

# **Quality publishing in a digital environment**

**From Pippa Smart**

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Crossref LIVE Brazil

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# Publishers, editors and trust

- "It must be true, I read it in a journal"
- Responsibility in the scientific community
  - To the development of knowledge
  - To the public
  - To readers
  - To authors
  - To reviewers, editorial boards, to parent organisations and Associations, to publishers

# It's not all about ethics ...

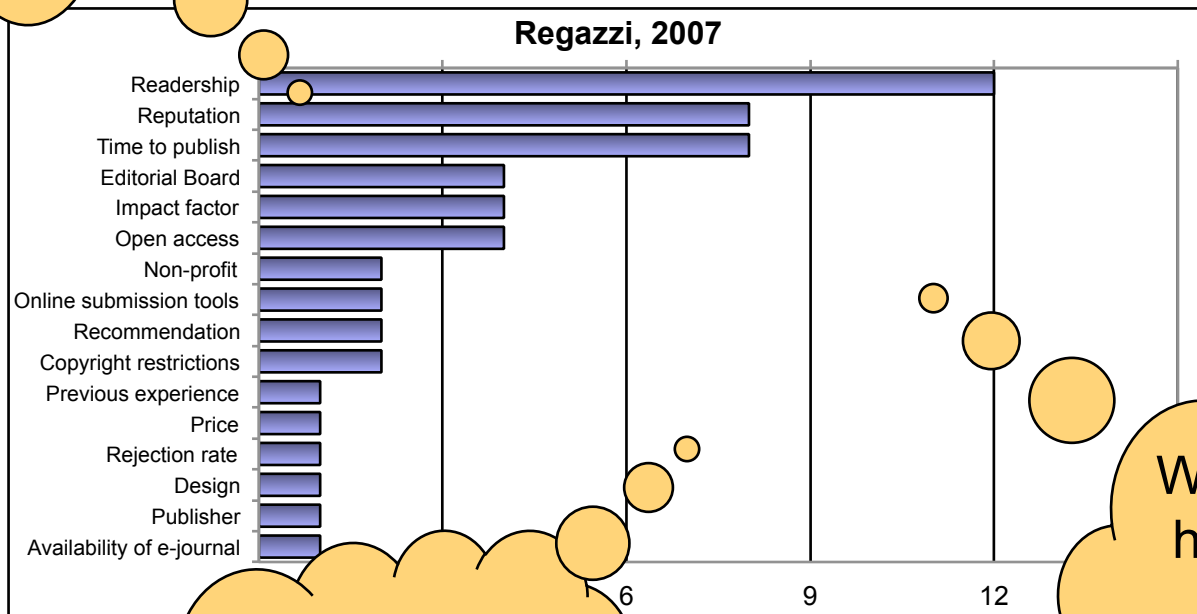
- This talk will cover
  - Authors
  - Readers and quality
  - Ethics
  - Problems (and some solutions)



# Supporting Authors

# Do you understand your authors ...

Will my  
peers read  
this?



How quickly  
can I get my  
article  
published?

Will publishing  
here give me  
sufficient  
credit?

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## Why Publish in PLOS Medicine?

Choosing where to send a paper is always a difficult decision. Here are ten ways in which you will benefit by publishing your paper in PLOS Medicine rather than another top-tier journal.

- 1. Wide dissemination.** PLOS Medicine is the leading open-access medical journal, providing an innovative and influential venue for research and comment on the major challenges to human health worldwide. As an open access journal, articles in PLOS Medicine will always be freely available online, from our Web site and from PubMed Central, to anyone with internet access. This means that your work will have the broadest possible audience. And [recent studies](#) have begun to suggest that open access articles get downloaded and cited more frequently.
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- 8. Your research has the chance to have a high impact.** There are a number of ways of measuring a journal's impact, including the influence it has on health policy, how widely read its papers are, and how frequently the papers are cited by other researchers. For a more information on impact factors see this [blog](#) and for wider discussion of impact see the [June 2006 Editorial](#).
- 9. Publicity.** We send out weekly press releases on papers published by PLOS Medicine to ensure that papers have the greatest chance of being covered accurately by the media.
- 10. Comments.** PLOS Medicine provides comments to facilitate community evaluation and discourse around published articles. See our [guidelines explaining how you can add comments](#) to any PLOS Medicine article.



