research integrity of that field.

7) *Disclosure may not be sufficient to prevent all cases of bias – other measures may be necessary*. In addition to common disclosure policies, blanket prohibitions, conflict management, and ethical analysis exercises may help to change the norms of scientific research and publication. Science is a social enterprise. The solution to the problem of bias in scientific research lies perhaps as much in the norm-setting process of recognizing that competing interests have consequences as in the specific measures taken to detect or prevent them. The symbolic and educational value of ethical standards should not be underestimated.

References

1 Krimsky S. *Science in the private interest: has the lure of profits corrupted biomedical research?* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

2 Resnik, DB. *The price of truth: how money affects the norms of science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2007.

3 Adams PJ. Assessing whether to receive funding support from tobacco, alcohol, gambling and other dangerous consumption industries. *Addiction* 2007;102(7):1027-1033.

4 FASEB (Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology) Toolkit. [2007.] http://www.faseb.org/coi/Home.aspx.

5 Committee on Publication Ethics. COPE Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors. http://publicationethics.org/files/u2/Best_Practice.pdf (accessed 14 September 2009).

6 The Farmington Consensus. *Addiction* 1997;92(12):1617-1618.

7 Goozner M, Caplan A, Moreno J, Kramer BS, Babor TF, Husser WC. A common standard for conflict of interest disclosure in addiction journals. *Addiction* 2009;11:1779-1784.

8 Jahiel R, Babor TF. Industrial epidemics, public health advocacy and the alcohol industry: lessons from other fields. *Addiction* 2007;102:1335-39.

9 Brennan TA, Rothman DJ, Blank L, Blumenthal D, Chimonas SC, Cohen JJ, et al. (2006). Health industry practices that create conflicts of interest: a policy proposal for academic medical centers. *JAMA* 2006;295(4);429-433.

10 Miller P, Babor TF, McGovern T, Obot I, Bühringer G. Relationships with the alcoholic beverage industry, pharmaceutical companies and other funding agencies: holy grail or poisoned chalice? In: Babor TF, Stenius K, Savva S, O'Reilly J, eds. *Publishing Addiction Science: A Guide for the perplexed*. London: International Society of Addiction Journal Editors, 2008.

11 Babor TF. Towards a common standard for conflict of interest disclosure. *Addiction* 2009; 104:1777-1778.

12 West R. Conflict of interest declarations: could a 'traffic light' system work? *Addiction* 2009;104:1779-1780.

13 Davies JB, Rotgers F. Disclosure in the best interests of science? or moral crusade? *Addiction* 2009;104:1781-1783.

14 Obot I. Disclosing conflicts of interest: common standards in uncommon contexts. *Addiction* 2009;104:1784-1786.

15 Sass J. Supporting the need for rigorous enforceable disclosure policies for scientific journals. *Addiction* 2009;104: 1787-1789.

16 Babor TF. Raising the standard: a response to the commentators. *Addiction* 2009;104:1789-1791.

17 Drazen JM, Van Der Weyden MB, Salmi P, Rosenberg J, Marusic A, Laine C, et al. Uniform format for disclosure of competing interests in ICMJE Journals. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2009;152:125-126.

Correction

In the table on p 63 of "Handling plagiarism at the editor's desk" by Mary Ellen Kerans and Marije de Jager in the August issue (*European Science Editing* 2010;36(3):62-66), the penultimate sentence should read:

However, we have found paragraphs or chapters that are uncharacteristically easy to back-translate to English because the progression of ideas in the translated text is identical to that of an existing text in English [not "in another language"].

Editing around the World

Medical journal editors' association in the Western Pacific Region

Jeong-Wook Seo

Editor-in-chief, Basic and Applied Pathology; Secretary General, Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors (APAME); Director, Seoul National University Medical Library; Professor and Chairman, Dept. Pathology, Seoul National University College of Medicine, Korea; jwseo@snu.ac.kr

Editors of medical journals published in the Asia Pacific region established the Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors (APAME) on 5 May 2008.[1,2] This organization aims to discuss roles of editors and peer reviewers, and ways to improve the quality and visibility of journals in the region. One practical aim was to facilitate the construction of a regional medical index, Western Pacific Region Index Medicus (WPRIM) of the Western Pacific Region of the World Health Organization (WHO).[3,4] Moreover, editors would like to use this organization to promote inter-society and international exchange by supplying more opportunities for congresses, workshops, and cyber communication . We consider this establishment of APAME as new momentum for access to health information in this region and as a means of broadening the coverage of information resources and library services.[1,5,6]

History of APAME

The Asia Pacific Science Editors Association (APSEA) was established in October 1995 in Singapore, and a general assembly and workshop of APSEA was attended by 80 editors in 1996. However, no recent information on the association is available on line.

APAME is a regional extension of national associations of medical editors. The Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors (KAMJE) started in February 1996.[7] Activities of KAMJE are surveying and evaluating medical journals, education concerning writing of medical papers and their evaluation, and development of a database, KoreaMed, and the related citation data services KOMCI and full text service KoreaMed Synapse.[7-9] The Chinese association of journal editors has also been very active, and editors from medical journal are key members.[10] Editors of the *Singapore Medical Journal* and the Malaysian Medical Association have organized a series of educational workshops on medical writing and publishing since July 2008, and three programmes have been recently sponsored in part by APAME.[11] Associations of medical journal editors are formed or being formed in Japan, Mongolia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

It may be necessary to describe the history of the Global Health Library (GHL)[12] and Western Pacific Region Index Medicus (WPRIM) before we describe the history of APAME. The GHL was conceptualized by the World Health Organization (WHO) Library & Information Networks for Knowledge (LNK/HQ) to "extend to all the people the benefits of the knowledge that is essential to the fullest attainment of health". One of the contents of the Global Health Library is Global Index Medicus (GIM), which currently hosts the regional indexes produced by the WHO Regional Offices in Africa, the Americas, the Eastern Mediterranean, and South-East Asia. WHO's Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) would like to create its own regional index medicus to be deployed alongside the other regional medical indexes in the Global Index Medicus portal as part of WPRO`s contribution to the Global Health Library.[4] In May 2005, the Regional Workshop of National Focal Point Librarians on the Global Health Library was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and one of its objectives was "to identify the activities required to produce a regional index medicus and the necessary steps to produce a regional union list of medical periodicals".[13] The workshop recommended that the scope or coverage and selection of the journals to be indexed for the regional medical index that was subsequently called the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus.

In January 2006, Jeong-Wook Seo and Charles P Raby had one month of intensive study in Manila to develop a work plan for the regional Index Medicus and the regional association of medical editors. In December 2006, at the meeting in Beijing of the Western Pacific Regional Office of WHO in collaboration with China to discuss the development the WPRIM and the GHL, participants recommended that associations of medical journal editors be established in countries where they do not exist to actively improve the quality of journal publishing.[14]

At the Second Meeting of the WPRIM, held in Seoul in November 2007, Im Jung-Gi, president-elect of KAMJE, proposed the establishment of a regional association of medical journal editors. Participants of the meeting agreed on the name of the association as the Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors.[3] The founding members of APAME are representatives from national associations of medical journal editors: Im Jung-Gi, Cho Soo-Hun, and Jeong-Wook Seo from the Republic of Korea; Dai Tao and Wang De from China; Kiyoshi Kitamura, Kiichiro Tsutani, and Takahiro Kiuchi from Japan; John T Arokiasamy from Malaysia; Jose Ma C Avila from the Philippines; and Charles P Raby from the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific.

The inaugural meeting of APAME was held in Seoul, Korea, in May 2008. Members included individual editors, editors' societies, and those working on scientific communication from 11 countries: Australia, China, Fiji, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam. Officers from the WHO participated as an advisor and a coordinator. Chang-Kok Hahm (Korea) and John T Arokiasamy (Malaysia) were

elected as the president and the vice-president and Jeong-Wook Seo became secretary general. Chang-Kok Hahm, Wifred CG Peh and Jose Ma C Avila were nominated as chairpersons of the planning and finance, education and information technology, and editorial policy and ethics committees.

Mission and objectives of APAME

The Western Pacific Region of WHO consists of 37 member countries and it is estimated that there are more than 3000 journal titles, a far larger number than in any other region of WHO. The economic and social statuses of the 37 member states are very different, so APAME needs to be broad and flexible. Educational activities are very important, and exchanges of human resources are major tools for better editorial conditions. One of our priority objectives is to make the WPRIM as successful as possible as soon as possible so that health information becomes more accessible in the near future. We consider access to health information for us and for other health professionals as the most important measure of our success.

The mission of APAME is to contribute to the improvement of health in the Asia Pacific Region by ensuring the quality and dissemination of health-related information published in medical journals, to be used for the purposes of better decision-making and effective delivery of health services.[1] The objectives are:

- To encourage collaboration and facilitate communication among medical journal editors in the region and globally;
- To improve editorial standards and promote professionalism in medical editing through education, self-criticism, and self-governance;
- To promote research in peer-review and medical editing;
- To foster continuing education of medical journal editors, reviewers, and authors.

Journal publication in member countries of the Western Pacific Region of WHO

To estimate potential size of membership it is useful to study the number of health journals in this region. Considering that journal articles are accessed through search engines and indexes, we surveyed the numbers of health journals included in the major listing services. Medline listed 391, (Pubmed 1266), ISI 413, Scopus 982, and Ulrich 2397 journal titles from 37 member states of the Western Pacific Region of WHO (table). The number listed is far fewer than the actual number of journals as there are many new and developing journals waiting to be included in these services.

Number of scholarly journals on health and medicine from member states of Western Pacific Region of WHO in 2009

Country	Medline	JCR	Scopus	Ulrich
Japan	162	170	395	991
China (Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan)	100	76	259	858
Australia	70	67	162	310
New Zealand	27	22	57	115
Korea, Republic of	19	38	59	51
Singapore	9	37	23	44
Philippines	0	2	11	9
Others	1	0	2	7
Total	391	413	982	2397

Western Pacific Region Index Medicus (WPRIM)

The WPRIM has several features different from indexes from other areas. The journal selection criteria, established in 2007, are:[15]

- A journal must be peer-reviewed, either internally or externally;
- It must be published regularly, at least two issues per year. Initially, if the journal has only one issue per year, it will be accepted. However, it will be advised to increase its frequency to two issues in the next year;
- The quality of instructions to authors should be reviewed and accepted by the national WPRIM board or committee;
- Journals should cover health and biomedical issues;
- Only journals with English abstracts will be included.

The first Regional Journal Selection Committee was convened in Beijing in November 2007. The results of journal selection were: China, 64 titles; Japan, 2; Mongolia, 2; the Philippines, 13; and the Republic of Korea, 131.

In May 2010 the WPRIM Platform was officially launched at the Institute of Medical Information, Chinese Academy of Medical Science (IMI CAMS) in Beijing. This meeting was attended by officers of IMI CAMS (directed by Dai Tao), WHO (Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Charles P Raby, Michael O'Leary) as well as leaders of the Chinese Medical Association (Liu Depei, Yuan Haibo), editors of Chinese medical journals, medical libraries and members of APAME. Representatives from APAME included Chang-Kok Hahm (Korea), John T Arokiasamy (Malaysia), Jeong-Wook Seo (Korea), Kiichiro Tsutani (Japan), Pagbajabyn Nymadawa (Mongolia), and Dong Gong Thach (Vietnam).

A total of 416 journals were approved to be listed in the WPRIM, but initially 199,086 articles were uploaded from 371 journals. Numbers of journals in 2010 are: 201 (China), 158 (Korea), 16 (Philippines), 12 (Malaysia), 4 (Japan), 4 (Singapore), and 1 (Papua New Guinea). Twelve Vietnamese journals and seven Mongolian journals are selected but actual data are not yet uploaded.

Most of articles from WPRIM journals are in the local language, but the abstracts are in English. Document delivery and translation services are a necessary contribution by libraries.

The WPRIM platform was designed and constructed by IMI CAMS, with a significant contribution from the Korean team. The basic features are similar to PubMed, and search functions and statistics are added. Operation and maintenance are financially supported by IMI CAMS. The WPRO of WHO and KAMJE contribute other costs.

APAME/WPRIM meetings in 2010/2011

The third Joint Meeting of APAME and WPRIM and APAME forum on medical journal publishing will take place in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 3-5 November 2010. The WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific is co-organizing the meeting and forum with the Central Health Information and Technology Institute. This meeting will include policy making and educational activities. Activities of editors such as training and capacity building for pre-publication and post-publication stages of journals will be discussed.

An international conference of APAME is planned in Seoul on 28-30 August 2011, in conjunction with the Fourth Asia Pacific Evidence Based Medicine Network Conference (APEMBNC) and the Eighth Guidelines International Network (G-I-N) meeting.[16-18] Exchange of ideas and information, plans and projects, and policies on scholarly journal editing, publishing, and writing are expected as lectures, free papers, symposia, and workshops.

Conclusion

APAME is currently an association of editors from member states of the Western Pacific Region of WHO, including Korea, China and Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Mongolia, Cambodia, Laos, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Brunei Darussalam. This organization is in close collaboration with the WPRIM programme of WHO. It will play the role of leader among the scientific community as well as facilitators of production, publication, circulation, and use of scientific information. APAME aims to discuss the role of editors, peer review, and ways to improve the quality and visibility of journals in the region, and eventually it will contribute to the improvement of health in the Asia Pacific Region.

References

1 APAME. Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors. 2008. [cited 26 August 2010]. Available from: http://www.apame.info/ [accessed 26 August 2010].

2 WHO-Western Pacific Region. First meeting of the Asia Pacific Association of Medical Journal Editors. Seoul, Korea: 4-5 May, 2008. http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/resources.ashx/LIB/APAME_MEETING_REPORT.pdf. 3 WHO-Western Pacific Region. Second meeting on the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus. Seoul, Korea: 21-23 November, 2007. http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/resources.ashx/LIB/WPRIM+Seoul+Meeting+Report_FINAL+24APR08.pdf [accessed 26 August 2010].

4 WHO-Western Pacific Region. Western Pacific Region Index Medicus. http://www.wprim.org [accessed 26 August 2010].

5 Seo JW, Park JH, Kim H, Park JY, Park MJ, Kim HY. Korean medical libraries and professional associations: changing services and roles. *Health Information & Libraries Journal* 2008;25:142-9.

6 Pandita N, Singh S, Dash S. Barriers to equitable access to quality health information with emphasis on developing countries. 2008. http://www.ehealth-connection.org/files/conf-materials/Barriers%20to%20Equitable%20Access_0.pdf [accessed 14 May 2009].

