Editing a Scientific Journal
Leading and Shaping Your Discipline

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UC Davis
VETERINARY MEDICINE

The University of Wisconsin
Madison
Veterinary Medicine
Why a workshop for journal editors?

• Most of us work as academics, are part-time editors, lack specific training
• Editors face common challenges, but often lack the network, support, and resources to solve them
• Editors face pressure from authors and publishers to meet publication needs while maintaining integrity
• The world of publishing is changing rapidly
Journal editors as leaders

- Authority in the scientific community
- Exercise editorial independence
- Expertise in research
- Responsible for the integrity of published records
- Power to formulate and implement editorial policies
- Promote good research and publishing
Editor-in-chief

• Is solely responsible for the scientific content of the journal
• Maintains a high standard of scientific and ethical rigor
• Provides leadership in implementing a vision for the journal to advance its mission
The editorial board

- Executive Editor
- Managing Editor
- Editor-in-Chief
- Co-Editor-in-Chief
- Associate Editor
- Section Editor
- Deputy Editor
- Statistical Editor
- Feature Editor
- Image Editor
- Editorial Board
- Advisory Board
- International Board
- Technical Editor
- Language Editor
- Copy Editor
Organization of editorial workflow

- Who will log-in and screen manuscripts?
- What are the responsibilities of the Sub-Editors?
- Who oversees the peer review process?
- Who handles correspondence with authors?
- Who makes the decisions to accept/reject manuscripts?
- Who establishes journal policies?
- What is the role of the editorial board?
- Who edits manuscripts (for content, language, style)?
How does your editorial board work?

Create an editorial “workflow” diagram for your journal

• Who will log-in and screen manuscripts?
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An editorial workflow

- Submission
- Acknowledgment
- Initial screening
- Review by Editor
  - Local ed. board member
  - Int’l ed. board member
  - External peer reviewer
- Peer Review
  - Local ed. board member
  - Int’l ed. board member
  - External peer reviewer
- Author for Revision
- Review by Sub-Editor
  - Language editor
  - Copyeditor and layout
- Statistical review
- Acceptance
- Rejection

Language editor
Copyeditor and layout
Which step in your workflow presents the biggest challenge?

What is your biggest challenge in working with your editorial board?
Optimize your editorial board

Structure
• Create organizational chart
• Sub-editors as appropriate to handle/distribute workflow
• Editorial board composition
  – Publication experience
  – Topical scope
  – Specialty expertise
  – Geographic balance
  – Gender balance

Function
• Define roles, tasks, and terms
• Use your editorial board
• Define policies for conflict-of-interest
• Assess and balance workload and effectiveness periodically
• Hold editorial board meetings
  – Seek feedback
  – Editorial policy and direction
  – Report journal progress and goals
Acknowledge your editorial board

- Stipend
- Honoraria
- Publishing perks
  - Free publication in journal
  - Invited publication
- Regular board meetings
- Acknowledge within society/organization
Editors as educators

• Editors educate:
  – authors
  – readers
  – reviewers
  – researchers
  – students
  – policymakers

• Promote high quality research and publishing
Peer Review: Definition

Evaluation of manuscripts by peers ("experts") in similar or relevant fields

Scientific quality, validation of research
Importance to the field
Peer Review: Purpose

Improve and enrich scientific publications
  Aids editors in making decisions
  Helps authors improve scientific quality and writing

Promote networking within scientific communities

Contribute to the learning process for scientific writing

Encourage discussion of scientific hypothesis, design, methods, analysis, and conclusions if review is open
Peer Review: Role of the Editor

Establish the best system for your journal

- Determine the type of peer review (blinded, open)
- Guide sub-editors in how to select reviewers: number of reviewers, varied expertise
- Guide reviewers in aspects to evaluate and expected professional/constructive input
Peer Review: Role of the Editor

Establish the best system for your journal

- Establish and update a database of reviewers
- Establish timeframes for review
- Use peer review to make decisions
- Communicate with reviewers: expectations, share other reviews, decision, appreciation
Peer Review: Models

**Single-blinded**

Reviewers aware of authors and their institutions
Authors blinded to reviewers

**Double-blinded**

Authors and reviewers blinded to each other

**Triple-blinded (not in practice...yet)**

Editors, authors, and reviewers blinded
Peer Review: Models

Open

Reviewers (and sometimes their reviews) known to authors (and the readership) somewhere in the process

Post-publication

Users can post comments after publication
Single-Blinded Peer Review

Advantages
• Honest candid reviews
• Ease of administration (no need to remove identifying elements from the manuscript)

Disadvantages
• Biased reviews
• Unprofessional, vitriolic comments
Double-Blinded Peer Review

Advantages

- Less (or no) bias – perceived as a “fairer” process
- Reviewer focused on content (authors/institutions not a distraction)

Disadvantages

- Reviewers can sometimes or often identify the authors
- Administrative work (often burden to blind is placed on the authors)
- Unprofessional comments can still be a problem
- No convincing evidence that quality of reviews is higher
- More difficult to identify conflicts of interest and self-plagiarism
Bias

Nationality/country of origin
Gender
Competing scientific or commercial interest
Perceived reputation of the institution
English usage
Stage of career
Positive bias if senior author well known in field

