News notes

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Some of these items are taken from the EASE journal blog (http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.co.uk) where full URLs may be found

ICMJE on data sharing statements

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) announced that it will require a data sharing statement on all clinical trials to be published after 1 July 2018 in all the journals affiliated with ICMJE. The requirement is about a data sharing statement, not data sharing itself, so a statement that no data will be available after the trial ends would fulfil the requirement. Some said that the committee should have gone further to encourage trial authors to share their data for further research.

Peer Community In

The 'Peer Community In' project, launched earlier this year, aims to build invited communities of researchers to both review and recommend papers in a particular field. The site works by allowing authors to post preprints from open repositories and ask for the work to be recommended to the community, who then review it. The non-profit organisation, started by a group of scientists based at INRA Institute in France, launched with Peer Community in Evolutionary Biology (evolbiol.peercommunityin.org). You can read more about the details of the project at peercommunityin.org.

PubMed updates

A recent update to PubMed (pubmed. gov) included two new features of interest to editors. Conflict of interest statements will (if supplied by publishers) now be listed after the abstract, giving greater prominence. Secondly, editorial expressions of concern are now available as explicitly labelled links, rather than being handled as comments.

More fake peer reviews

In April the publisher Springer retracted 107 papers from the journal *Tumor Biology*, following the discovery of faked peer reviews. Retraction Watch (retractionwatch.com; 14 June 2017) reports how the investigation that followed also prompted an additional 12 retractions in *Molecular Neurobiology*. Many also had issues with plagiarism that were not noticed pre-publication because the plagiarism was of other submitted papers (submitted within a narrow time frame). Some authorship queries also emerged during the investigation. Springer Nature is looking at ways to improve its manuscript handling processes.

Journal appeal policies

Many journals have policies and processes for allowing authors to appeal rejections, but how much do we know about these processes and how often are they used? A survey of 20 journals revealed that appeal processes varied between journals, with "little evidence of any detailed, reproducible, or established appeal policies in operation" and limited information on the numbers of appeals (*Learned Publishing* 2017;30:227-231). The authors call for more evidence-based approaches to appeal processes.

European Open Science Cloud

At a summit meeting in Brussels, held on 12 June, proposals for a European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) received broad support from key stakeholders. The EOSC, described by Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, as "The New Republic of Letters", will provide a safe and straightforward means for researchers to store and access data. *Nature* reports that the event revealed some divergent views on the direction of the project (*Nature* 2017;546:451), which will need to be brought together. You can read about the pilot project at eoscpilot.eu.

NEJM summit on data sharing

Jeffrey Drazen, editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine,* called for a "culture change" within the scientific community so that the generation of high-quality data was valued as much as published papers. He made the remarks at a summit held by the journal in Boston, USA, in April 2017. The summit sought to explore the balance between the benefits of data sharing and concerns about privacy or misuse, and was held in the wake of the 'research parasite' controversy last year, when that phrase was used in an editorial about data sharing in the journal.

RePAIR and CLUE

Following last year's meeting on retractions ('Keeping the Pool Clean: Prevention and Management of Misconduct Related Retractions, Fort Collins, USA, July 2016), a multi-disciplinary working group set out to define the responsibilities of all stakeholders (researchers, institutions, publishers, agencies) handling cases of research or publication misconduct, and to identify barriers for those groups. The resulting RePAIR guidelines have since been updated following consultation, and they are available on the COPE website (publicationethics.org/repair-consensus-guidelines). Exploring further how journals and institutions should work together, the CLUE (Cooperation and Liaison between Universities and Editors) guidelines (*bioXriv* 2017; 139170) offer six core recommendations, with elaborations. The CLUE guidelines were the output of a meeting hosted by the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), with financial support from COPE, building on discussions at the 2013 World Conference of Research Integrity in Montreal.

Cabells blacklist

Cabells launched in June its blacklist of journals that deceive authors or readers through their publishing practices. The list, covering more than 3000 titles, is available to institutions upon the payment of subscription fee. Cabells has worked on the blacklist for more than a year, using the inclusion criteria openly available on their website (www.

cabells.com), and claims to provide journal-level reasons for inclusion, subject to a yearly appeal from the journal itself. The blacklist is not identical with the Jeffrey Beall's now-defunct list of 'potential, possible or probable' predatory journals (closed by its author in January), although Beall has worked as a consultant at Cabells.