7 KAMJE. Welcome to The Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors. Seoul: The Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors; 2009. http://www.kamje.or.kr/eng/#introduction. [accessed 14 May 2009].

8 KAMJE. KoreaMed. http://www.koreamed.org [accessed 26 August 2010].

9 KOMCI. Korean Medical Citation Index. http://www.komci.org [accessed 26 August 2010].

10 Squires B. WAME, FAME, EMAME and other regional groups. *Biomedical Imaging and Intervention Journal* 2006;2:e54-14.

11 SMJ Golden Jubilee Conference. Singapore, 6-8 November 2009. http://smj.sma.org.sg/goldenjubilee/home/index.htm [accessed 16 August 2010].

12 WHO. Global Health Library. http://www.globalhealthlibrary.net/php/index.php [accessed 26 August 2010].

13 WHO-Western Pacific Region. Regional workshop of national focal point librarians on the Global Health Library. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: 23-25 May, 2005. http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/resources.ashx/LIB/Regional+Workshop+of+National+Focal+Point+Librarians+FinalReport.pdf.

14 WHO-Western Pacific Region. Meeting on the development of the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus and the Global Health Library wirh China collaboration. Beijing, China: 11-12 December, 2006. http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/resources.ashx/LIB/Meeting+on+the+Development+of+the+Western+Pacific+Region+Index+Medicus+and+the+Global+Health+Library+with+China+Collaboration_FinalReport.pdf.

15 WHO-Western Pacific Region. Second Informal Consultation on the Development of the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus. Tokyo: 17-18 May 2007. http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/resources.ashx/LIB/Second+Informal+Consultation+on+the+Development+of+the+Western+Pacific+Region+Index+Medicus_FinalReport.pdf.

16 Guidelines International Network. G-I-N 2011 Conference. www.gin2011.org [accessed 26 August 2010].

17 Taiwan Evidence-Based Medicine Association. Asia Pacific Evidence-Based Medicine Network Conference 2007. http://ebpg.nhri.org.tw/2007apebmnc/contact_en.asp [accessed 16 August 2010].

18 Burgers J. G-I-N perspective: from evidence-based guidelines to quality improvement. 2007. http://ebpg.nhri.org.tw/2007apebmnc/download/plenary/P1-01.pdf [accessed 16 August 2010].

At the launch of WPRIM in May 2010. From left, Dai Tao, Sung Tae Hong, Chang Kok Hahm, Charles P Raby, Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Jeong-Wook Seo.

Viewpoints

Information discordance in reprints on cancers in "the elderly"

According to Kevin Kelly, information can be regarded as a communicable disease, and the millions of scientific papers published yearly can be accessed by reading "a tiny, unusual magazine called *Current Contents*."[1] During the 1970s and 1980s, I made utmost use of that magazine and accumulated reprints from all over the world.

World traffic, in terms of the requested reprint (RR), so intrigued me that I wrote articles on its tracer function. These were appreciated by John Swales,[2] editor of *English for Specific Purposes*. Indeed, he wrote about me as "the only active researcher that I have traced in the RR area."

My research went as far as to include using requested reprints to analyze medicine itself.[3] In particular, I recommended requested reprints as a tool for information and documentation.[4] I did this by imitating the ingenious publication of Eugene Garfield, the information guru, who used his complex *Science Citation Index* to determine the eight American states whose institutions produced 25 or more most-cited contemporary scientists.[5] Using my simple RR catchment, I confirmed that all these eight, except New Jersey, were the states from which American scientists dispatched 50 or more requests.

As I had made many requests for publications on elderly cancer patients I was able to analyze the crop of reprints despatched to me. This ought to be done profitably because they deal with an important subject. William Vaughan, a member of the editorial board of *Geriatrics,* asked, "Cancer: What's special about the elderly?" [6] With patients aged 70 years and older in mind, he answered pointedly as follows:

> Because the incidence of most malignancies increases with advancing age, their diagnosis and treatment become important subjects for the physician who treats geriatric patients. Moreover, age and other disease states have a major impact on the appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic decision making in these patients.

Patients of variable ages are often assigned to the elderly group. This ongoing tendency is evident in my personally collected reprints. Such information discordances in the RR field deserve animate analysis.

Analysis may begin with authors who published research on the "elderly" but, alas, provided data with variable cut-off ages. Thus, Jun and colleagues, in their New York series, mentioned "80 years of age or older" in their *Abstract* but "over the age of 80" in their introduction.[7] Another American group commented that "Neoplasia is most frequent in persons beyond age 65," but they included opinion on "elderly donors, aged 61 to 91 years."[8] They also wrote that "in the lung cancer and colorectal carcinoma protocols, 'elderly' was defined as greater than 70 years of age."

Age data were also varied in a Swedish report.[9] The summary portrayed investigation at the age of 70 and 75, but the introduction specified that "The incidence of colon cancer increases tenfold between the ages of 50 and 80." Moreover, under acknowledgements, the grants were specified as having been made for "the population study of 70-year old subjects."

Subjects were at times surveyed and their ages published as a range. In an American example, the range was specified as 62-94 years.[10] In a Norwegian study, the range was not given but two subsets appeared thus: "The males with undiagnosed tumour in the head of the gland were marginally older (79 ± 7 years) than those with tumour in other sites (69 ± 11 years)".[11]

Years have been more or less chosen arbitrarily. For instance, Hall wrote in terms of not only "past age 60" but also "over age 65."[12] Little wonder that Bernard Isaacs, who was based at the University Department of Geriatric Medicine, Birmingham, UK, wrote to the *British Medical Journal* in 1982. He entitled his letter "Let's abolish 'the elderly'." In his spirited words,

> There is a curious predilection among the authors of papers, which is presumably shared by editors, for inclusion of the words "the elderly" in the title of otherwise admirable articles. This derives from and lends support to the view that there is a homogeneous mass of people whose only characteristic is that they are somewhat older than ourselves, and about whose behaviour general inferences can be drawn.
>
> I have previously had occasion to express my disapproval of the use of this term by the authors of an article in your journal who, it transpired from the text, were referring to people aged 50 and over. Lest you might think this represents personal sensitivity may I point my criticism in the other direction and refer to the article on blood pressure reduction "in the elderly" (31 October, p 1151)? It turned out that these subjects were all residents of local authority welfare homes with a mean age of 80. Residents of homes comprise 2% of those who are conventionally looked upon as "the elderly"– that is, those aged 65 and over.[13]

Over the ages, writers must have been using the word elderly with equivocation. Apparently, it was in the year 1611 that the word was first used.[14] As I see it, to come down to our own times, let us agree with the World Health Organization (http://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefnolder/en/index.html): "Most developed world countries have accepted the chronological age of 65 years as a definition of elderly or older person." Accordingly, concerning the usage of 65 years and over, let this hold sway in cancer informatics.

Informatics has been focused on from many angles. For instance, in this journal Satyanarayana of the Indian

Council of Medical Research thrashed out the problems of whose name and how many names should be on a scientific paper.[15] Elsewhere, the editor of *Canadian Family Physician* wrote on how to love librarians and become immortal,[16] and van Bemmel presented the structure of medical informatics.[17]

If editors aim at quality assurance in their individual publications, important words such as "the elderly" will be standardized.

Wilson I B Onuigbo
Medical Foundation and Clinic, Enugu 400001, Nigeria
wilson.onuigbo@gmail.com

References

1 Kelly K. Information as a communicable disease. *CoEvolution Quarterly* 1984; (Summer):98–103.
2 Swales J. ESP in the big world of reprint requests. *English for Specific Purposes* 1986;5:81–85.
3 Onuigbo WIB. Analyzing medicine by means of reprint requests. *Methods of Information in Medicine* 1985;24:37–39.
4 Onuigbo WIB. Reprint requests – a tool for documentation. *International Forum on Information and Documentation* 1985;10:7–9.
5 Garfield E. The 1000 most-cited contemporary scientists. Part 3. Details on their current institutional affiliations. *Current Contents Clinical Practice* 1982;(2)7:5–20.
6 Vaughan W. Cancer: what's special about the elderly? *Geriatrics* 1984;39:15–16.
7 Jun MY, Strong EW, Saltzman EL, Gerold FP. Head and neck cancer in the elderly. *Head & Neck Surgery* 1983;5:376–382.
8 Lipschitz DA, Goldstein S, Reis R, Weksler ME, Bress R, Neilan BA. Cancer in the elderly: basic science and clinical aspects. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 1983;102:218–228.
9 Rundgren A, Mellstrom D. Cholecystectomy and colon cancer in the elderly. *Age and Ageing* 1983;12:44–49.
10 Rao DB, Batina RR, Ray M. Multiple primary malignancy in the elderly. *Journal of the American Geriatric Society* 1978;(November):526–527.
11 Hartveit F, Maartmann-Moe H. Pancreatic cancer; a hidden disease in the elderly. *Clinical Oncology* 1982;8:223-229.
12 Hall SW. Cancer: special considerations in older patients. *Geriatrics* 1984;39:74–78.
13 Isaacs B. Let's abolish "the elderly." *British Medical Journal* 1982;284:112.
14 *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield: Merriam-Webster Inc, 2007:400.
15 Satyanarayana K. Whose name and how many names should be on a scientific paper? *European Science Editing* 1987;(30):3–5.
16 McCaffery M. How to love librarians and become immortal. *Canadian Family Physician* 1980;26:429–432.
17 Van Bammel JH. The structure of medical informatics. *Medical Informatics* 1984;9:175–180.

Good editorial practice – a defence against email scams

We must all be familiar with those email scams – you have won a cash prize, you have inherited from a long-lost relative, this dormant account must be yours, you have been awarded compensation, you qualify for a tax rebate. The list goes on and on and, of course, the aim is to get at your bank account and make a one-way transaction – though not the one you were expecting.

But once in a long while one of these messages may be genuine. How will you know it when you see it? Obviously, you need to make lots of independent checks and enquiries before committing to any form of response at all, but the first check you should make is to examine the quality of the editing.

Awareness of best editorial practice has a new and enormously important role to play in fending off scams. Genuine communications of this kind go through almost endless drafting and redrafting to ensure that their message is concise, accurate, and right up to the mark as regards layout, punctuation, typography, forms of address, phraseology, spelling, and the myriad of other minute details that make excellent written communication. None of these will be neglected in a genuine official email, so if they are not absolutely spot-on this should spell danger.

Of course, there are limits because good editing, though clearly necessary, is not sufficient. Most relevant organizations have instituted policies against asking for personal or account information in emails. But now and again such data are genuinely needed and good editorial practice does not guarantee an easy passage. For example, my own journal pays modest honoraria to its decision editors and reviewers but I have nonetheless had instances of when my own (perfectly-constructed) message offering payment has been treated as a scam ("Oh, really? Pull the other one!"), even though the recipient should have known that a payment was due. Such people will have to do without their cash until they can discriminate better.

Roderick Hunt
University of Exeter
r.hunt@exeter.ac.uk

Reports of Meetings

Misconduct in science communication and the role of editors as science gatekeepers

Debate session within the Career Programme Section of ESOF, Turin, Italy, July 2010

Editors as gatekeepers

Arjan Polderman provided an overview of the field of science editing. Scientists generate knowledge that is meant to be disseminated in order to be used by other scientists as well as the general public. Editors, far from being journalists, writers, or publishers, look for valuable information to be published in scientific journals. In this role they can be considered as quality gatekeepers and controllers. People who select papers submitted are the so called "journal editors," or "decision editors," who are assisted by expert peer reviewers. There are also "production editors," whose role is to present the information in an optimal manner, controlling and correcting text structure, language, nomenclature, images, and so on.

In publishing, misconduct can arise because of money or prestige. Prestige can condition authors, who may create duplicate or salami publications in order to increase their number of citations, or they may withhold negative results, or even falsify data. Money can influence publishers, whose aim is to increase the number of reprints or subscriptions sold. Editors may have conflict of interest, because they want to keep their job.

Undesirable neighbours: Mrs Redundancy and Mr Plagiarism, and Mr Ghost and Mrs Gift

With the aid of pictures made by her daughter and herself, Reme Melero defined the basic concepts concerning misconduct in science publishing.

Mr Gift and Mrs Ghost are related to authorship. An "author" is someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to the article. According to ICMJE, authorship credit should be based on three things: substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data; drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and final approval of the version to be published.

One form of misconduct (Mr Gift) is to be listed as an author without being one. Another form of fraud is ghostwriting (Mr Ghost), where an author who gave substantial contribution to the work is masked (suggesting a possible conflict of interest).

Mrs Redundancy

Mr Plagiarism

Mrs Redundancy is related to salami publication. "Salami" refers to something divided into thin slices, so this expression means an article split in order to be published in many different journals. One of the reasons behind this fraudulent behaviour is that authors need to increase the number of their publications, to increase their prestige and to improve their careers. Of course its consequences can be dangerous, especially in biomedical publishing, because data on the same patients can be analyzed twice in meta-analyses or guidelines, and may cause bias in the results.

To plagiarize means to copy something, saying that you are the owner. It differs from copyright infringement, that concerns the use of the paper without asking for permissions to the owner of the copyright (the publisher, for instance).

Journal editors sometimes are required to act as spies, checking submissions for possible misconduct.

How to proceed if you detect misconduct

The privilege of being gatekeepers comes together with the responsibility for the integrity of what is published, and editors can be blamed for not detecting or preventing misconduct. Many organizations provide international publishing policies, such as EASE itself, the Council of Science Editors (CSE), the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). Misconduct can be detected at different levels: manuscript submission, review, editorial process or post-publication: unfortunately the latter is the step when misconduct is mostly detected. This is evident by looking at PubMed, the largest repository of biomedical articles. This database has a special section in which retracted publications are listed. Interestingly, the number of retracted articles has increased during recent years, indicating an increase in the awareness.

There are also technologies that can help editors in detecting another form of misconduct: image manipulation. Images manipulation – for example, bands removed in blots, or brightness increased until everything you don't want to be present is lost – is quite common, and a specific policy has been introduced to state what can be considered acceptable and what has to be considered fraud. Of course authors can use technology to present the images in a better way, but they cannot change their message. To detect this kind of misconduct, the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) offers tools for examining scientific images and for

the detecting plagiarism. Photoshop can also be useful in detecting image manipulation.