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## Research

These articles should report original research studies that can improve decision making in medical practice, policy, education, or research and will be understandable by general medical readers.

All research studies published in the BMJ must follow the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki. In this, we aim to appraise the ethical aspects of research. Research involving human participants, whatever the setting, including research, audit, and sometimes the very rare occasions that we publish

To learn more about the kind of research we offer to authors of research, please read [research to the BMJ](#). And, as it is not always clear what to do at the time of presubmission inquiries, particularly at busy times, this checklist may help you decide [when to submit your research](#). Please note that we welcome research with "negative" results - as long as their research is new, and relevant to general readers and the BMJ.

You may also want to know more about the BMJ's [publishing model](#), and read our [FAQs](#) about it.

We audit the performance of all BMJ research articles using a range of indicators to assess their impact on readers and on the wider world.

The BMJ's Impact Factor is 12.827 (ISI Web of Science). Over 5 million unique users download 5.9 million pages (ABCe audit, October 2008).

Further down this page there are full details on how to submit articles for the BMJ, but first please read this information on editorial policies:

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The full text of every research article published in the BMJ is accessible on bmj.com through [open access](#). Even the full text of all research articles is also sent, without fee, to PubMed Central, the National Library of Medicine, which makes it fully accessible without delay. This means



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### Author Services Menu

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- Journal Authors
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  - Register
  - My Publications
  - Find a Journal
  - Editorial Policies
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    - Author Rights and Benefits
    - FAQs
- Book Authors
  - Book Authors Home
  - Life of a book
  - Preparing proposals
  - Preparing the text
  - Preparing illustrations
  - Accompanying material
  - Author Checklist
  - Permissions clearance
  - Sales and marketing
  - Links
  - Book Author Contacts
  - Royalties

### Author Resources

The following links provide guidance generally applicable to the submission of manuscripts and preparation of artwork as well as information on further matters of interest to journal authors. Please be sure to view the Author Guidelines by Journal at the right for specific information on submitting to your chosen journal.

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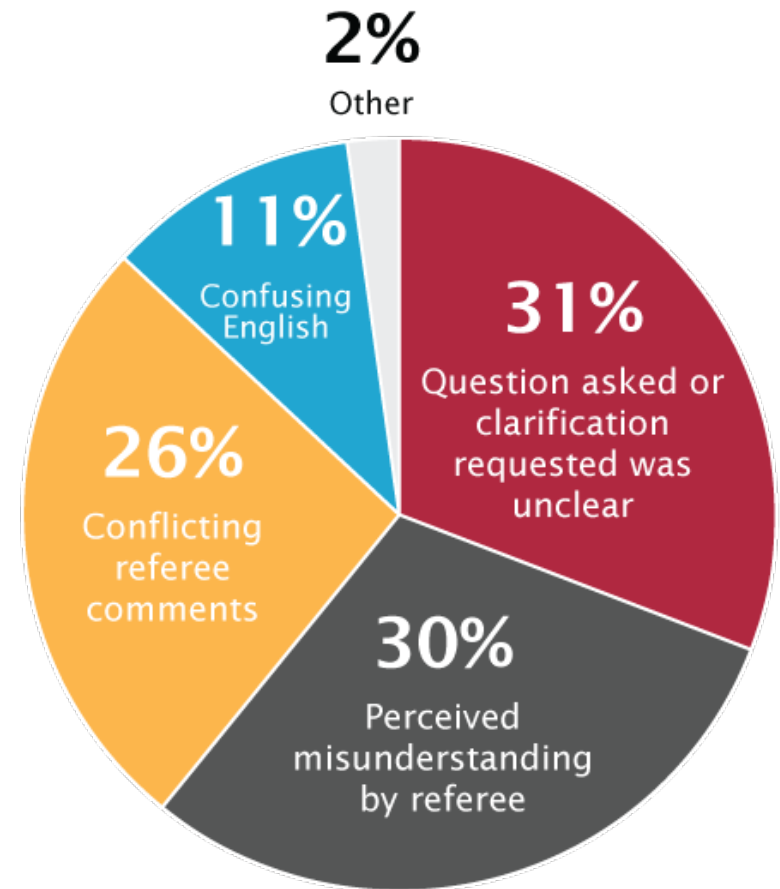
- Your author guidelines?
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# Authors don't understand reviewer feedback

