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Management Committee
FERCSL

RESEARCH INTEGRITY & RESEARCH MALPRACTICE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Commonwealth Medical Association
24th Triennial Conference
14 to 16 October, 2016

Satellite meeting on Open Access Publishing – 15 October
Symposium on Ethics Issues in Clinical Trials – 16 October

- ✘ Prof. Paul Braunschweiger – Research Integrity & Reproducibility
- ✘ Dr. Asiri Rodrigo – Research integrity & misconduct
- ✘ Dr. B. J. C. Perera – Publication integrity



INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH

- ✘ Conducting research with **integrity** means doing research in a way which allows others to have trust and confidence in your methods, your findings and any publications based on your research.
- ✘ It means meeting the professional standards expected of researchers.
- ✘ These are built on five core elements: **freedom of inquiry; honesty; rigour; transparency and open communication; and care and respect.**



RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

- ✗ Fabrication,
- ✗ Falsification,
- ✗ Plagiarism in research

in

- ✗ Proposing,
- ✗ Performing,
- ✗ Reviewing, or in
- ✗ Reporting results



RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

- ✘ Deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviations from accepted practice in carrying out research

- ✘ NOT honest errors or differences of opinion



EXAMPLES

- ✘ Stealing research ideas of other workers without acknowledging
 - + Such as previous studies on the same subject
- ✘ Repeating studies with a control arm when evidence of benefit from intervention is overwhelmingly beneficial
- ✘ Title suggesting a wider population than sample
- ✘ Justification not adequate for degree of risk or inconvenience to participants

- Asiri Rodrigo

JUGGLING DATA

✘ False data

- + Changing results
- + Filling in blanks of unanswered questions in a questionnaire
- + Falsification of data to obtain funding

✘ Fabrication

- + Multiplication of data sets



'PHOTOSHOPPING'

- ✘ Alteration of photographs by the insertion of details, or removal of something, **is not allowed**
- ✘ However, adjusting brightness and contrast to show up details **is allowed**



THREATS TO RESEARCH INTEGRITY

- ✘ Personal bias and self deception
 - + Randomization is a way to avoid bias
 - + Conversely, errors introduce bias in research
- ✘ Career advancement
- ✘ Pressure to produce results
- ✘ Making exaggerated claims
 - + Low data quality leads to non-reproducibility



AUTHORSHIP CONCERNS - 1

- ✘ Gift authorship – Including as an author the name of a renowned researcher to facilitate acceptance of a paper.
- ✘ “...has revealed that 53 per cent of doctors who submitted papers to publications indulged in plagiarism. Fifty-six per cent resorted to alteration of data while the most commonly observed misconduct was offering 'gift authorship' or giving false credit for research, which was done by 65 per cent of the doctors reviewed.”

- A pan-India audit survey by the state-run Lady Hardinge Medical College and Maulana Azad Medical College, published in the latest issue of the Indian Journal of Medical Ethics,



AUTHORSHIP CONCERNS - 2

- ✘ Honorary authorship – listing of uninvolved people as co-authors of research papers
 - + e.g. a head of Department
- ✘ Controlled by requesting details of contributions made by each individual towards the article

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_authorship#Honorary_authorship



AUTHORSHIP CONCERNS - 3

- ✘ Ghost authorship – when an individual makes a substantial contribution to the research or the writing of the report, but is not listed as an author.
- ✘ Merck routinely paid medical writing companies to prepare journal manuscripts, and subsequently recruited external, academically affiliated researchers to pose as the authors.

References next slide



SELECT REFERENCES

Gøtzsche, P.C., Hróbjartsson, A., Johansen, H.K., Haahr, M.T., Altman, D.G., Chan, A.-W. (2007). "Ghost authorship in industry-initiated randomised trials". *PLoS Medicine*. 4 (1): 47–52. [doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0040019](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.0040019)

Ross, Joseph S.; Hill, Kevin P.; Egilman, David S.; Krumholz, Harlan M. (2008). "Guest Authorship and Ghostwriting in Publications Related to Rofecoxib: A Case Study of Industry Documents from Rofecoxib Litigation". *JAMA: the Journal of the American Medical Association*. 299 (15): 1800–12.





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