Other technologies are available to detect overlap: eTBLAST, working on abstracts, is better to spot suspected duplicate publication; Déjà Vu helps detect duplicate citations, and Cross Check, working on the full text of the article, is essential for detecting duplicate publication.

COPE produced 17 flowcharts to tell editors (and authors) what to do when they suspect misconduct: plagiarism, fabricated data, or conflict of interest, or if they need to change or remove an author. So what should editors do? Can they change what happens in the scientific community or do they just have to follow? To answer to this question, Ana Marusic cited a former editor of the *BMJ* who said that "a subject that needs reform should be kept before the public until it demands reform."

How can an author's editor help to promote research integrity?

Sylwia Ufnalska explained what an author's editor can do to promote research integrity. Author's editors help authors to improve quality of their articles; they can therefore be essential in avoiding plagiarism and copy and paste (very common in non-native English speakers) by paraphrasing the information. They also help to avoid misunderstanding, and improve the correct use of the language – for example, paying attention to scientific false friends (words that seem equivalent but have different meanings in different languages; for example, the Polish "cytoplazma" means cytosol and therefore is not exactly equivalent to the English cytoplasm). An author's editor can improve the presentation of data by correcting the format of images or tables.

The "EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators of Scientific Articles to be Published in English" have recently been published to provide basic advice on how to write complete, concise, and clear manuscripts. They also explain what is regarded as scientific misconduct. The guidelines are currently available in eight languages, and more translations are in preparation.

Many questions emerged from the audience, underlining the interest of the topics and suggesting some ideas for reflections. In cases of misconduct not only the authors' reputations but also the institutions' reputations are involved: are institutions informed by the editor when a case of misconduct is detected? Can the increase of misconduct be related not only to better methods of detection, but also to the general conditions of working in science? Does a retracted article remain published, continuing to be cited?

Silvia Maina
Medical editor, SEEd
silm75@hotmail.com

Moderator: Joan Marsh (Wiley, EASE President).
Speakers: Arjan Polderman (EASE Past President): "Introduction: role of editors in research integrity"; Reme Melero (CSIC, EASE Vice-President): "Undesirable neighbours: Mrs Redundancy and Mr Plagiarism, and Mr Ghost and Mrs Gift"; Ana Marusic (Zagreb University School of Medicine, EASE Council): "How to proceed if you detect misconduct"; and Sylwia Ufnalska (Editor and translator, EASE Council): "How can an author's editor help to promote research integrity?"

ESOF: a showcase for European science

Euroscience Open Forum, Turin, Italy, 3–7 July 2010

A marine biology student sits beside a politician and a press officer watching a seminar on particle physics. At the same time there are eight other sessions on topics varying from "The future of the European Research Area" to "Would Einstein be on Twitter?"

One attendee describes the Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF) as the Olympics of Science, a crossroads where separate domains meet on equal terms.

The venues, at least, have all been Olympian: since the first edition in Stockholm in 2004, ESOF has biennially passed through Munich and Barcelona, growing in size and scope each time. This year the relay baton was handed to Turin, the city enveloped by the Alps and host of the Winter Olympics four years ago.

Our location, the building that contains the Lingotto conference centre, was once Fiat's main car factory, a long imposing stone structure, which was renovated as a public complex in the 1980s and '90s. Raw materials were fed into the bottom floor, cars were built in stages moving upwards, and the final products driven on a rooftop test track. It is a testament to Turin's industrial heritage which has also helped the city develop into one of Italy's scientific centres.

We entered at the level of the old raw materials, in the dimmed light of Lingotto's main auditorium where the opening ceremony began with a 15th century musical composition explained through mathematics. When confusion erupted over handing bunches of flowers to delegates – evidence that scientists may not respond well to choreography – it was not just any flowers, but a special variety of rose developed for ESOF by an Italian plant biologist.

There was no parading with flags, but 82 nationalities were represented by over 4000 participants: students, professors, politicians, journalists, and many others from all aspects of the scientific spectrum.

Everyone was welcomed with a video message from the Italian President, Giorgio Napolitano, whose speech closely echoed ESOFs objective of catalysing a cohesive, scientific Europe. "Europe as a whole cannot count on natural resources or underpaid labour, a qualified human capital and

a knowledge-driven economy are to be our main resources now and for the future," he said in a speech emphasizing the importance of a united Europe in this venture.

Over the following days a busy programme, with over 800 speakers, was divided into several themes, "Scientific", "Career", "Science to Business", and across Turin, "Science in the City". Social events, excursions, and satellite events ensured there was no rest in activity. An exhibition area was hived with stands from over 150 exhibitors, volunteers dressed in bright orange swarmed helpfully, and the tables serving free Italian coffee buzzed with chatter.

The main sessions were all streamed live on the internet, and recordings of every session are available on the event's website, www.esof2010.org.

The scientific programme was as broad as it was deep; from robotics to epigenetics, from heated discussions on research policy to climate change, from Nobel prize laureates to the science of humour, with speakers answering questions from experts and novices alike. Vladimir Kutcherov got everyone talking by claiming new chemistry may be able to produce an endless supply of petroleum, and the excellent duo O+A closed the conference with their impressive fusion of art and sound. There was truly something for everyone in an eclectic scientific melting pot.

A strong emphasis was placed on youth, with over half of participants under 35, a figure that delighted the organisers. The careers programme reflected this, as ESOF aimed to inspire the next generation of scientists. During lunchtimes "Pizza with the Prof" proved popular, as prominent figures such as Philip Campbell, the editor in chief of Nature, and Nobel prize winners Harold Kroto and Kurt Wüthrich shared a relaxed meal with young guests. Both senior figures and the youth seemed to enjoy the exchanges.

The cornerstone of the Science to Business programme, Research & Business Speed Dating, was a novel way to encourage the marriage between academia and innovation, particularly trying to set up opportunities for co-funded networks between researchers and industry as part of the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme.

ESOF is not only a showcase for European science, but an opportunity for the host city to display its charms, and for science to reach out to the public. Through posters and billboards the event was visible in the city centre, and during the evenings "Science in the City" infiltrated the city's main public squares and spaces. The people of Turin responded in impressive numbers as the more artistic and quirky sides of science were showcased. During Nobel Night, three laureates spoke about their experiences, and the engaging Peter Agre serenaded the crowd with the "Element Song", a lyrical journey through the periodic table. The public were suitably charmed.

The elephant in the room was, of course, the financial crisis. José Mariano Gago, a key player in the development of the Lisbon strategy 10 years ago, asked organiser Enrico Predazzi before his keynote speech whether he wanted a realistic or optimistic assessment of Europe's scientific situation, and was candid in his assessment: "The economic and financial crisis can have the consequences of destroying science in many countries for many years." However, he stated his belief that all is not lost if the right action is taken: "Scientists in Europe should unite, act, and mobilise to save science in Europe."

Through its General Assembly, Euroscience released the Torino Declaration, a statement highlighting the challenges that Europe faces in tackling local and global problems with increasing competition from emerging countries. It calls for international cooperation and careful management from the European Commission. "Decision makers must realize that time is running out fast ... This is a plea from Euroscience ... The research community is ready and eager to respond."

Like the old Fiat cars, our final destination was the rooftop test track, giving views across Turin under the warmth of the Italian sun. Here we gathered for the transfer event to the next forum in Dublin.

A group of young dancers performed in two parts; first very seriously, slow movements and serious emotional expressions, before running onto the track with arms aloft, cheering for start of a new ESOF cycle. It was perhaps a poignant way to symbolise the event; concern in troubled times, but optimism for what ESOF and Europe can achieve by bringing people together.

Calum MacKichan
PhD student, , INRA, Jouy-en-Josas, France
calummackichan@hotmail.com

Promoting editorial capacity in psychiatric journals in low and middle income countries

Workshop at the World Psychiatric Association International Congress, Beijing, China, September 2010

Two surveys conducted in 2007 and 2009 by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Taskforce on Research Dissemination identified the scarcity of psychiatric journals from low and middle income countries in the main international indexation databases.[1,2] In fact, only 5.5% of the 235 journals listed under the Psychiatry and Substance Abuse categories in Medline and Web of Science are from middle income countries, and none comes from a low income country.

In order to promote editorial capacity for journals from low and middle income countries and thus enhance their chances of indexation, representatives from five non-indexed psychiatric journals – with a focus on Africa and Asia – participated in a workshop facilitated by members of

the WPA Operational Committee on Publications (Helen Herrman, Jair Mari, Christian Kieling and Christopher P Szabo), with Norman Sartorius, Zeping Xiao, Michael Phillips and Shekhar Saxena as discussants.

Before the meeting, an invitation to participate in the workshop had been sent to identified non-indexed journals based in low and middle income countries in Asia and Africa, with subsequent applications reviewed by members of the Operational Committee. The five were selected on the basis of an assessment of their preparedness to apply for selection to Medline, with the purpose of assessing their status quo and making recommendations for improving the chances of selection.

A workshop held in Prague in 2008 had included editors of eight psychiatric journals from low and middle income countries, two of which were subsequently selected into Medline (African Journal of Psychiatry and Indian Journal of Psychiatry).[3]

Indexed journals

The workshop started with a general introduction regarding the aims: specifically to assist with the process of selection to Medline and other databases. This was followed by presentations from the editors of two psychiatric journals from low and middle income countries indexed in Medline (*Revista Brasileira de Psiquiatria* and *African Journal of Psychiatry*). These dealt with the experience of the process, lessons learned, and future challenges beyond indexation. Aside from technical aspects that comprise requirements for selection, the political and strategic components of an application were emphasized.

Non-indexed journals

The meeting continued with a series of presentations from the selected journals, which were the *ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry* (representing Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Phillipines), *Current Psychiatry* (Egypt), *East Asia Archives of Psychiatry* (Hong Kong), *Journal of the Pakistan Psychiatric Society* (Pakistan), and *Shanghai Archives of Psychiatry* (China). Each presentation covered specific aspects such as the journal's geographical reach, frequency of publication, content, review process, editorial structure, and funding. Each presentation was evaluated in terms of apparent strengths and weaknesses, and readiness for application, with direct feedback given.

Discussion

Aside from discussion and suggestions related to each presentation, a number of proposals were made regarding future strategies:

- The creation of a network of editors from developing world countries (indexed/non-indexed publications), to provide both support and guidance as well as sharing of resources such as potential reviewers.
- Provision of a check list of the format and content requirements a journal needs to fulfill for achieving indexation.
- Supervision on steps to be taken and screening of applications before submission, by editors of indexed journals from low and middle income countries.

Updating and further development of a database of all psychiatric journals, both indexed and non-indexed, from high and low and middle income nations, remains an ongoing task. This content would be available through the WPA website and include details of the individual journals (cover; scope of content; submission process; indexing status) with links to their websites (where available).

The future

A further workshop is planned for the 15th World Congress of Psychiatry (to be held in Buenos Aires in 2011) with a focus on Central and South American countries. Based on the two workshops to date, and with the active support of the WPA Operational Committee on Publications, it is envisaged that beyond further journals being selected for Medline – and other databases – the main mission will be to enhance quality of journals related to mental health worldwide regardless of the indexation status.

Christopher P Szabo
Division of Psychiatry, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
Christopher.Szabo@wits.ac.za

Christian Kieling
Department of Psychiatry, Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre, Brazil

Jair de Jesus Mari
Universidade Federal de São Paulo, Department of Psychiatry, São Paulo, Brazil

Helen Herrman
WPA Secretary for Publications and University of Melbourne, Australia
h.herrman@unimelb.edu.au

References

1 Kieling C, Herrman H, Patel V, Mari JD. Indexation of psychiatric journals from low- and middle-income countries: a survey and a case study. *World Psychiatry* 2009;8(1):40–44.

2 Mari JJ, Patel V, Kieling C, Razzouk D, Tyrer P, Herrman H. The 5/95 gap in the indexation of psychiatric journals of low- and middle-income countries. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 2010;121(2):152–156.

3 De Jesus Mari J, Patel V, Kieling C, Anders M, Jakovljevi M, Lam LC, Lotaief F, Mendlowicz MV, Okulat G, Sathyanarayana Rao TS, Tamam L, Tyrer P, Herrman H. The 5/95 gap on the dissemination of mental health research: the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) task force report on project with editors of low and middle income (LAMI) countries. *African Journal of Psychiatry (Johannesburg)* 2009;12(1):33–39.

Book Reviews

A Practical Guide For Health Researchers. Fathalla MF, Fathalla MMF. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2004. (WHO Regional Publications, Eastern Mediterranean Series 30.) 234 pp, $18. ISBN 92-9021-363-9. Available at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/emro/2004/9290213639.pdf.

This volume, in 14 chapters and five supplementary annexes, is a fairly comprehensive guide for familiarizing health researchers with all aspects of health related research. The authors, who have extensive experience, have provided invaluable guidance in a non-technical and reader-friendly manner. The user will agree that the authors have achieved their goal of educating and making those involved in health research aware of the whole spectrum of health research processes, including selection of research topic, and research objectives and their achievement. The overall aim is to achieve widespread awareness among the health research community for better planning, conducting, and disseminating high quality research.

This book is currently being used extensively by many facilitators and research educators in training workshops, seminars, and research awareness and teaching sessions. The utility of this book will almost certainly continue for many years to come and, to ensure this, the present version written in 2004 would benefit from some revision. My opinion is based on the following comments and suggestions.

The present book does not have a logical organization. The beginning should have been focused on the basic methods of health research, rather than the ethical issues related to health research.

Chapter 1 is not only not needed but is extensive. It is essentially a review of the entire contents of the book (already given in a four-page detailed list of contents), and subsequently the relevant parts of each chapter are rewritten as the introduction to the respective chapter. Indeed, after reading Chapter 1, many readers may not consult the individual chapters. Chapter 1 may thus be regarded as a "distraction chapter". In my opinion a precise introduction to what is meant by Health Research would have been much better.

My third suggestion is that explanatory examples and problem solving examples for different types of data, variables, and statistical tests/ratios should be included. These are needed especially for educating the young and those new to the field of health research.

Last, but not the least, many changes have occurred in information that has been given as facts and figures in the book. For example the number of MeSH terms has changed, and new versions of the Declaration of Helsinki (2008) and the ICMJE Uniform Requirements (2009) have been published, and should be considered during revision of the volume. Any new edition should be widely publicized so that it replaces the existing edition, which is present in every medical library, and every health department, medical education, and research and development office.