- From Edanz survey of Chinese authors
  - Is this the same for all authors?



<http://www.edanzediting.com/white-paper>

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# Moral and legal obligations

- Intellectual property rights
  - Rewriting without authorisation
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- Timely publication
- Confidentiality
  - Data protection

# **Quality Content & Peer Review**



# Peer review ...

**it is slow, expensive,  
largely a lottery,  
poor at detecting  
errors and fraud,  
anti-innovatory,  
biased, and prone to  
abuse**



Richard Smith

Richard Smith, BMJ Blogs, March 22, 2010

# Transparency and bias

- Triple blind
  - Only the Managing Editor knows the identities of authors/reviewers
- Double blind
  - Authors' and reviewers' names withheld
- Single blind
  - Authors' name revealed to reviewer
- Open
  - Authors' and reviewers' names known to each other
- Public
  - As Open, but review published with article

Research article

Highly accessed

Open Access

## Time trends in municipal distribution patterns of cancer mortality in Spain

Gonzalo López-Abente<sup>12\*</sup>, Nuria Aragonés<sup>12</sup>, Beatriz Pérez-Gómez<sup>12</sup>, Marina Pollán<sup>12</sup>, Javier García-Pérez<sup>12</sup>, Rebeca Ramis<sup>12</sup> and Pablo Fernández-Navarro<sup>12</sup>

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For all author emails, please [log on](#).

*BMC Cancer* 2014, **14**:535 doi:10.1186/1471-2407-14-535

The electronic version of this article is the complete one and can be found online at:  
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2407/14/535>

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**BMC Cancer**

Epidemiology,  
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Volume 14

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## Pre-publication history

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BMC Cancer 2014, **14**:535 doi:10.1186/1471-2407-14-535

## Pre-publication versions of this article and reviewers' reports

Original Submission - Version 1	<a href="#">Manuscript</a>	06 Feb 2014
Reviewer's Report	<a href="#">Wan Qing Chen</a>	20 May 2014
Reviewer's Report	<a href="#">Roberto Zanetti</a>	05 Jun 2014
Resubmission - Version 2	<a href="#">Manuscript</a> <a href="#">Author's comment</a>	09 Jun 2014
Reviewer's Report	<a href="#">Wan Qing Chen</a>	02 Jul 2014
Editorial acceptance		04 Jul 2014
Published		24 Jul 2014

## BMC Cancer

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# Review – experiments

- Quality of review
  - "Methodologically accurate" or novel and exciting?
  - PLOS One and other mega journals
- Collaborative review
  - Reviewers discuss and agree recommendation
  - Frontiers journals
- Cascading review
  - "Top" journal refers (good)rejections to other journals
  - BMC journals, Wiley and F1000Research
- Open/closed reviews
  - Article made public for comment whilst being reviewed
  - Copernicus journals, F1000Research

# How to improve reviews?

## Questions? Checklists?

- Some journals use questions:
  - Does the paper add to the research?
  - Are the conclusions supported by the data
  - Any ethical concerns?
- Some use checklists:
  - Importance
  - Writing quality
  - Conceptual rigor
  - Methodological rigor

**Reviewer Report Form**

**Please note: We only need your responses (codes) to the questions.**

Before completing your review, please read carefully the [Instructions](#) in mind that this information will not be shared with the authors. Even Form responses; 2) the Comments to the Editor; and 3) the Comment Please do not mail a hard copy as well.

