



Ethics Policy

This policy has been adapted from the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) site, see Policy of the World Association of Medical Editors at <http://www.wame.org/resources/wame-ethics-resources>.

Documented review and approval from a formally constituted review Board or ethics committee is required for any study involving people, medical records or human tissue. Informed consent or its equivalent as decided by a properly constituted Medical Research Ethics Committee (MREC) is required. This is particularly relevant in the intensive care environment where direct informed consent may be impossible. In the absence of informed consent, assent from the patient's advocate must be sought and retrospective consent sought from the patient. A statement to this effect must be included in the paper.

Audit

Under UK guidelines some retrospective data collection may be considered to be clinical audit. Some clarity can be gleaned from this website: <http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/applications/is-your-project-research/>

or

<http://www.nres.nhs.uk/news-and-publications/news/nres-sops-version-5/>.

There is also an algorithm for deciding if a project requires ethical review: Does my project require review by a Research Ethics Committee?

It is essential that documentary evidence is provided to show that this process had been used in determining the status of the work. Usually this is in the form of a registration number from the local Research and Development (R&D) Department or documentation from an MREC that the work has been designated as an audit.

Service evaluation is designed to measure or define current practice. It is not intended to be generalised beyond the setting in which it takes place and does not require ethical approval. Again, evidence that an R&D department or an ethics committee has designated this as service evaluation is required. See <http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/applications/approval-requirements/nhs-rd-approval/>

Animal experiments of any kind must be fully compliant with national ethical and regulatory licencing agreements and documented as such.

There must be evidence of consultation with an independent body. All articles should contain a statement relating to the position regarding the nature of the paper and the position of either an ethical committee or a R&D department regarding the paper.

Authorship

Designation as an author of a submitted paper implies that the individual has made a significant intellectual contribution to the project, with a role in writing and reviewing the final manuscript, although relative contributions of authors may vary. The precise level of involvement should be documented in the covering letter.

All authors must take responsibility for the accuracy of the manuscript; one author should take responsibility for the integrity of the manuscript as a whole, for access to the entire dataset and must be prepared to answer questions relating to the manuscript.

Previous publication

JICS seeks to publish original material, whether research, audit or review, therefore articles should not have been published previously. For purposes of prior publication, web-based publication is considered the same as printed publication. On occasion simultaneous or 'different language' publication may be acceptable, but there must be full disclosure of this and the rationale for re-publication must be included within the article. Previous presentation at meetings or in abstract form (in print or electronically) does not preclude publication, providing there is full disclosure.

Review articles refer to other work and as such, care should be taken to reference adequately the origins of that work.

Peer review

All scientific articles will be subject to peer review. Reviewers should have expertise in the field and must be independent. The reviewer will consider the study design and methodology, the quality of the data and its interpretation, the usefulness of the conclusions and the quality of discussion of the study, including its limitations. In a review article, the breadth and depth and the conclusions of the review should be acceptable to the reviewer. Reviewers should be aware of the expectations of *JICS*. The review process, whether successful or unsuccessful, will be fed back to the authors. Any potential conflict of interest between the reviewer, the work, or the authors should be stated.

The editors consider the discussion of opinion to be an important part of *JICS*. Opinion pieces will be peer-reviewed and will state that they constitute opinion. Letters will be subject to editorial approval but are not peer reviewed.

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Editorial decisions

All submissions must conform to the requirements of the journal, as laid out in the Instructions to the Authors. The editors are responsible for the standard of work published; their decisions are final.

Plagiarism

The presentation of work or ideas by another without attribution or permission, whether by accident or intent, constitutes scientific misconduct. Authors must not represent the work of others as their own.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest exists when a person has a duty to more than one person or organisation and cannot do justice to the actual or potential interests of both parties. At editorial level and in review, conflict of interest should be avoided. Any potential conflict of interest at authorship, reviewer or editorial level needs to be made known to the editors and to be documented in the publication. This is particularly relevant where there is industrial involvement. There is frequently indirect involvement, whether through grants or other forms of support, but the level of involvement should be stated.

Responding to allegations of misconduct

JICS has a responsibility to share reasonable concerns with the relevant authorities, such as the employer, University or Granting authority. It is not the role of *JICS* to conduct formal enquiries or to reach conclusions regarding potential misconduct. That is the role of the authorities mentioned above.

The areas that should be considered are:

- Falsification of data
- Plagiarism
- Improprieties of authorship
- Misappropriation of ideas
- Violation of accepted research practices
- Failure to comply with regulatory requirements affecting research.

The response may be aligned to that described by the US Office of Research Integrity:

All allegations of misconduct will be referred to the editors who will review the circumstances. Initial fact-finding will include a request to all the involved parties to state their case, and explain the circumstances, in writing. In questions of research misconduct centering on methods or technical issues, the editors may confidentially consult experts who are blinded to the identity of the individuals, or if the allegation is against an editor, an outside expert. The editors will arrive at a conclusion as to whether there is enough evidence to lead a reasonable person to believe there is a possibility of misconduct. Their goal is not to determine if actual misconduct occurred, or the precise details.

When allegations concern authors, the peer review and publication process for the manuscript in question will be halted while the process above is carried out. The investigation described above will be completed even if the authors withdraw their paper, and the responses below will still be considered. In the case of allegations against reviewers

or the editors, they will be replaced in the review process while the matter is investigated.

All such allegations should be kept confidential; the number of inquiries and those involved should be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve this end. Whenever possible, references to the case in writing should be kept anonymous.

In the event of misconduct the following options in order of severity are available:

- A letter of explanation to the person against whom the complaint is made
- A letter of reprimand
- A formal letter, including a request to the supervising authority to investigate
- Publication of a notice of duplicate publication or plagiarism if warranted
- Formal withdrawal or retraction of the paper from the scientific literature. This will be published in *JICS* and communicated to the indexing authorities. It does not require the consent of the authors and will be reported to the institution where the author(s) work. This conforms to the International Committee of Journal Editors guidance. See <http://www.icmje.org/#correct> (accessed 1.10.11).

Advertising

There is a clear and obvious potential conflict of interest between advertising and publication. Any advertisement should clearly identify the advertiser and the product or service being advertised. Any drugs should be described with the full generic name of any ingredient.

Commercial advertisements should not be placed, as far as practical, adjacent to any editorial matter that discusses the product being advertised, nor adjacent to any article reporting research on the advertised product.

JICS may publish educational supplements from time to time which are funded by an industry partner; in these cases the supplements will be separate from the journal and the source of funding clearly identified, with any potential conflicts of interest listed prominently.

Any advertisement must have a different appearance from editorial material so there can be no confusion between the two. The quality of advertisements must be high, with care not to be in any way deceptive or misleading, nor can there be any possibility of causing offence. *JICS* has the right to refuse or decline advertising for any reason. Any decisions about acceptability must be discussed with the editorial team and the reasons must be transparent.

Relationship with the Intensive Care Society

The responsibility of the editors is to provide a journal that will inform, educate and allow proliferation of ideas by engaging in debate within the intensive care community. This will be provided to the readership in an accurate and discerning fashion that will protect and enhance the integrity of the specialty. Currently *JICS* is funded by the Intensive Care Society. The editors have full authority over the contents of *JICS*, ie 'editorial independence;' editorial decisions are made on the validity and utility of submitted work. There is at this time no financial involvement between the editors and *JICS* or the Intensive Care Society beyond provision of reasonable expenses.