Fazal Ghani
Khyber College of Dentistry, Peshawar, Pakistan
fazalg55@hotmail.com

Publishing Addiction Science: A Guide for the Perplexed. Second edition. Thomas F Babor, Kerstin Stenius, Susan Sawa, and Jean O'Reilly, eds. Brentwood, Essex: Multi-Science Publishing Company, 2008. 228 pp, £18/€27/$36US. ISBN 978-0-906522-97-4

The purpose of the book, as stated in the Preface is, "to provide a practical guide to scientific publishing in the addiction field that is used often enough to affect personal decisions, individual careers, institutional policies, and the progress of science." Each of the 14 chapters is an article written by various authors. Although 19 authors have contributed, Thomas Babor seems to be the main author, as he is an author of all but three of the chapters.

The chapters fall under five headings: Introduction, How and Where to Publish, The Practical Side of Addiction Publishing, Ethics Matter, and Conclusion. Furthermore, presentations on a website given by the authors form a "tutorial" that goes into more details. The tutorial is a valuable addition to the book, and I encourage readers to check it out. It is at http://www.parint.org/tutorial.cfm#modules. Unfortunately, the book only briefly mentions the tutorial, and readers may easily miss it and not realize that the tutorial is available. If it had been referenced in the chapters, I certainly would have found it earlier.

In the Preface, Babor points out that "[this] field of science has become much more ethically challenging." The pharmaceutical, tobacco, gambling, and alcohol industries have financial interests to protect; addiction is a politically loaded issue; and the people – the objects of research – are vulnerable. Indeed, the section Ethics Matter contains three chapters that give much food for thought. The authors define "seven deadly sins of scientific publishing" and offer guidelines to avoid them. To help research institutes,

funding agencies, publishers, peer reviewers, and authors avoid ethical conflicts, the chapters provide checklists for decision making related to ethics. They also present and analyze the ethics of specific cases; I found these to be enlightening. Especially, vested interests influence funding and the selection of results to be published. I recommend journal policymakers and editors to have a look at this section of the book – and the related presentation on the website.

Of special interest to researchers in the field of addiction, the chapter "How to choose a journal" presents an overview of the 90 or so English and non-English language journals that publish research in the field. Tables summarize their languages, addictive substances, areas of interest, and publishing information. The chapter gives tips to authors on choosing a journal, including an interesting discussion of the pros and cons of choosing an open access journal.

The chapter entitled "Beyond the Anglo-American world: advice for researchers from developing or non-English-speaking countries" presents an overview of the problems and obstacles encountered by addiction researchers in these countries. Addiction in low and middle income countries is, apparently, a severe health and economic problem, and resource availability does not meet resource needs. And this opens the door to ethical problems; researchers are poorly paid, and may be financially tempted to publish biased results. Authors in countries where English is not the first language also face specific communication obstacles. Cultural differences in writing, when translated literally into English, often communicate poorly and even lead to distrust in the credibility of the science. Furthermore, studies that focus on local situations are often of little interest to international journals.

Although this chapter is very enlightening about the many problems, it provides little specific help to solving them. The chapter offers only rather general suggestions such as "The importance of good English language usage cannot be over-emphasized." And authors are encouraged in "trying to publish the text in more than one language… find out the policy of the journal(s)."

I found the chapter entitled "Reviewing manuscripts for addiction journals: an application of the golden rule" to be valuable. It gives excellent tips to peer reviewers. Based on the Golden Rule, which I paraphrase as "Review others as you would have others review you", the chapter summarizes the goals of the peer reviewing process. It answers the questions "Why have peer reviewers?" and "Why be a journal reviewer?" It encourages researchers to become peer reviewers. In my courses on scientific writing, I encourage course participants to read critically. To that end, I introduce authors to peer reviewing and have them review each other's work. This chapter of the book as well as the related presentation is excellent reference material for this purpose.

The chapter entitled "How to write publishable qualitative research" describes differences between quantitative and qualitative research and offers useful guidelines to authors. It summarizes the content of the sections of the IMRAD article and – especially useful – it lists English language journals that publish qualitative research.

Unfortunately, the book is not an example of concise and focused writing. It contains much repetition within and between chapters, and many abstract concepts will perplex readers. Some rather philosophical parts of the book also contribute to fuzzy focus and do not seem to belong in a book of guidelines. I also find excessive over-argumentation of the many "important" issues. I am allergic to this word – unless it is clearly defined, I have to guess at why something is important and to whom it is important. Guesswork on the part of their readers is not what writers of science should strive for.

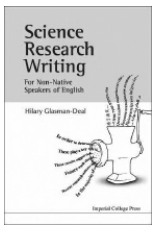
I was quite surprised to find that the chapter entitled "How to write a scientific paper for a peer-reviewed journal" does not tell us "how to write" at all. Indeed, the article's author even states, "We assume here that the reader is already competent in all areas of writing a scientific paper." The chapter gives rather general tips that someone "already competent" would already know, such as "Check the style guide for your journal of choice." In his presentation on the website, the author explains that neither the book nor the presentation can go into scientific writing, but for those who read the book, the title is misleading.

Furthermore, the book's title may not do justice to the book. I doubt that many potential readers would describe themselves as being "perplexed" and, as a result, I suspect that the title will not attract the readers it deserves.

The book strongly presents the need for a practical guide to scientific publishing in the addiction field – and it lays the groundwork for such a guide.

Ed Hull
edhull@home.nl

Scientific Research Writing: A Guide for Non-native Speakers of English. Hilary Glasman-Deal. London: Imperial College Press, 2009. 272pp; £44/$58, ISBN 978-1-84816-309-6; paperback £19, $25 ISBN 978-1-84816-310-2



Oh dear, we have yet another "How to" book on scientific writing and presentation! Although such books are fairly numerous, their usefulness varies enormously, making it difficult for budding authors of scientific papers to choose one that meets their basic needs. Nearly all follow a typical pattern, which is not surprising given the conventional way in which almost all scientific papers are presented. The promise of this book is that it will be of particular assistance to the non-native English speaker. As a native English speaker who has been publishing papers and books for half a century, this one is far more difficult for me to use compared with many others. So putting myself in the shoes of a non-native

English speaker, I would be totally bemused by it. On this basis alone, it is not easy to recommend it to the many foreign students, post-docs, and colleagues I have helped.

To deliver something more acceptable to the non-native English speaker requires an understanding of the business of authoring a paper (preferably from personal knowledge and experience), and an excellent command of English both from the vernacular and scientific perspectives, putting everything in the simplest terms. Added to this is the need for an author to appreciate the demands of journals, to be given good guidance in the tricky business of submitting a paper, an understanding of what peer review entails, and some knowledge of what editors consider an acceptable communication. Without a background that encompasses all these requirements, it is unlikely that authors of scientific papers will be significantly helped in producing articles in English that will stand a much better chance at some strict peer reviewing.

A striking feature of this particular book is that it contains innumerable lists of alternative words, phrases, and expressions from which authors can choose. It then sets tasks that need to be assiduously followed through so that a deeper understanding of the whole process is acquired. This is appropriate for students in the practical classes of formal courses in scientific writing, but is of little use to young scientists struggling in their own offices, lacking anyone to turn to in order to make good use of this book. This latter category probably includes the vast majority of aspiring authors around the world. Indeed, it is the interminable lists that set this book it apart from most other manuals. Even a native English speaker would be flummoxed by the "select from these options"-basis of the tables. As an example, how does the non-native speaker choose the right verb from the table on p.81 without first having a thorough knowledge and huge command of the English language?

There are two reasons for having books on this subject; the first is to get across the reasons as well as the way in which papers are presented in English by most conventional scientific publishers. The second is to improve the English presentation so that the grammar, syntax, idiom, jargon, etc are all of a standard that is acceptable to a native English-speaking editor, expressing things in the simplest possible terms. In attempting to integrate the first two objectives, this book ends up as a mish-mash that is difficult for both non-native and native English speakers to use. If a third reason has to be added, budding scientists need to have a better understanding of the publishing process itself; I find this perspective greatly helps many young scientists know what is to be expected of them. In conclusion, I hesitatingly and reservedly might recommend this book to scientists who already have a strong command of the English language.

Denys Wheatley
BioMedES Ltd, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire
wheatley@abdn.ac.uk

Correspondence

Setting the scene for scientific discourse

I am glad I stuck with Françoise Salager-Meyer's article, *Scientific discourse and contrastive rhetoric: the Creating a Research Space (CARS) model*, in the August issue (*European Science Editing* 2010;36(3):66-9). The first three paragraphs used terms that meant nothing to me, but it got better (I speak from an unreconstructed Anglo Saxon perspective – that is, critical and, frankly, rude). The article is about how scientific writers from different cultural backgrounds set the scene in their articles.

The CARS model, as an entity, was new to me. Its essence – "this is the area of interest, there is an topic within it which warrants further attention, and this is my contribution to knowledge or understanding of it" – seemed familiar, sensible, and incontrovertible. Why would anyone want to approach scientific discourse any other way? I was shocked to read that this model represents an application of the law of natural selection and is associated inevitably with cut-throat competition between academics for publication.

I was chastened to learn that, elsewhere, more gentlemanly conduct prevails. Scientific papers in Polish and Spanish may not deign to explain their reason for existence, those in Russian and Ukrainian are self effacing, and the Swedes tell stories to engage their readers. Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese writers are disinclined to criticize work that has gone before.

Certainly science in the Western world seems to run on highly competitive lines, but I am not altogether convinced that the CARS model makes it inevitable. The idea that scientific writing (and presumably the science it reports) can do without considering the context into which it is introduced might appear to be an invitation for wheel reinvention.

Forgive this caricature, based on a summary article, whose references I have not read. As editors we receive manuscripts from authors around the world, whose first languages and cultures differ. How do we respond to them? Do we celebrate diversity of expression and well constructed metaphors, or impose homogeneous "house style"? How carefully do we read what does not appear immediately to fit our preconceptions? In our obsession with data and knowledge, do we risk missing out on understanding?

Stuart Handysides
ProMED-mail
stuart_handysides@hotmail.com

EASE-Forum Digest: June to September 2010

You can join the forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Be sure to send messages in plain text format; the forum software does not recognize HTML-formatted messages. More information can be found on the EASE web site (www.ease.org.uk). When you first subscribe, you will be able to receive messages, but you won't be able to post messages until your address has been added manually to the file. This prevents spam being sent by outsiders, so please be patient.

Duplicate and prior publication as well as avoiding abstracts that give too much away before a conference were the focus of forum discussions over the summer months. Technical abuse of language, something that should concern us all, was another thought-provoking topic. Participants also supplied websites focusing on article retractions and embargoes, and a twitter feed for finding editing jobs.

When your manuscript sinks into a black hole

What should you do if you don't receive an acknowledgement after submitting a manuscript by email to a journal that does not have an online submission system? Marcin Kozak put this question to the forum after he had failed to elicit an acknowledgement following many attempts to contact a journal to which he had submitted a manuscript. His concern was that if he submitted it to another journal there might be a duplicate publication of the article if the first journal published the article in the meantime. Will Hughes thought a possible line of communication would be through a commercial or academic publisher, if the journal had one. Otherwise he would write to the journal stating that in view of its lack of response he would be submitting the article elsewhere. He thought the first journal would be in breach of copyright if it published the article, provided the original email submitting the manuscript had not transferred copyright to the journal.

Prior publication: when might a journal republish an article published elsewhere?

Helle Goldman asked editors on the forum if they would consider a paper that had previously been published in a magazine or journal which did not peer-review articles for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Many of the points raised in the replies to her question are covered by the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals (ICMJE, http://www.icmje.org/publishing_4overlap.html). According to the requirements, journals do not wish to receive papers that have already been published either in print on in electronic media. This statement can be taken to refer to all publication, whether peer-reviewed or not. As Paul Neate pointed out on the forum, changes introduced as a result of peer review normally would not alter the content to such an extent as to justify the paper being considered "new".

John Glen thought that although journals generally do not wish to republish articles they would do so where the original publication was not generally available or was in a foreign language. Mary Ellen Kerans believed republication might be considered if the publication had been in a local journal that is not internationally indexed. The ICMJE stipulates criteria that need to be fulfilled to justify secondary publication: it is important that the journals target different audiences, e.g. publish in different languages; the second publication should have a footnote on the title page informing about and referencing the first publication; and permission must have been obtained from the journal and/or copyright holders. The title of the secondary publication should indicate whether it is a complete republication, abridged republication, complete translation, or abridged translation of the primary publication.

Many questions around republication, as discussed on the forum, are associated with scientific conferences. According to the ICMJE, journals usually consider posters and abstracts published at conferences or press reports from conferences as preliminary reports and are prepared to publish a complete report on the study. As I have discussed in an article on prior publication (http://chestjournal.chestpubs.org/content/135/1/233.full.pdf), a distinction is usually made between work in progress and completed work. The ICMJE specifies that the press reports should have been brief and not include additional data or copies of tables and figures. However, somewhat inexplicably the ICMJE envisages that a complete report published as part of the proceedings of the conference may also be considered for republication by a journal. Alan Hopkins on the forum thought the proceedings version would have been subjected to only minimal peer review and therefore the fully reviewed journal version would differ substantially—there could also be commercial explanations.

In all instances the ICMJE states that authors should inform the editor of the previous publication, and that the second publication should have a footnote on the title page informing about and referencing the first publication. In the case of republication of articles published as conference proceedings, Alan Hopkins suggested the wording "this paper is based on an article that was originally published in Proceedings of..." for inclusion in the acknowledgement or as a footnote, and Alan Singleton suggested the wording "based on a presentation at".

Finally, taking up the aspect of republication in different languages of articles, Françoise Salager-Meyer referred to the arguments of the Chinese applied linguists Qiufang Wen and Yihong Gao that the same research should be published in different languages to maximize access and equalize rights between scientific communities. Liz Hamp-Lyons, an editor of applied linguistics journals, argued in reply that this would be repugnant to many academics as infringing

the tenet of originality in research and its dissemination. Her proposal was that authors should frame their reporting of their research within the social, linguistic, academic, and professional setting in which the study took place, and present this framing with a strong sense of the audience of the specific journal they are targeting. The arguments are detailed in the following articles:

Wen QH, Gao YH. Viewpoint: Dual publication and academic inequality. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 2007: 17;221-225.

Hamp-Lyons L. Access, equity and ... plagiarism. *TESOLQ* 2009; 43(4):690-693.

Salager-Meyer. Academic equality and cooperative justice. *TESOLQ* 2009; 43(4):703-709.