**A. Importance of the topics/issues to the field of consumer research**

- 4 Extremely important
- 3 Important
- 2 Modest
- 1 Trivial
- 0 Unimportant

**B. Quality of writing and other presentations (figures, tables, exhibits)**

- 4 Superior
- 3 Good
- 2 Minor Problems
- 1 Major Problems
- 0 Completely Inadequate

**C. Conceptual rigor (clarity of objectives, treatment of relevant literature,**

- 4 Superior
- 3 Good
- 2 Minor Problems
- 1 Major Problems
- 0 Completely Inadequate

# Quality Content: Ethics

# Ethical problems

- Bad research
  - Lack of ethical approval
  - Lack of adherence to reporting guidelines
- Author problems
  - Disagreements, disputes
- Plagiarism, copyright
  - Theft of ideas and content
- Conflicts of interest
  - Authors, reviewers, editors, owners

# What is ethical research?

- Require authors to follow the Declaration of Helsinki
- Statement of ethics approval
  - With name of ethics committee, board, ID, etc.
  - Participant informed consent
- But ... “full ethical approval” does not guarantee “ethical”
- Whose standards do you accept – those of the authors’ country, or your own country?

# Reporting guidelines

- EQUATOR NETWORK
  - <http://www.equator-network.org>
  - “works to improve the reliability and value of medical research literature by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of research studies”
- Links to guidelines – CONSORT, etc.
- Toolkits for authors, editors, peer reviewers, etc.

The resource centre for good reporting of health research studies



## Library for health research reporting

The Library contains a comprehensive searchable database of reporting guidelines and also links to other resources relevant to research reporting.



Search for reporting  
guidelines



Visit the library for  
more resources



## Key reporting guidelines

<a href="#">CONSORT</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>   <a href="#">Flow Diagram</a>
<a href="#">STROBE</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>
<a href="#">PRISMA</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>   <a href="#">Flow Diagram</a>
<a href="#">STARD</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>   <a href="#">Flow Diagram</a>
<a href="#">COREQ</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>
<a href="#">ENTREQ</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>
<a href="#">SQUIRE</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>
<a href="#">CHEERS</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>
<a href="#">CARE</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>   <a href="#">Checklist</a>
<a href="#">SAMPL</a>	<a href="#">Full Record</a>



## Toolkits

The EQUATOR Network works to improve the reliability and value of medical research literature by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of research studies.

Our Toolkits support different user groups, including:

### Authors

Information and resources  
for authors



## EQUATOR highlights

### 16/04/2014 - [The STROBE Statement webinar recording now available](#)

The recording of the EQUATOR – PAHO March 2014 webinar on the STROBE Statement [Read More](#)

### 17/03/2014 - [Scientific meeting and the EQUATOR Annual Lecture 2014, 16 May 2014, Paris, France](#)

The INSERM-Sorbonne Paris Cite Epidemiology and Statistics Research Centre in collaboration with the EQUATOR Network will be hosting a one-day scientific meeting: "Improving reporting to decrease the waste of research". The aim of the meeting is to bring important issues ... [Read More](#)

## News

### [EQUATOR Network Newsletter April 2014](#) 25/04/2014

[Implementation of reporting guidelines in journals: Wolters Kluwer experience](#)  
15/04/2014

[Collaborative initiative involving 28 rehabilitation and disability journals](#)  
9/04/2014

[Videos from Lancet/NIHR "Waste in Research" symposium available online](#)  
8/04/2014



# Authorship problems

- Real authors omitted
  - Error? Mistake? Fraud?
- Which author first?
- Which author do you deal with?
  - Does the corresponding author (really) represent all authors?
- Disagreement over submitted version
  - Disagreement over corrections/changes

# Ghost or guest?

- Ghosts = write but are not acknowledged
  - Articles written by professional authors on behalf of (pharmaceutical) companies
- Guests = don't write, but are listed
  - (author celebrity to give article kudos)
- Gift authors = don't write, but are listed
  - (head of department, etc.)



# Authorship criteria

- ICMJE definition
  - “An “author” is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study”
  - i.e. contributed to the idea AND execution AND writing of the study
- “All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support.”