Peer review in 2030

Ever wondered what peer review might be like in 2030? That was the theme for discussions at the SpotOn London conference in November 2016 (events.biomedcentral.com/spoton). A report based on the meeting, and co-ordinated by the SpotOn organisers, BioMed Central and Digital Science, highlights four areas that will be key to improving peer review: experimentation with models; reviewer diversity; training and support; and using artificial intelligence. You can download the report from the BioMed Central Blog (blogs.biomedcentral.com/bmcblog; 2 May 2017).

Crowd peer review

The journal *Synlett* has been experimenting with "intelligent crowd reviewing". The journal's editorial team worked with developers to create a forum to enable an invited group of reviewers to comment on uploaded manuscripts. Over 100 reviewers took part, providing comments on manuscripts over a 72-hour period. Each of the ten manuscripts they tested received dozens of peer reviews, meaning that the peer review was both quick and broad. Benefits are that reviewers can choose which papers to work on and can read their fellow reviewers' comments.

Clarivate acquires Publons

Publons (publons.com), the peer review recognition platform launched in 2012, has been acquired by Clarivate Analytics, the company that owns Web of Science and the Journal Citation Reports, as part of its aim to improve efficiency across all aspects of research. Publons recently launched the Publons Academy (publons.com/academy), a peer review training course linking early career researchers with expert editors.

TRUST project

TRUST (trust-project.eu) is a Horizon 2020-funded project to improve adherence to high ethical standards, across all disciplines and settings. The project aims to deliver a series of codes and tools, with a focus on funder engagement.

Funders statement on trials transparency

A group of 15 research funders has issued a joint statement on clinical trials transparency, endorsed by the World Health Organization. The funders, including Médecins Sans Frontières, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the British, Indian, and Norwegian Medical Research Councils, committed to requiring all funded clinical trials to be registered and the results publically disclosed, within specific time frames.

European Commission a publisher?

The European Commission spends more than €10 billion a year on research, so it's perhaps not surprising that it is considering a move into publishing, following the recent publishing ventures set up by two other major funders: The Wellcome Trust and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As reported in *Science* (sciencemag.org; 29 March 2017), the Commission is considering which models might work, and the idea was discussed at a meeting of the Open Science Policy Platform.

Concern about expressions of concern?

Expressions of concern are an important tool for editors wishing to notify the academic community about potential issues relating to published research, but they are used infrequently. A recent study looked in more detail at their usage and found that while usage was increasing, there was inconsistency in the way expressions of concern were displayed, managed and indexed. About a quarter were followed by a retraction. You can read more in *Research Integrity and Peer Review* (2017;2:10).

FORCE11 RIAP

A group set up within FORCE11 (force11.org) is exploring the feasibility and barriers to publishing research reports, ideas, and proposals ('RIAP') as preprints. These documents are usually only available in closed repositories or are not published, but provide valuable information on ongoing and planned research. The first step will be to develop guidelines for publishing such works, followed by the development of a platform using the Open Science Framework (osf.io).

Denmark changes misconduct approach

In Denmark, from 1 July, all allegations relating to research misconduct (defined as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism) will be investigated by a new Board for the Prevention of Scientific Misconduct. Institutions will be required to forward allegations to the new Board, but will retain responsibility for allegations of 'questionable research practices' and must have publically available policies for doing so.

Reporting Summary document

The Nature journals are now requiring authors of papers in life sciences to complete a new Reporting Summary document, to be published alongside the paper, with the aim of providing full and transparent details to enable reproducibility. The document will include full details of experimental design, reagents, and analysis, and is available at www.nature.com/authors/policies/availability.html.

Peer review monument

A crowdfunded monument to celebrate the peer review process was unveiled in Moscow, in May. The monument, located outside Higher School of Economics, is in the form of a dice, displaying on its sides the 'Accept', 'Minor Changes', 'Major Changes', 'Revise and Resubmit' and 'Reject'. As reported in *Nature* (26 May 2017), the man behind the monument, Igor Chirikov, wanted to pay tribute to the "invisible heroes of science".

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