Enticing conference abstracts

Scott Hatton was preparing an online guide to papers submitted to an upcoming congress and was keen to obtain some examples of online abstracts that did not give too much away before the conference. Elisabeth Heseltine agreed that conference abstracts should indicate what was to be presented at a conference by only stating a hypothesis and the general method chosen to test that hypothesis. Results are often not available, or are saved up for the conference itself. Although Scott had wanted to withhold authors' and institutions' names, Elisabeth thought giving a list of speakers, with their institutions, would be good advertising for the conference.

Technical abuse of language

James Hartley passed on to the forum an exchange of correspondence he had had with Patrick Hall. The topic, which at first might seem remote, is food for thought for Europeans, scientists, and native British English speakers, among others. Patrick has a personal mission: to save the languages used in Nepal from the abuse of technologists. He explained that the Newar community has a strong written tradition of about 1000 years, with different writing styles for different purposes—religious, stories, administrative and news, etc. As the writing has not been encoded for computers, there is currently a debate in the community as to whether different styles of writing should be given a common encoding (viewing their differences like those between fonts such as Arial and Times) or whether the different styles should be encoded completely separately (viewing their differences like those between Cyrillic and Roman writing). Pat asked therefore if, when writing, people produce the content first and then format it using the styles of their chosen word processor, or if the use of styles was an essential part of their writing process. Dr Kalra from the Department of Library and Information Science at Punjabi University, India, wrote that this question had yet to be discussed for the Punjabi language, although there were utilities between Shahmukhi and Gurmulhi which had been developed by his university. He felt that whether the publication had been pre-decided (such as an invited article) and the motivation of the author should be factored into the discussion on techno-determinism.

Views differ as to the importance of preserving languages classed as minority languages in the global context. But the problem described by Pat can be applied to the effect the hegemony of English used in computers and on the internet is having on umlauts and accents, and the use of superscript and italics in scientific nomenclature, and the preference for American over British English. German authors with names like Rösing and Nicoläs are increasing found on the internet as Roesing and Nicoleas (or even Rosing and Nicolas). How often do you see italic characters used for gene symbols to distinguish the gene from the protein with the same symbol – *Glut4* from Glut4, for example? The online *Economist* recently debated the proposal, "This house believes that the English-speaking world should adopt American English" (http://www.economist.com/debate/days/view/537&fsrc=nwl). Although Michael Agnes, editor-in-chief of Webster's New World Dictionaries, who defended, lost the motion (hardly surprising in a British-English venue), his point that computers nowadays are usually set to American English and few people can be bothered to change their computer settings was a good one. All these are examples of techno-determinism surreptitiously stamping out diversity.

Guidance and tips on how to peer review a paper

Ed Hull asked for information on guidance for reviewing articles that journals give to their peer reviewers and tips useful for reviewers.

- Will Hughes supplied the URL (http://will-hughes.blogspot.com/2009/11/reviewing-research-papers.html) for a site he had developed for his students based on David Silverman's book, *Doing Qualitative Research* and which sets out what to look for in research papers.
- Helle Goldman recommended *Peer Review and Manuscript Management in Scientific Journals*, by Irene Hames (2007), in which there is a section of detailed reviewer guidelines contributed by a number of journals.
- Liz Wager recommended the chapter "How to peer review a manuscript" by Moher and Jadad in Godlee and Jefferson's book *Peer Review in Health Sciences*, the *BMJ* checklists for reviewers available at http://resources.bmj.com/bmj/reviewers, and her own book *How to Survive Peer Review* (by Wager, Godlee and Jefferson).
- James Hartley thought that a couple of chapters on refereeing and on responding to referees in his book, *Academic Writing & Publishing*, might be helpful.
- I would add the excellent CD-ROM Guide for Peer Reviewers available at http://www3.us.elsevierhealth.com/extractor/graphics/em-acep/index.html.

Websites focusing on article retractions and embargoes

Karen Shashok alerted the forum to two useful websites:

- Retraction Watch, with the slogan "Tracking retractions as a window into the scientific process",

at http://retractionwatch.wordpress.com/. She wrote that the site contains summaries (with useful links) of recent retractions and attempted retractions of journal articles. She found it interesting to see how many articles are being retracted and in which journals.

- Embargo Watch at http://embargowatch.wordpress.com/, with the slogan "Keeping an eye on how scientific information embargoes affect news coverage". Karen wrote that the entries (again with links) summarize breaches of embargoes, changes in journal embargo policies and other embargo-related events (for example, a "retrobargo").

Editing jobs

Jaya Ramchandani kindly informed the forum about a twitter account she had started to tweet all editing jobs she finds while regularly searching job leads on Google reader: http://twitter.com/editingjobs.

Elise Langdon-Neuner (compiler)
langdoe@baxter.com

Discussion initiators
Marcin Kozak: nyggus@gmail.com
Scott Hatton: scotthatton@gmail.com
Helle Goldman: helle.goldman@npolar.no
Ed Hull: edhull@home.nl
Karen Shashok: kshashok@kshashok.com
Jaya Ramchandani: jayar@siriusinteractive.co.in

New Publications Committee member – Anna Maria Rossi

Anna Maria's career at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità – ISS (Italian National Institute of Health in Rome, Italy) started in 1987 when, after eight years' activity in private companies, she worked on the Italian Research Register, collecting data related to researches carried on at the Institute. In 1988 she moved to the ISS Publishing Unit – where she is still working – as a member of the editorial staff of the ISS Bulletin (*Notiziario dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità*). She is also editorial coordinator of ISS leaflets on its structure and activities, a member of the ISS Library Advisory Committee, and editor of the "WHO Publications" Section of the ISS journal *Annali dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità*.

She has more recently been a member of the ISS working group for Italian translation of documents, guidelines, and standards on editorial practices, and has collaborated to the European project NECOBELAC, taking care of Italian translation of web contents and leaflets.

Anna Maria lives in Rome with her husband and a daughter. In her spare time she loves reading, visiting museums and art galleries, and going to live jazz concerts.

EASE members' discount to use Crosscheck software

EASE has negotiated an arrangement with iParadigms, the company that owns the iThenticate software which powers Crosscheck, whereby EASE members are entitled to a substantial discount on the service. The normal fee is $50 (£35) but EASE members need pay only £20 per submission, where a submission would be any document upload up to 25,000 words. This would enable authors' editors to check their authors' manuscripts. We presume that editors would include the fee in their charges to their authors. If you would like more information about how it works, please contact Bob Creutz on rcreutz@ithenticate.com.

How the discount will work: there is a central EASE account that members will be entitled to use, upon payment to EASE, who will then reimburse iParadigms. Members will need to contact the Membership Secretary (membership@ease.org.uk) to activate their access to the account. Please be patient if you don't get an immediate response from her as she works part-time and you may have hit her day off!

My Life as an Editor – Paola De Castro

After 4 years on the Publications Committee of *European Science Editing* I have decided that I must shortlist my commitments, and unfortunately I have decided to step down. I will miss my colleagues and our bi-annual meetings, but sometimes one has to make difficult decisions. As a consequence (or punishment?), I was asked to be in the spotlight.

I got started as an editor by chance, and I learned by doing. I had been educated in Italy, and like most young people, I would accept any kind of work to find my independence. I was looking for a job in the 1980s armed with a degree in humanities and a love of studying foreign languages, and I was curious to meet people with cultures different from mine.

I started with secretarial work and translations and then enrolled at the National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, ISS; www.iss.it). The qualifications required were connected mainly with language skills and librarianship, and I easily passed the examinations. I was assigned to the Publishing Unit, and thus I became an editor. My boss presented me with a pile of documents and said that I should prepare them for printing! Although I liked the idea of collating and disseminating the results of research for the benefit of public health, I was completely unaware of what I had to do: I had no previous editorial experience and back then there was no internet to turn to for information. My first editorial work consisted of advising authors of technical reports about the most elementary rules for the correct layout of their manuscripts, which were to be printed in-house with a limited print run.

I started writing brief instructions for "my" authors and translated the ISO standard 5966/82 for the presentation of scientific and technical reports into Italian to help them in the editing their papers. Some years later I became involved in the production of a monthly newsletter, and later with *Annali dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità*, a quarterly publication in public health, indexed in Medline and other databases.

I started the first writing courses for researchers more than 10 years ago to support authors in the difficult task of getting published. More recently, within an international group of grey literature producers, I promoted the development of the GLISC guidelines for the production of scientific and technical reports (www.glisc.info), better known as Nancy Style from the International Conference on Grey Literature (held in Nancy, France, in 2006) where the guidelines were first presented.

A couple of years ago, my fellow editors at ISS and I translated the Vancouver style (www.icmje.org) into Italian to support authors and editors with a useful reference tool in their native language. In the same period, I supported the production of the EASE guidelines, which are now also available in many languages on the EASE website. The initial draft of the guidelines circulated through the EASE Forum and then they were discussed at the EASE Conference in Pisa (Italy) in 2009. I was a member of the Conference Program Committee and was involved in many organizational activities.

To make a long story short, I am now the head of the same Publishing Unit I shyly entered over 20 years ago, and I have witnessed the passage from paper only to electronic publications. We now deal with different activities related to the diffusion of scientific output: we manage a digital archive including public health literature produced by Italian researchers (DSpace.ISS.it), organize exhibitions, produce posters, leaflets, audiovisual material, etc. We are also involved in disseminating scientific culture in schools and preserving historical memories (from letters to scientific instruments, oral memories, old videos, etc). More recently, I have been involved in cooperative projects for the promotion of scientific writing and open access publication models in Europe and Latin America (www.necobelac.eu), and I am glad that some EASE members are able to share this project with me.

I think that experience gained should be transmitted to younger generations. This is why in more recent years I have become much more involved in editorial training activities than in the past, and I am also convinced that we have much to learn and gain from the younger generations, not only in terms of new technologies, but also in terms of enthusiasm and fresh ideas.

I often ask myself, what is my principal occupation? I am not a full time editor, although I am responsible for a Publishing Unit within a scientific institution producing over 1500 articles per year in national and international journals. I am satisfied with my present position as I have multiple opportunities to share experiences and develop new projects for the benefit of public health, a precious asset for people throughout the world. I am convinced that curiosity is the prime mover for a satisfactory job: if you lose interest in doing what you are doing, you should be able to change. This is one of the lessons I learnt from my life (as an editor).

In this sense, my professional life is a continuous search for improvement and innovation to provide access to valuable and validated information for safeguarding scientific and cultural progress, abating existing barriers to knowledge dissemination.

In the coming years I will most probably continue to look at the ISS publications and promote open access models for the safeguarding of the Southern part of the world. I will continue to post items in the ESE blog (that I created some years ago), follow the Forum discussions, and I will stay in touch with EASE members who proved so supportive on different occasions.

This Site I Like

Preventing avoidable chronic diseases

Avoidable chronic diseases account for the greatest healthcare burden and social burden of disease. Preventing chronic disease is cost-effective and can be a cost saving, reducing demand on our health are services. Prevention of chronic disease is a worldwide priority which needs long term strategies with support from public policies and health promotion.

Many organizations work on tackling lifestyle risk factors and addressing economic, social, and environmental determinants of avoidable chronic diseases. The National Heart Forum (NHF) (http://www.heartforum.org.uk) is a leading alliance which works in the areas of policy development and advocacy, information provision, research, and modelling of avoidable chronic diseases, both nationally and internationally. The information and resources that we provide may prove useful when you need to find out more about public health and the prevention of chronic disease.

We link extensively to what our members do and also other national and international organisations. We provide information on controlling the density of fast food outlets, the use of salt and sugar, creating healthier physical environments, promoting active travel and play, labelling of food, and modelling levels of obesity. We also promote work towards reducing health inequalities and tackling disease in low and middle income countries, highlighting the impact of climate change on public health and related areas. The website uses a variety of technical functionality to personalise content to the user, allowing users to select how they access information by using topic categories. There are plenty of feeds and newsletters to sign up to.

News briefings

The information services team provides a comprehensive range of free services on avoidable chronic diseases via e-news and e-research briefings. The briefings are abstracting services that you can receive via email, browse on the website, or get via alerts (RSS feeds). The e-news briefing collates published news stories from the media and press releases. The e-research briefing collates recently published peer-reviewed research mainly from journals or official reports.

Obesity Learning Centre

Another NHF website is the Obesity Learning Centre (OLC; http://www.obesitylearningcentre-nhf.org.uk), which was funded by the Department of Health and the Department for Education. The OLC supports those individuals who work in the community in tackling obesity, and so the audience of the website is varied and requires different information. We do not aim to replace any other obesity website or information service, but we highlight what they do on the OLC, acting as a portal. The OLC works closely with the National Obesity Observatory (http://www.noo.org.uk/) and Change4Life (http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life). We provide free tools, case studies, recently published news, and links to new resources and websites relevant to obesity. The OLC is also about sharing information, and we encourage professionals to discuss their local issues and share what works and doesn't work for them. As with the NHF website, we provide news feeds and newsletters that can be subscribed to.

NHF Chronic Disease eLibrary

The Chronic Disease eLibrary (http://62.49.40.20:7070/rmwp) is a unique repository of information resources relevant to chronic disease prevention. A lot of information in public health is grey, meaning it is rarely published, and the eLibrary collections contain abstracts and links to these resources: reports, abstracts and presentations, recommended reading, toolkits, articles, and guidelines. You can also download the references in other suitable formats. Information can also be found scattered across a number of websites and libraries, such as NHF Evidence (http://www.evidence.nhs.uk/default.aspx) and the WHO Global Info Base (https://apps.who.int/infobase/report.aspx).

Social media

A lot of news in chronic disease prevention can be found in social media. Many public health organisations tweet and blog regularly, and you can read tweets or blogs without being registered. We maintain one for all avoidable chronic disease (http://twitter.com/NHeartForum) and one for obesity alone (http://twitter.com/obesitylearning).

NHF Dashboard

The dashboard, using Netvibes (http://www.netvibes.com/nationalheartforum) contains listings for tables of contents for a range of prevention and epidemiology journals and key events. You can also find links to other relevant websites and journals on the dashboard. The dashboard is a method of delivering the most up to date information instantly. You do not need an account to access the dashboard.

Helena Korjonen
Associate Director Information Services,
National Heart Forum [city please]
helena.korjonen@heartforum.org.uk

News Notes

News Notes are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com). Please email items for inclusion to John Hilton (hilton.john@gmail.com) or Lionel Browne (lionel.browne@sfep.net), with "News Notes" as the subject.

TinyURLs may be given to save space and aid reading; full URLs (clickable links) can be found on the EASE Journal Blog.