# Plagiarism vs copyright

- Plagiarism
  - Re-use without credit
- Copyright infringement
  - Re-use without permission
- Schools (academia, institutions) enforce plagiarism
- The courts enforce copyright infringement
- <http://www.plagiarismchecker.com/plagiarism-vs-copyright.php>

# Levels of plagiarism

- Full text copy
  - Someone else's article
  - Author's own article (self-plagiarism)
- Partial copy
  - Parts from one other article
  - Parts from many articles
- Translation
  - Own or other's article
- ... Without citation!



# Why plagiarism happens

- Laziness
  - Authors do not bother to re-create their own work when they find it already written elsewhere
- Deceit
  - Authors want to get credit for something they did not write
- Misguided respect
  - Authors feel that they cannot write something better

# Conflict of interest

- Funding
  - Who paid?
- Relationships
  - “I am married to the editor”
  - Chaos, Solitons & Fractals
    - 60 articles by the editor during 2008
- Remember: COI also applies to editors
  - And reviewers
  - And publishers/owners



# Quality Content: Presentation



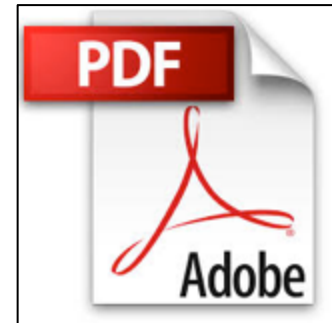
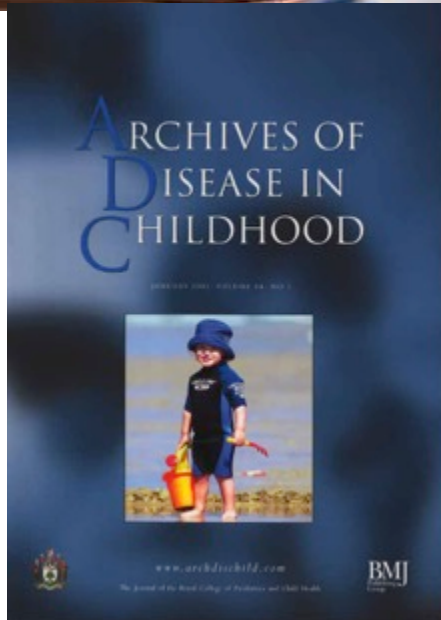
# Does technology matter?

- Meeting expectations
  - Discoverability
    - Can I find the content I want?
    - Can people find my content?
  - Access
    - Can I read the content I find?
    - Can people (I care about) read my content?
  - Appearance
    - Does this look credible?
    - Is my work made to look credible?

# Appearance matters



# Access (technology) matters



# Is it credible?

## Retraction Watch

Tracking retractions as a window into the scientific process





# Publishing and editing initiatives

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## 2) Publishing best practice and basic standards for inclusion

Here are some publishing best practices. These are not ideas generated by DOAJ but are common publishing standards for online journals and digital posting. We have also consulted [OASPA's Code of Conduct](#) and we are co-authors to the [Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#). Where stated, some of the items below are counted as *basic requirements for inclusion in DOAJ*.

### Coverage:

- Subject: all scientific and scholarly subjects are covered in DOAJ. We use the [Library of Congress Classification Outline](#).
- Types of resource: scientific and scholarly periodicals that publish research or review papers in full text.
- Acceptable sources: academic, government, commercial, non-profit and private sources are all acceptable.
- Level: the primary target group should be researchers. If the journal is run by a student body, the journal must have an advisory board of which at least two members have a PhD or equivalent.
- Content: at least a third of the content should consist of [original research and/or review papers](#). All content should be available in [full text on the site without embargo](#). See our [policy for journals that publish case reports](#).
- [All languages are accepted](#).