Publishers' prize-giving

Several science publishers were recipients of awards from the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (APLSP) at its annual conference in September. The award for best new journal went to BMJ Group's *BMJ Case Reports* (http://casereports.bmj.com), recognizing its success in this less formal and less evidence-based area of medicine.

The Royal Society of Chemistry received a publishing innovation award for ChemSpider (http://chemspider.com), its free, searchable, linkable database of chemical structures.

In the e-book category, CRCnetBase (http://www.crcnetbase.com) from CRC Press was Best e-book Publisher, while Dawsonera (http://www.dawsonera.com), a web-based e-book collection, was highly commended. See http://awards.alpsp.org for a full list of winners.

Liquid publishing

The LiquidPub project (http://project.liquidpub.org) is a software platform that enables scientists to publish their research, as well as commenting on and "gathering" research within their own "journal". The goal is to allow scientists to easily collaborate and to allow the best research to be recognized on the basis of how scientists interact with it, and to promote quality over quantity. It allows scientists to bypass traditional peer review and a system that "encourages authors to write many (possibly incremental) papers to get more 'tokens of credit', generating often unnecessary dissemination overhead for themselves and for the community of reviewers."

The project leader, Fabio Casati, an information engineer at the University of Trento, envisions a new era of scientific journals created by researchers and validated by post-publication peer review by the "cloud" of users who promote the high-quality, useful work, and keep the garbage at bay.

Opening up the data

Open-access publisher BioMed Central (BMC) has put forward a position statement on accessibilty and sharing of scientific data on its blog (http://tinyurl.com/2vvam8m) and is inviting the scientific community to help devise an open data licensing policy. The statement proposes that any data accompanying a research article should be put in the public domain with a Creative Commons or similar licence.

BMC has also started an initiative to support and promote the sharing of scientific data in one of its journals, *BMC Research Notes*. The journal is asking for contributions in the form of Data Notes, which "briefly describe a biomedical data set or database, with the data being readily accessible and attributed to a source." The data should be accessible permanently.

The first article in the series, providing a dataset from studies of outcomes of prostate cancer surgery, was published in September (http://www.biomedcentral.com/1756-0500/3/234).

Springer Science+Business Media, owner of BMC, is launching its own series of open access e-journals under the banner SpringerOpen (http://www.springeropen.com). Taking inspiration, expertise and technology from BMC, SpringerOpen will start publishing 12 titles in early 2011, and institutions signed up to BMC's membership team will also get access to the new SpringerOpen titles.

Extra, extra! Don't read all about it

Many science journals include supplementary material with the web version of published articles., making the most of the extra space and multimedia options in the web format. But *Times Higher Education* reports how one journal has found the quantity of additional material too much to handle.

The *Journal of Neuroscience*, the official journal of the Society for Neuroscience, has taken the controversial step of ceasing publication of supplementary material. The journal's editor, John Maunsell, says that peer reviewers were struggling to cope with the quantity of supplementary material and were putting much less effort into reviewing it. "These additions are invariably subordinate or tangential, but they represent real work for authors and delay publication," he added. Authors are now being encouraged to embed videos on the journal website or on their own websites, alongside a statement that they haven't been peer reviewed.

For those wanting to learn more about supplementary material and how it's used, blogger Heather Piwowar has compiled a bibliography (http://tinyurl.com/389ebop).

New guidelines

The summer months have seen the publication of several new guidelines of relevance to science editors.

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) has updated its conflict of interest reporting form, replacing the October 2009 version (see http://www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf). The main change was the replacement of a question about competing interests of close family members with a more general question about influence of relationships. Other modifications have been made to aid clarity and translation.

In June, the ARRIVE guidelines for reporting on animal research were published in *PloS Biology* and five other journals (http://tinyurl.

com/3973fl4). Funded by the UK National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs), the guidelines were issued in response to an NC3Rs survey revealing serious deficiencies in the way animal research is reported and published. An accompanying editorial in *PloS Biology* points out that editors and publishers need to consider both the ethical treatment of animals and the need for scientific validity and replicability. The interplay of ethics and science is also of concern much further downstream in medical research.

The European Network of Centres for Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance (ENCePP) of the European Medicine Agency has developed a Code of Conduct for scientific independence and transparency in the conduct of pharmacoepidemiological and pharmacovigilance studies (http://tinyurl.com/ENCePP). The Code also addresses issues of publication and reporting of study results, and recommends following the Guidelines for Good Pharmacoepidemiology Practices (GPP) and the STROBE Statement.

Watching the defectives

Two new blogs provide a fascinating insight into the murkier aspects of science publishing.

Embargo Watch (http://embargowatch.wordpress.com), founded by Ivan Oransky, executive editor of Reuters Health and an assistant professor of medicine at New York University School of Medicine, looks at what happens when embargoes don't work in the public (or the publisher's) interest, and how news organizations can find themselves up against both powerful institutions and renegade bloggers.

Oransky's other blog, Retraction Watch (http://retractionwatch.wordpress.com) written in collaboration with Adam Marcus, examines the process of retraction and what happens to the scientists and their work. Along the way, they shed light on the way scientists and science journals respond to misconduct, error, and mishap.

Making climate data free for all

Meteorologists met in September to hammer out a solution to one of the thorniest problems in climate science: how to make raw climate data freely available to all. The workshop, held in Exeter, UK, in September, was hosted by Britain's Meteorological Office. It follows years of discussion within the climate science community, which wants to draw disparate climate data together into a single, comprehensive repository to streamline research. The effort has been given fresh urgency over the past year by the backlash against climate science that was sparked by the leaking of emails from the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, UK.

Ghostwriting in the drug industry

Journal articles on hormone replacement therapy (HRT) ghostwritten by medical writers employed by the pharmaceutical industry serially understated the treatment's risks and promoted unapproved uses, according to an analysis of industry documents. The analysis, published in the journal *PLoS Medicine*, is based on some 1500 emails, contracts, and other documents made public in July 2009, after the *New York Times* and *PLoS Medicine* successfully argued that their release would be in the public interest. Many thousands more papers remain sealed as part of ongoing lawsuits brought by more than 14,000 women against the drug maker Wyeth, which was bought last year by the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, based in New York.

The costs of misconduct

Editors who unearth misconduct in research or publication may need to spend considerable time and effort establishing the details of the misconduct and informing relevant institutions. But it's up to those institutions to take the necessary action, and for various reasons they may be reluctant or slow to act. A paper in *PLoS Medicine* highlights another reason for institutions to act decisively: the cost of preventing misconduct is much less than the expense of investigating a single case. Researchers at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, New York, looked at a specific investigation and estimated the direct costs to be $525,000.

How much for a positive outcome?

An analysis of the outcome of over 500 clinical trials of commonly prescribed drugs looked at the link between funding and published outcomes. The paper, published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, used data from http://clinicaltrials.gov. For those trials funded by pharmaceutical companies, 85% had positive outcomes, compared with 50% of government-funded trials and 72% of trials funded by other non-profit organizations. Furthermore, trials funded by industry were less likely to be published within two years of completion than those from other sources (http://www.annals.org/content/153/3/158).

Cross chemists

A survey of chemistry researchers in the United States revealed that many feel they have been insufficiently credited on published papers. The survey, published in the journal *Accountability in Research* and reported in *Times Higher Education*, looked at responses from about 600 academic chemists (16% response rate). Half felt they had not received appropriate credit for contributions to publications, and the same proportion had asked to have their name removed. One in five had discovered they were an author only after the paper had been submitted.

Plagiarism: here to stay?

Most publishers now use software to root out plagiarism in submitted work. The latest example, CrossCheck (http://www.crossref.org/crosscheck.html), is a tool that combines the iThenticate software with a literature database. *Nature News* has reported how CrossCheck has revealed surprisingly high levels of plagiarism in science journals from different publishers. An extreme example was in one of China's leading science journals, *Journal of Zhejiang University–Science*. CrossCheck was

used on 2233 submitted papers and revealed that 31% contained non-original material (http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v467/n7312/full/467153d.html).

But is plagiarism always bad? Some researchers and some publishers believe that self-plagiarism (when scientists re-use chunks of text from previous papers) is unavoidable and may be beneficial. A blog on *The Scientist* (http://www.the-scientist.com/blog/display/57676) points out that at least half of plagiarism "hits" may be self-plagiarism, and that most journal editors adopt a case-by-case approach to new cases.

Publishers' new clothes

Several science publishers or aggregators have relaunched or redecorated their online platforms in recent months, generally with the aim of better linking products and enabling broader searches. Wiley Interscience has been shut down and relaunched as Wiley Online Library (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com), a major restructuring and rebranding. Springer has updated its SpringerLink website (http://www.springerlink.com) to include semantic linking and searching, and Informa has a new-look site for its healthcare offerings (http://www.informahealthcare.com).

IngentaConnect presents content from multiple publishers on its revamped website (www.ingentaconnect.com), but JSTOR's addition of a facility to search across all JSTOR content on its new interface drew strong reactions from many in the library community. Their key concern was that JSTOR users at participating institutions with a subset of JSTOR collections could get search results pointing to content they could not access, and that JSTOR had not yet enabled OpenURL for all articles. This could make it difficult for libraries to redirect users to other copies of the articles that might be available to them.

In response, JSTOR issued an update to the interface changes. The default option for authenticated users on all search forms will be to search licensed content only. Authenticated users include those on campus or logged in via remote access. This change should reduce any potential frustration for authenticated users until JSTOR can extend support for OpenURL linking throughout the platform, at which point librarians will be able to direct their users to alternative options for accessing content not licensed through JSTOR.

Referencing for success

An analysis of over 50,000 papers published in the past 100 years in the journal *Science* suggests that it could pay to include more references. A long reference list could lead to more citations, a desirable outcome for most scientists.

The research, presented at the International Society for the Psychology of Science & Technology conference in August, showed that scientists who referenced more were more likely to be referenced themselves, and that one extra reference leads to, on average, one additional citation. Lead researcher Gregory Webster, from the University of Florida in Gainesville, told *Nature News* that "there is a ridiculously strong relationship between the number of citations a paper receives and its number of references". And it's not just *Science*. The effect was also observed in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* and *Evolution and Human Behavior*. Webster suggests that high citation counts arise from scientists exhibiting "tit-for-tat" behaviour.

An article in *The Scientist* magazine hints that journals may also be to blame. Removing restrictions on the number of citations allowed in a journal article, in the hope that it increases that journal's impact factor, may be encouraging unnecessary citations or self-citation (http://www.the-scientist.com/2010/8/1/29/1).

Systematic reviews register

Many organizations and journals now require clinical trials to be registered in accessible databases before they can be published, but that hasn't been the case for systematic reviews, as is proposed by the PRISMA Statement (http://www.prisma-statement.org/). The UK Centre for Reviews and Dissemination is addressing this by launching the Register of Ongoing Systematic Reviews (http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/projects/register.htm). The aims are to reduce publication bias, improve quality and transparency, and encourage publication of complete results. New reviews would be given unique identification numbers that can be used to identify related publications. An article in the 13 July issue of *The Lancet* explains the project in more detail.

SPARC praises SCOAP

SCOAP3, an innovative open access initiative set up by CERN, has been awarded the 2010 SPARC-Europe Award for Outstanding Achievements in Scholarly Communications. SPARC Europe (http://www.sparceurope.org) is an alliance of European research institutions and libraries. SCOAP3 (Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing; http://www.scopa3.org) was commended for its comprehensive approach to open access. CERN's director general, Rolf Heuer, said: "It is inspired by the same principles that our community has developed to tackle global scientific challenges: collaboration; consensus; innovation; openness; technology transfer and open access to knowledge."

Author-pays options

The *BMJ* has introduced author fees for its research articles, which have been open access since 1998 and remained so after the introduction of some access controls for non-research content in 2005. The publication fee will be relatively high (£2500) but will be payable only by authors who have research grants. The journal's editors maintain that the ability to pay will not affect editorial decisions. The *BMJ* is also launching *BMJ Open* (http://bmjopen.bmj.com), a new online open-access general medical journal that also has an author-pays model, but with a lower price tag (£1200).

US open access battle rumbles on

The Association of American Publishers (AAP) has warned that

US government mandates requiring free access to journal articles published by the private sector would undermine scientific communication, as well as jobs, exports and copyright protection. The AAP has stressed the distinction between the research that is funded by the government and the journal articles that validate and document the process, findings and significance of that research. Allan Adler, AAP's Vice President for Legal and Government Affairs, said, "Publishers invest hundreds of millions of dollars every year in the screening, peer review, editing and production of these journal articles. It is unfair for the government to expropriate these private-sector products without compensation and make them available free."

Commons communities

Are journal articles and traditional sources of information sufficient when it comes to bringing together the very latest data? Cancer Commons (http://cancercommons.com/cancer-commons-info.php) is an open science community supported by personalized medicine company CollabRx. The aim is for clinicians and researchers to post observations, "living case reports", hypotheses, and preliminary findings that are too early for formal publication but may be helpful to late-stage patients.

A similar model is used for OceanDocs (http://www.oceandocs.org), a new digital repository of marine science that includes preprints, technical reports, and working papers alongside published papers. Supported by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), OceanDocs is a partner to Aquatic Commons (http://aquacomm.fcla.edu), supported by the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC).

References changing the world

Software that sorts, sifts, and extracts data from a user's library of published scientific articles, then creates an organized, searchable directory that anyone can peruse, was voted the project "most likely to change the world for the better" at the *Guardian* Activate 2010 technology conference in July (http://www.guardian.co.uk/activate). Mendeley, first launched in April 2008, has grown rapidly and has about 400,000 users. *The Guardian* reported how the "iTunes for research papers" is hoping to accumulate 40 million more papers by the end of 2010. Mendeley can be downloaded from http://www.mendeley.com.

Science Online London

The Science Online London conference (http://www.scienceonlinelondon.org), held in the British Library in September, was an opportunity for researchers, publishers, journalists, and developers to discuss the changing way in which science is conducted, communicated, and disseminated. A useful archive of videos, blogs, and presentations from the conference are available on the *Of Schemes and Memes* blog, hosted by Nature Networks (http://tinyurl.com/2caugcc).

UK science austerity on its way

Researchers in the United Kingdom are anxiously waiting to see what damage may be inflicted on R&D funding by the government's budget deficit. Levels of funding for the next few years will be revealed in the government's Comprehensive Spending Review, due out on 20 October.

In a speech at Queen Mary, University of London, Vince Cable, the minister for business, innovation, and skills, spoke enthusiastically about science, but gave little away about the cuts to come. He pointed out that several countries, in similar financial straits, have decided to increase spending on research, such as the United States, China, Germany, and Sweden. But there was no indication that the United Kingdom would be going down this route. "My preference is to ration research funding by excellence and back research teams of international quality – and screen out mediocrity – regardless of where they are and what they do," Cable said.

Other researchers were not impressed."The UK leads the world in science and engineering, and yet today Dr Cable had nothing exciting or inspiring to say about government policy in this area," said Imran Khan, director of the Campaign for Science and Engineering. Richard Horton, editor of *The Lancet,* said: "Any contraction in the UK's science and higher education budgets will signal a narrowing of this country's vision for its role in the world, a withdrawal from its current international leadership role in science." There is some encouragement, perhaps, from the European Union's commissioner for research and innovation, who has announced that the EU will invest approximately €6.4 billion in research in 2011, the largest ever funding.

Top tips for editorial professionals

The UK's Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) has compiled two sets of top tips from its membership, one from the point of view of freelance copy-editors and proofreaders and one from the perspective of project managers and managing editors (http://www.sfep.org.uk/pub/faqs/toptips/toptips_default.asp). Rooted in years of experience, both sets highlight the things that are important to bear in mind when producing a readable publication without breaking the bank. Together they can provide a better understanding of everyone's roles in editorial projects, and of how they can best work together.

Multilingual WorldwideScience.org

The beta version of Multilingual WorldWideScience.org was launched in June in Helsinki, Finland, at the International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI) annual conference. It now provides the first-ever real-time searching and translation across globally dispersed, multilingual scientific literature. Multilingual WorldWideScience.org allows users to conduct a single query of over 70 nationally sponsored scientific databases from around the world. Results from the databases are combined, ranked by relevance, and then translated into the user's preferred language. At the time of the launch, nine languages were available

(Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian), and more languages will be added in the coming months. Since its inception in 2007, WorldWideScience.org has grown from searching 12 databases in 10 countries to searching over 70 databases in 66 countries, covering more than 400 million pages of science.

Research integrity guidelines

While acknowledging national and cultural differences, delegates at the 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity concluded that all scientists share a set of values that can serve as the foundation for global guidelines that promote research integrity. The conference, held in Singapore in July and co-sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is producing a draft statement of international research integrity recommendations for release this autumn. The final statement will cover a broad range of topics, including peer review, proper credit for publications, and practices to pre-empt research misconduct. It will also confirm that research integrity is an essential part of science's service to society.

New group tackles European copyright

The European Network for Copyright in Support of Education and Science (ENCES) has been set up to lobby for changes in European copyright law in support of education and science. ENCES believes that despite the ever increasing availability and accessibility of information,"copyright regimes increasingly erect artificial borders that get in the way of scientific freedom and the pursuit of knowledge."

Steering a middle course

A new journal, *Hypotheses in the Life Sciences*, will publish papers that introduce new ideas in biology that"advance or challenge scientific thinking". The papers will be chosen primarily with the guidance of the editorial board, which includes the recently fired editor-in-chief of Elsevier journal *Medical Hypotheses*. The journal was set up after Elsevier decided to institute a more traditional peer review process at the once editorially reviewed journal.

The founding editor of the new journal says:"What a journal of this sort can provide is a certain amount of scientific quality control, but without attempting to be definitely authoritative and without some of the restrictions that come from conventional peer review." (http://www.the-scientist.com/blog/display/57554)

Scandinavian open access initiatives

Three Scandinavian institutions have recently proposed open access policies. Sweden's Royal Library (Kungliga biblioteket) promises to provide immediate open access to digital versions of all material by its employees published in magazines and journals. Another Swedish body, the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Riksbank Tercentenary Foundation), now requires all grant-funded work to be open access, and will pay fees where necessary. Denmark's Open Access Committee recommends that all Danish universities adopt open access mandates and that Danish academic publishers actively consider open access.

PLoS ignores impact factors

The Public Library of Science (PLoS) has decided"to stop promoting journal impact factors on our sites altogether. It's time to move on, and focus efforts on more sophisticated, flexible and meaningful measures." The statement, published on the PLoS Blog (http://tinyurl.com/3yb4xzs) follows the release of the 2008 impact factor data, showing significant increases for all PLoS's journals. But PLoS believes that individual article metrics are a more useful measure of the impact of published science and better reflect the way scientists access published research.

DOIs in the popular press

The CrossRef newsletter reports on the appearance of DOIs (digital object indentifiers) in the mainstream media, giving readers a reliable way to access the original research. An example can be seen on the ScienceDaily website (http://tinyurl.com/5vtwx5). Publishers can promote the use of DOIs by making sure they are included in citations used in public relations materials.

EndNote gets an upgrade

Thomson Reuters has released a major new version of the popular bibliographic management software EndNote. The new version, codenamed X4, enables users to import PDFs and offers a neater "Cite While You Write" facility that includes a boggling 4500 journal styles. EndNote X4 is for Windows and Mac users and is fully compatible with Microsoft Word 2010. A video showcasing the new features is on the EndNote website (http://www.endnote.com).

Peer review turned around

Elsevier is piloting a new approach to peer review: let the reviewers choose what they want to review. The new system, called PeerChoice, will be trialled for three months in the journal *Chemical Physics Letters*, and Elsevier hopes it will speed up peer review and avoid the problem of reviewers being asked to review articles outside their area of expertise.

The Editor's Bookshelf

Please write to annamaria.rossi@iss.it or pennylhubbard@gmail.com if you wish to send new items or become a member of the EASE journal blog (http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com) and see your postings published in the journal.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Bowden J, Jackson D, Thompson SG. **Modelling multiple sources of dissemination bias in meta-analysis.** *Statistics in Medicine* 2010;29:945-955.
Asymmetry in the funnel plot for a meta-analysis suggests dissemination bias, perhaps caused by publication bias or selective reporting by authors. That studies with statistically significant results or larger effect sizes are more likely to be published gives a biased picture of the evidence. The article considers a realistic scenario in which statistical methods can be used look for potential effects of multiple biases in meta-analysis.
doi: 10.1002/sim.3813

Gøtzsche PC, Delamothe T, Godlee F, Lundh A. **Adequacy of authors' replies to criticism raised in electronic letters to the editor: cohort study.** *BMJ* 2010;341:c3926.
Letters to the editor are an essential part of scientific debate and may alert readers to limitations in research papers that have been overlooked by the authors, peer reviewers, and editors. A study of research papers published in the *BMJ* that had received substantive criticism shows that authors are reluctant to respond to criticism of their work, although they are more likely to respond when criticisms are severe. Editors should ensure that authors take relevant criticism seriously and respond adequately to it.
http://www.bmj.com/content/341/bmj.c3926.full

Kojima T, Barron JP. **Changes in the ethos of medical publications as reflected in progressive alterations in the uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals (1979-2008).** *Chest* 2010;137:1479–1482.
In 1979, what became the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) published the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals, a document which has become the standard submission format for hundreds of international journals. This article discusses the changes in the document over its 30-year history; changes which include a general move towards greater transparency and concern for ethical issues in biomedical research.
doi 10.1378/chest.09-3024

Moher D, Schulz KF, Simera I, Altman DG. **Guidance for developers of health research reporting guidelines.** *PLoS Medicine* 2010;7(2):e1000217.
Nowadays the quality of reporting in most healthcare journals may be inadequate. Many publications lack clarity, transparency, and completeness in describing how the research was carried out. Use of reporting guidelines should improve the quality of reporting health research. This paper provides guidance on developing such guidelines, including an 18-step checklist. Some of the items are optional, but a core set of steps can aid in ensuring adequate development of a reporting guideline. This checklist is now available on the EQUATOR Network website (http://tinyurl.com/34plmr8). As well as researchers who write reports, it could also aid peer reviewers and editors to strengthen manuscript review.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1000217

Rosenfeld RM. **How to review journal manuscripts.** *Otolaryngology – Head Neck Surgery* 2010;142(4):472–486.
Reviewing manuscripts is central to editorial peer review. A common complaint of nearly all journal editors is difficulty in finding competent reviewers: identifying content experts is relatively easy, but finding those with expertise in both content and reviewing is quite another matter. Assuming the reviewer has appropriate expertise and is free of conflicts of interest, this article provides suggestions on how to review a manuscript, including goals of editorial peer review, the structure of a manuscript review, criteria of the general comments section, assessment of internal validity (methodological quality) and external validity (generalizability), ethical aspects, and composition.
doi:10.1016/j.otohns.2010.02.010

ETHICAL ISSUES

Lacasse JR, Leo J. **Ghostwriting at elite academic medical centers in the United States** *PLoS Medicine* 2010;7(2):e1000230.
In 2009 the Institute of Medicine recommended that US-based academic medical centers enact policies that prohibit ghostwriting by their faculty members. These authors found that few medical centers have such public policies, and many of the existing policies are ambiguous or ill-defined. They propose an unambiguous policy which defines participating in medical ghostwriting as academic misconduct akin to plagiarism or falsifying data.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1000230

Liesegang TJ. **Peer review should continue after publication.** *American Journal of Ophtalmology* 2010;149(3):35.
Readers assume that articles published in peer-reviewed journals are scientifically valid, but evidence to the contrary exists. The most common errors in articles involve methodology or study design. Journals are responsible for the integrity of peer-reviewed literature, but many manuscripts are not reviewed by the best in the field.

The International Committee of Journal Medical Editors (ICJME) agrees that editors should correct the literature by critique of the articles through correspondence and then by publishing corrections or retractions. Correspondence should lead to correction of mistakes and initiation of a dialogue between reasearchers and clinicians. Publication should be only the start of the peer-review process, since many readers possess the critical skills to judge the content and interpretation of studies and can detect faulty data.
doi:10.1016/j.ajo.2009.11.015

McGauran N, Wieseler B, Kreis J. **Reporting bias in medical research – a narrative review.** *Trials* 2010;11:37.
Reporting bias is widespread in the medical literature. Prospective registration of trials and public access to data should be introduced worldwide, allowing independent review of research data and ensuring that ethical obligations are met, and also providing a basis for fully-informed decision-making.
http://www.trialsjournal.com/content/11/1/37

Souder L. **A rhetorical analysis of apologies for scientific misconduct: do they really mean it?** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 2010;16:175-184.
Published acknowledgements of scientific misconduct can be sincere or a mere ritual. By comparing published retractions and letters of apology with the letters that charge misconduct, it is possible to assess whether the apology was sincere. Although most published acknowledgements of misconduct do use language strategically to minimise culpability, most still satisfy, to some degree, the concerns raised.
http://www.springerlink.com/content/695602346198p00j

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

European Medical Writers Association. **Business in medical writing: a monographic issue.** *The Write Stuff* 2010;19(2):78–163.
Two articles tackle whether medical writing activities add value that can be seen as a tangible investment, also in terms of return on investment (p. 96–100). The issue also contains a small collection of "acquiring-knowledge-to-help-you-in-business" articles: one gives an overview of aspects of publications management within organizations that produce a large number of publications, and compares two electronic tracking programmes for managing publications, complying with good publication practice guidelines (p. 105–9). Among other articles are guidance on word order in written English, helpful for non-native speakers of English; a report of a controversial case of plagiarism; topic based writing, in which information is structured in a modular way instead of a linear way.

Kim TY, Coenen A, Hardiker N. **A quality improvement model for health care terminologies.** *Journal of Biomedical Information* 2010;17 August.
This paper introduces a terminology quality improvement (TQI) model formulated through a synthesis of the literature and validated by use of a case study with the International Classification for Nursing Practice. A TQI model or framework would be useful for various stakeholders to guide terminology selection, to assess the quality of healthcare terminologies, and to make improvements according to an agreed standard. The TQI model encompasses structure, process, and outcome components in relation to a terminology life cycle: change-request, editing, and publication.
doi: 10.1016/j.jbi.2010.08.006

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Nicholas D, Williams P, Rowlands I. **Researchers' e-journal use and information seeking behaviour.** *Journal of Information Science* 2010;36:494–516.
Computer usage logs give an accurate picture of researchers' online behaviour and show that e-journals are the main means of access. Gateway services are widely used, re-intermediating the link between publisher and reader.
http://jis.sagepub.com/content/36/4/494

PUBLISHING

Björk BC, Welling P, Laakso M. **Open access to the scientific journal literature: situation 2009.** *PLoS One* 2010;5:e11273.
One in five research papers published in 2008 is currently available free online. Researchers at the Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki, Finland, checked the availability of 1837 randomly selected articles from the Scopus database (http://info.scopus.com). They found that 8.5% were freely available on the publishers' websites, with a further 11.9% available on authors' websites or in repositories. Earth sciences had the highest proportion of open-access (OA) articles (33%), while chemistry had the lowest (13%). In the life sciences, most OA articles were "gold" (free at publishers' websites), while in other disciplines, most were "green" (only available on authors' websites or in repositories).
http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0011273

Corbyn Z. **An easy way to boost a paper's citations.** *Nature* 2010;13 August.
Scientists who reference the work of their peers are more likely to find their own work referenced in turn. The study by Gregory Webster gathered data from the Web of Science database for all 53,894 articles and review articles published in *Science* between 1901 and 2000. Contrary to what might be predicted, review articles showed less relationship between citations and references than did standard articles. These results should be interpreted with caution, as different subjects have different citation patterns.
doi: 10.1038/news.2010.406

Heckenberg A, Druml C. **Gender aspects in medical publication – the Wiener Klinische Wochenschrift.**

Wiener Klinische Wochenschrift 2010;122:141–145.
Worldwide, about half of students starting medical school are female, but a much lower proportion of women reach leading positions. Among manuscripts submitted to the journal *Wiener Klinische Wochenschrift* from 2002 to 2007, the number of female authors increased – by 2007 to 30% (and up to 50% in some specialties). Review papers or invited editorials were rarely authored by female researchers. Furthermore, only a small percentage of peer reviewers are female, although the quality of their reviews is generally better. Medical journals should play their part in eliminating these gender inequalities.