# **Anticipating and dealing with problems**



# Journal policies

- Set policies
- Publicise them
- ...e.g....
- What you expect from authors
- What happens during your publishing process
- How you deal with problems
  - How you anticipate and avoid problems

## Other aspects of transparency

Please click on the links to find these policies:

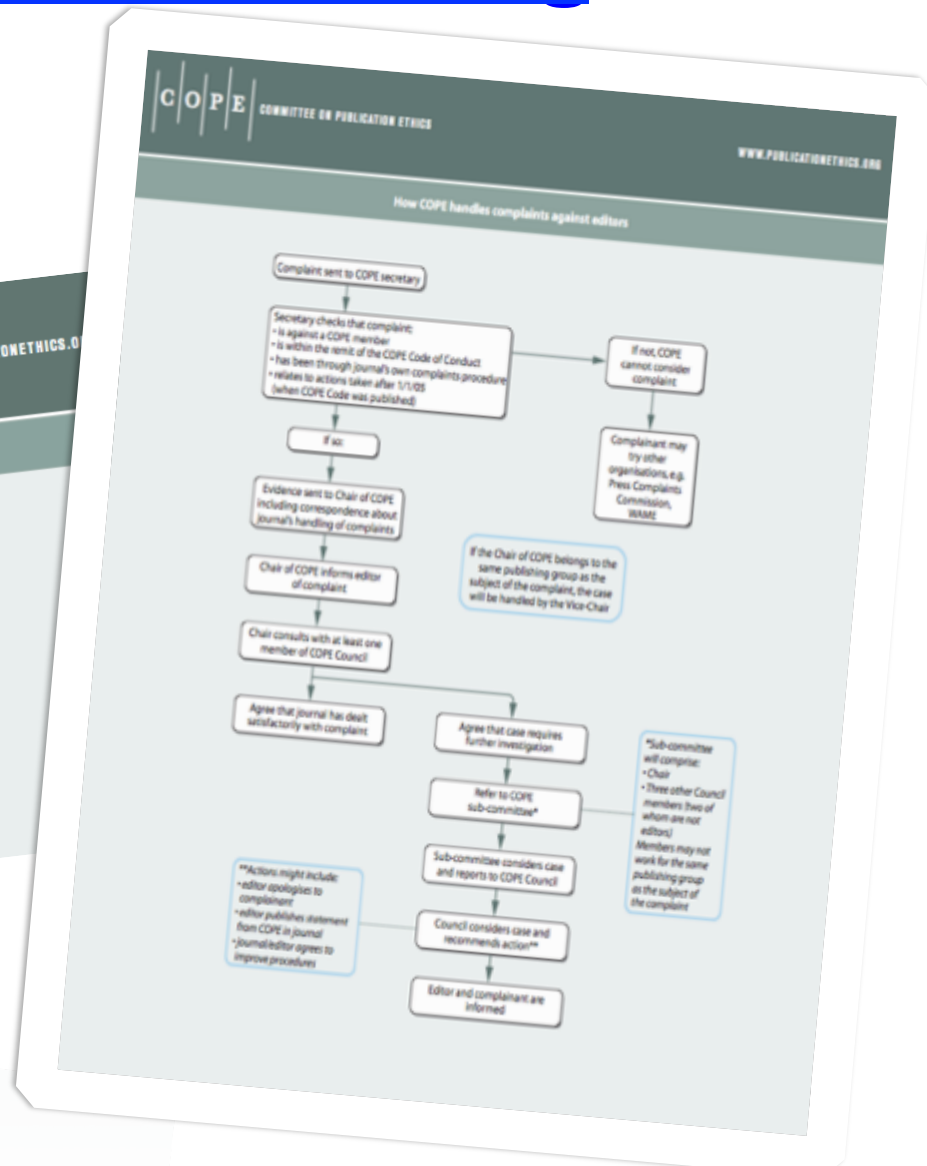
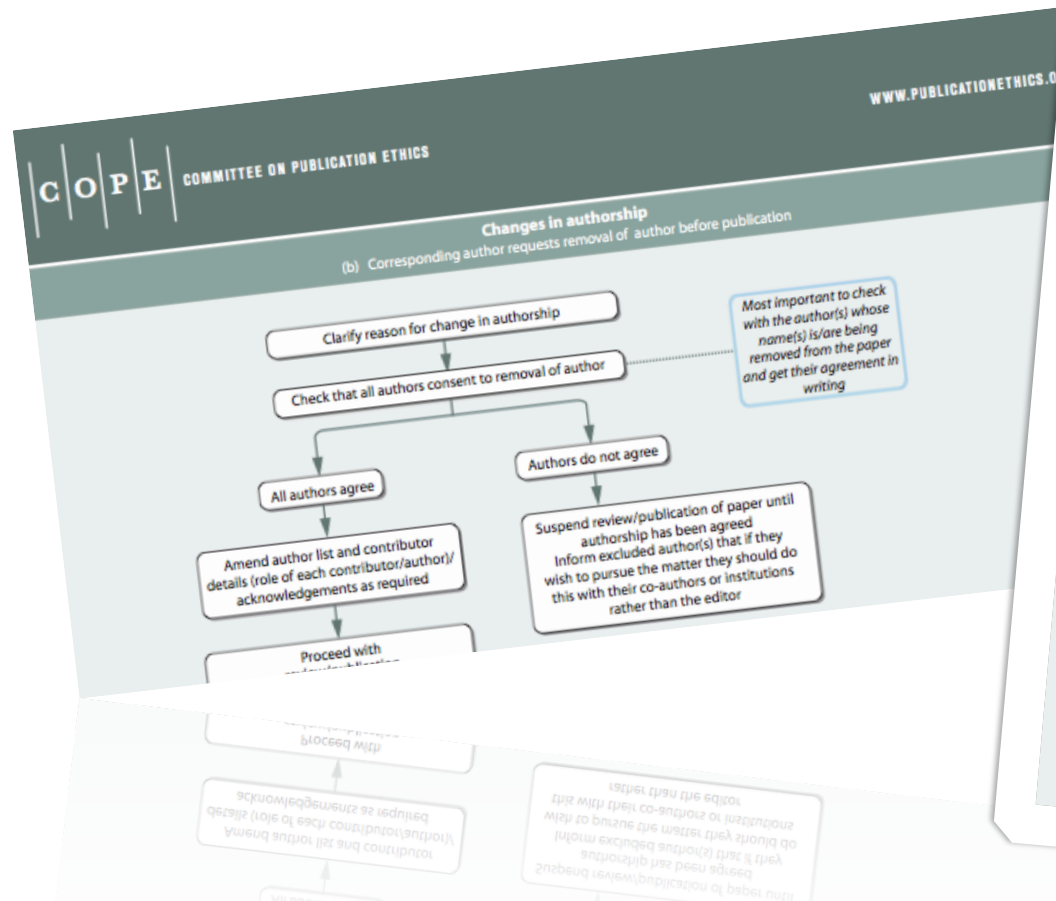
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- [ethics approval of research](#)
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# Responding to problems

- Everyone will want you to do something NOW
  - Stop and think
  - Send holding emails
  - Don't ignore it
- Investigate
  - Follow COPE guidelines (if available)
- Be certain of facts before action
- The problem may be minor
- The problem may not be yours to solve!

# Committee on Publication Ethics

<http://publicationethics.org>



# Erratum and corrections

- Link to/from the original article
  - These are not always picked up on PubMed Central
  - CrossMark (from CrossRef) to indicate changes, and any supplementary material
- Change the original article?
  - May be more helpful to the readers
  - Clearly signpost what has been changed and when

# Retractions

- Ensure you have conclusive evidence to support your decision
  - And your evidence is in writing, and any investigation is completed
- All authors should be contacted
  - If required, the authors' institutions should be informed
- A reason for the retraction should be published
  - And agreed with the authors
  - It should include the word “Retraction” before the article title

# Participate

- Join editorial associations
- Join publishing associations
- Stay aware of what is happening
  - Blogs: Scholarly Kitchen, RetractionWatch
  - Journals: Learned Publishing, European Science Editing
  - ListServes: LibLicence

# **Thank you!**

Credit for slides and content: Pippa Smart (pippa.smart@gmail.com)