Kaiser J. **Free journals grow amid ongoing debate.** *Science* 2010;329(5994):896–898.
The open access movement is claiming success, with publishers producing hundreds of free-to-read, peer-reviewed journals. The most prominent publisher, the Public Library of Science (PLoS), launched its first journal, *PLoS Biology*, in 2003. A recent study found that 20% of peer-reviewed articles across all disciplines are freely available, mainly through journals or as manuscripts in online repositories. But is open access speeding scientific progress, or is it encouraging mediocre work? The field has received a boost in recent years from public-access policies at funding agencies, and the future of open access will depend on what funding agencies do, particularly on the subsidies they provide.
doi: 10.1126/science.329.5994.896

RESEARCH EVALUATION

Craig ID. **Introducing SNIP to the Journal of Sexual Medicine.** *Journal of Sexual Medicine* 2010;7:2661–2662.
The Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) is a new journal indicator based on citation data derived from Elsevier's Scopus. It combines characteristics of how well a journal is cited with characteristics of the subject area in which it exists. It overcomes existing problems in delineating the related journals that constitute a journal's subject area. The SNIP indicator is undoubtedly a smarter indicator than the impact factor and is relatively simple to understand. Whether it will replace the impact factor is thus far an open question.
doi: 10.1111/j.1743-6109.2010.01907.x

Fanelli D. **Do pressures to publish increase scientists' bias? An empirical support from US states data.** *PLoS One* 2010;5(4):e10271.
The growing competition culture in academia may conflict with objectivity and integrity in research, because it forces scientists to produce "publishable" results at all costs. Papers reporting "negative" results are less likely to be published and cited Therefore, if publication pressures promote scientific bias, the frequency of "positive" results in the literature should be higher in the more competitive and "productive" academic environments. This study verified this hypothesis by measuring the frequency of positive results in a large random sample of papers in all disciplines with their corresponding author based in a US state. These conclusions could apply to all scientifically advanced countries.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0010271

Finch A. **Can we do better than existing author citation metrics?** *Bioessays* 2010;32:744–747.
This article reviewing author citation metrics available finds that the journal impact factor is a wholly inadequate means of evaluating authors. The main reasons for this are disparities between subject areas and variation in the quality of articles within a journal. T Measures such as the h-index and its variants significantly improve the impact factor in evaluating authors but still show limitations. A recently proposed metric, the Author Superiority Index (ASI), corrects some problems of the h-index but is dependent upon volume of papers published. Each of these metrics is able to describe only a small part of the whole and should thus accompany experts' peer review.
doi: 10.1002/bies.201000053

Larsen PO, von Ins M. **The rate of growth in scientific publication and the decline in coverage provided by Science Citation Index.** *Scientometrics* 2010;84(3):575–603.
Based on the growth rate of scientific publication from 1907 to 2007, data from a number of literature databases including the Science Citation Index (SCI) and Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), show that traditional scientific literature (publication in peer-reviewed journals) is still increasing, although big differences exist between fields. Important recent changes in publication methods include open access archives, publications on the net, and the increasing role of conference proceedings. But this is only partially reflected in the databases. In particular, the growth rate for SCI is smaller than for comparable databases, and its coverage is especially low in some of the scientific areas with the highest growth rates, including computer science and engineering sciences. What is then problematic is that SCI serves as the dominant source for science indicators based on publication and citation numbers.
doi: 10.1007/s11192-010-0202-z

SCIENCE

Editors. **Social relationships are key to health, and to health policy.** *PloS Medicine* 2010;7(8):e1000334.
Observational studies have documented the association between social relationships and beneficial effects on health outcomes such as mortality. This systematic review retrieved data from a large body of literature and reported that stronger relationships were associated with a 50% increased chance of survival over the course of the studies. Mortality associated with lack of social relationships is similar to that for notorious risk factors such as smoking. Because the mechanisms through which social relationships affect health are unclear, designing effective social interventions at a population level to lead to improved health outcomes is problematical.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1000334

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Hartley J. **Writing a structured abstract for the thesis.** *Psychology Teaching Review* 2010;16(1):98–100.
An analysis of sources containing advice on how to write abstracts for the PhD reveals that advice is often inappropriate for some situations. Students should thus check their institution's regulations, examine abstracts in theses of students in their departments, and consult with their supervisors as to what is required.

Ohman EM, Roe MT, Armstrong PW. **Public sensationalism and clinical trials: how to address the challenges of science?** *American Journal of Medicine* 2010;123:481–483.
Ensuring that clinical trials proceed rationally and without sensationalism will better determine risks and benefits of a therapy. There needs to be trust and transparency between the scientific community and industry, and an effective data safety monitoring board to prevent bias and allow trials to reach their full potential.
http://www.amjmed.com/article/PIIS0002934309011504/fulltext

Sena ES, van der Worp HB, Bath PM. **Publication bias in reports of animal stroke studies leads to major overstatement of efficacy.** *PLoS Biology* 2010;8:e1000344.
The existence and impact of publication bias in laboratory sciences was explored via the CAMARADES (Collaborative Approach to Meta-analysis and Review of Animal Data in Experimental Studies) database to find systematic reviews of animal studies of acute ischaemic stroke. Of the 525 publications identified, 10 reported no significant effects on infarct volume, and six lacked at least one significant finding. Statistical analysis showed that publication bias may account for about one-third of the efficacy reported in systematic reviews. One estimate is that over 200 experiments conducted in this field have not been reported.
http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.1000344

Shrager J. **The promise and perils of pre-publication review: a multi-agent simulation of biomedical discovery under varying levels of review stringency.** *PLoS One* 2010;5(5):e10782
A web-based review process must be carefully designed to allow for easy filtering of publications based upon their review type and quality. The author used a multi-agent simulation of treatment selection and outcome in a patient population to examine how various levels of pre-publication review might accelerate or hinder scientific progress. The results do not answer the specific question but show that both completely unreviewed and very strictly reviewed scientific communication seems likely to hinder scientific progress. This relatively simple model suggests general principles and reveals interesting phenomena for further analysis.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0010782

Stanbrook MB, Héber. **Disseminate time-sensitive research faster.** *CMAJ* 2010;182(1):9.
Traditional dissemination processes used by researchers, policy-makers, regulators, and journals may prove inadequate for health professionals and the public, particularly during health emergencies or for reporting possible new risks of widely prescribed therapies. Communication of important research findings that have immediate implications for public health should be improved. All stakeholders in the publication process should develop the capacity to make the process work faster when speed is critical. In such cases, the important steps of peer review and revision should be accelerated, ensuring at the same time their quality and integrity, which are even more essential during health emergencies as they ensure credibility.
doi: 10.1503/cmaj.092077

Van Eperen L, Marincola FM, Strohm J. **Bridging the divide between science and journalism** *Journal of Translational Medicine* 2010;8:25.
It is important for scientists and journalists to bridge their communication divide. Reducing years of research into a headline can be extremely difficult and certainly doesn't come naturally to every scientist. This article offers practical tips for scientists looking to work with the media to communicate findings, helping them to assist the public in making better informed decisions about healthcare. They may also personally benefit from increased funding, enhanced career opportunities, and more "cross-fertilization" of their research and ideas across broad disciplines. According to http://plainlanguage.gov, a recent study showed that medical articles reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and then reported in the *New York Times* receive about 73% more citations in medical reports than articles not reported there.
doi: 10.1186/1479-5876-8-25

Wiley S. **Down with reviews: review articles simply don't deserve all the citations they receive.** *The Scientist* 2010;24:31.
The relatively high citations for some review articles indicates that they are increasingly being cited in place of primary sources, either because a review conveniently summarizes multiple primary sources or because the primary source was overlooked.
http://www.the-scientist.com/article/display/57236/

Thanks to John Hilton.

Farewell, Paola

After four years on the *ESE* publications committee and The Editor's Bookshelf, our friend Paola De Castri is stepping down to focus on her other commitments. Paola has been a valued member of the committee and her bubbly presence at meetings will most definitely be missed. She initiated and set up the very successful EASE journal blog, on which many enthusiastic bloggers have contributed to The Editor's Bookshelf, News Notes and Webwatch. We would like to thank Paola for all her efforts and wish her the very best in her future endeavours.

Forthcoming Meetings, Courses, and BELS Examinations

Mediterranean Editors and Translators Meeting 2010 (METM10)
28–30 October 2010; Tarragona, Spain
http://www.metmeetings.org/index.php?page=metm10_call

National Association of Science Writers: Annual Meeting
4–9 November 2010, ; New Haven, USA
http://www.nasw.org/meeting/

Knowledge Globalization Conference 2010
5–7 November 2010, Boston, USA
http://www.kglobal.org

11th Annual EMBO/EMBL Science and Society Conference: The Difference between the Sexes – From Biology to Behaviour
5–6 November 2010; Heidelberg, Germany
http://www.embo.org/events

Editing medical journals: short course
10–12 November 2010; Oxford, UK
www.pspconsulting.org/medical-short.shtml

31st European Medical Writers Association Conference
11–13 November 2010; Nice, France
http://www.emwa.org/Conferences.html

Society of Editors Annual Conference
14–16 November 2010; Glasgow, UK
http://www.societyofeditors.co.uk

Eastern Mediterranean Medical Journalism Conference
3–5 December 2010; Karachi, Pakistan
www.emro.who.int/EMAME

6th International Digital Curation Conference
6–8 December 2010; Chicago, USA
http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/conferences/6th-international-digital-curation-conference

American Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Meeting: Science without Borders
17–21 February 2011; Washington, DC, USA
http:www.aaas.org/meetings

STM Annual Spring Conference
26–28 Apr 2011; Washington DC, USA
http://www.stm-assoc.org/event.php?event_id=59

CSE Annual Meeting
29 April–3 May 2011; Baltimore, USA
http://www.councilscienceeditors.org

GAC-MAC-SEG-SGA Annual Meeting
25-27 May 2011; Ottawa, Canada
http://www.gacmacottawa2011.ca

11th International Symposium on Landslides and Engineered Slopes
2–8 June 2011; Banff, Alberta, Canada
http://www.ISL-NASL2012.ca

European Association for Health Information and Libraries "Health information without frontiers"
4–6 July 2012; Brussels, Belgium
http://www.eahil2012.be/

COURSES

ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates
Half-day and one-day courses and updates.
Contact Amanda Whiting, Training Coordinator, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Tel: +44 (0)1865 247776; training@alpsp.org; www.alpsp-training.org

Publishing Training Centre at Book House, London
Contact: The Publishing Training Centre at Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8874 2718; fax +44 (0)20 8870 8985, publishing.training@bookhouse.co.uk
www.train4publishing.co.uk

Society for Editors and Proofreaders
SfEP runs one-day workshops in London and occasionally elsewhere in the UK on copy-editing, proofreading, grammar, and much else.
Training enquiries: tel: +44 (0)20 8785 5617; trainingenquiries@sfep.org.uk
Other enquiries: SfEP, Erico House, 93-99 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London SW15 2TG, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8785 5617; administration@sfep.org.uk; www.sfep.org.uk

Society of Indexers workshops
The Society of Indexers runs workshops for beginners and more experienced indexers in various cities in the UK.
Details and booking at www.indexers.org.uk; admin@indexers.org.uk

University of Chicago
Medical writing, editing, and ethics are among the many courses available.
Graham School of General Studies, The University of Chicago, 1427 E. 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. Fax +1 773 702 6814.
http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu

University of Oxford, Department for Continuing Education
Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science, and technology.
Contact Leanne Banns, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK.
Tel: +44 (0)1865 286953; fax +44 (0)1865 286934; leanne.banns@conted.ox.ac.uk
www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev

BELS - Board of Editors in the Life Sciences examination schedule
See: www.bels.org/becomeeditor/exam-schedule.htm

20 November 2010; Park Ridge, NJ; register by 30 October

EASE Business

EASE training course, February 2011

We are pleased to announce that Pippa Smart (an EASE member) has offered to run her course, "How to be a successful journal editor", which she teaches annually for ALPSP (the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers) in the UK. For EASE, she has agreed to travel to Warsaw, Poland, where Edward Towpik will host the course on behalf of the National Cancer Center and the Nowotwory Journal of Oncology. We hope that this will make the course more accessible to our editors in central and eastern Europe.

The course will be held the weekend of 5-6 February 2011. Costs for EASE members are £199 for early registration (before 15 November) and £249 after that; for non-members, £249 for early registration, and £349 after 15 November.

Accommodation will be available in a nearby hotel (www.hotelursynow.pl) but will not be included in the course, so that people may make their own arrangements if they prefer. If you wish to stay at the Hotel Ursynów, book your rooms individually, quoting the block reservation: EASE.

If you are interested in attending, please contact the EASE secretary (secretary@ease.org.uk).

EASE in the news

As EASE has expanded its internet presence, it seemed a good idea to track our cyber-footprint. By signing on to Google News Alerts I am informed whenever Google's search engine finds something related to our association. Most of what comes in relates to the website's links to sister organizations, affinity groups and bibliographic mentions – just what one would expect.

So it was something of a surprise when our mostly Eurocentric association turned up in an article published in *The Philippine Star*, just two paragraphs after mention of *Nature*. Entitled "The impact of Filipino scientists on world science", the article (http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=593335&publicationSubCategoryId=75, or http://tinyurl.com/24445m8) discusses the problems of measuring impact, and cites EASE's Statement on Inappropriate Use of Impact Factors (2007; see www.ease.org.uk).

Do we need new indicators to measure this kind of electronic impact?

If you come across other interesting or unexpected mentions of our association, please let us know (email mcooter3@gmail.com).

Membership changes - new members

Ms Susanne Backer
Max-Planck Institute for Demographic Research
Rostock, Germany
Scientific Editor
backer@demogr.mpg.de

Ms Elea Giménez Toledo
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas
Madrid, Spain

Dr Tiina Ikäheimo
International Association of Circumpolar Health Publishers
Oulu, Finland
International Journal of Circumpolar Health
tiina.ikaheimo@oulu.fi

Dr Brett Kraabel
Meylan, France
Physical Review
contact@p-sciences-communication.com
www.p-sciences-communication.com

Morgan Lyons
Compuscript Ltd
Shannon, Ireland
General manager
m.lyons@compuscript.com

Mr James A Mullins
Paris, France
American Journal of Medicine; *Atomium Culture*
jmullins@orange.fr

Mrs Catherine Parker
Lincoln, UK
Freelance proofreader
michael.parker38@btopenworld.com

Sponsorship of Author Guidelines

Thanks to Waleria Młyniec for sponsoring the printing of the Author Guidelines produced by Sylwia Ufnalska. The print copies were distributed at the EuroScience Open Forum in Turin, the World AIDS Congress in Vienna, and a Research Integrity conference in Singapore. Response to the Guidelines has been enthusiastic and we are most grateful that Waleria enabled them to be made available in print format for these events.