Bias often “implicit” – not acknowledged by the individual harboring the bias
The following clause(s) have been added to the Code of Conduct for Journal Editors and will be incorporated into the Code at the next revision. Editorial decisions should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript, including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors. Decisions to edit and publish should not be determined by the policies of governments or other agencies outside of the journal itself (July 2013)
Triple-Blinded Peer Review

Not is use yet, but recommended by some as even editors can have biases

Would require a separate “log-in” editor who handles communication with author and selects reviewers but plays no role in reviewing the manuscript or making decisions
Open Peer Review

Advantages

• Review tends to be more constructive
• Promotes transparent discussion of merits and flaws

Disadvantages

• Reviewers may be reluctant to voice legitimate criticisms
• Invitations to review may be declined more frequently
• Fear of retaliation
Post-Publication Reviews

Advantages
- Promotes transparent discussion of merits and flaws
- Opens the review process to anyone

Disadvantages
- Paper is already published and cannot be revised
- Debate may be endless
- Quality of reviews uncontrolled
## Type of Peer Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Review Type</th>
<th>Who is blinded?</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
<th>Best Fit for Your Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-blinded</td>
<td>Only authors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-blinded</td>
<td>Authors, reviewers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple-blinded</td>
<td>Authors, reviewers, editors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>No one, timing varies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-publication</td>
<td>No one, comments posted after publication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Typical Peer-Review Process

1. Submission
2. Acknowledgment Initial screening
3. Out-of-scope Language Low quality Low priority
4. Peer Review Reviewer 1 Reviewer 2 Reviewer 3
5. Statistical review
6. Review by Sub-Editor
7. Author for Revision
8. Acceptance or Rejection
9. Review by Editor
What content is reviewed?

- Original research
- Brief communications
- Case reports
- Review articles: narrative and systematic

But typically not....

- Editorials
- Letters to the editor
- Features and news
- Conference abstracts and proceedings
Who are your reviewers?

• Editorial Board members
• Reviewers in databases
  Build and update your own
  Search PubMed and other databases
• Reviewers suggested by other reviewers
• Authors of cited references
• Preferred reviewers suggested by authors
  (but check qualifications of suggested reviewers)
Who are your reviewers?

The BMJ (formerly the British Medical Journal)

- Experimenting with “patient” reviews
- Individuals living with or experience with a disease or significant illness, care-providers, patient advocates
- Goal: to improve relevance and patient centeredness of medical research
Selection of Reviewers

Different vantage points
   Choose reviewers with different areas of relevant expertise

Statistical reviewers

Avoid conflicts of interest
   Same institution, collaborators
   Ask reviewers to declare conflicts of interest
Selection of Reviewers

Acta Veterinaria-Beograd 2017, 67 (1), 33-42
UDK: 636.09:050”2010/2014”; 615.33.015.8
DOI: 10.1515/acve-2017-0004

Research article

EXAMINATION OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES WITH RESPECT TO STATISTICAL ERRORS IN VETERINARY SCIENCES

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(Received 23 May, Accepted 07 December 2016)
Incentives for Reviewers

- Engagement in scientific enterprise
- Expected contribution to profession
- Is more needed? Acknowledgment, access to articles, Publons, other rewards, ...
Working with Reviewers

Communicate what you want evaluated:

- Scientific quality, validity: design, methods, conclusions
- Originality/novelty/innovation
- Importance to field
- Organization, tables and figures, appropriate and valid references
- Language usage, clear writing
- Ethical practices
- Constructive comments; professionalism
Working with Reviewers

Communicate your decision
(accept, minor revision, major revision, reject)

Share all the reviews with each reviewer

Thank the reviewers!
Reviews are returned – now what?

Advisory to editor, who makes final decision

Reviewers can’t vote on the decision – it’s yours!

Quality of reviews: Did you receive the input you needed?
Reviews are returned – now what?

Advisory to editor, who makes final decision
Reviewers can’t vote on the decision – it’s yours!

Quality of reviews: Did you receive the input you needed?

Discordant reviews – one reviewer recommends ‘major revision”; another recommends ‘accept’

* The author(s) should not see the reviewers’ recommendations about acceptance, but they will see the disparate comments. What will you do?
Discordant reviews are returned

The editor is the final arbiter and has multiple options:

• Consider the strengths of the reviewers and evaluate their comments accordingly
• If reviews are adequate, provide guidance to the author on how to prioritize the reviewer comments
• May need to solicit an additional review to resolve the conflicting reviews
• If a reviewer is consistently not helpful or unprofessional, consider providing feedback to the reviewer.
Advantages to Reviewer

Learn to:

- Read a manuscript carefully identifying main message and supporting evidence
- Evaluate a manuscript as you read for organization, clarity, precision, persuasion
- Improve your own writing by recognizing strengths and weaknesses of someone else’s manuscript

Learn new stuff!
Guidelines and Training for Reviewers

Provide guidelines to reviewers

• Author Guidelines: Reviewers should read them
• Detailed peer review guidelines (journal website)
• Checklists, specific questions, guided review form
Guidelines and Training for Reviewers

Provide guidelines to reviewers
• Author Guidelines: Reviewers should read them
• Detailed peer review guidelines (journal website)
• Checklists, specific questions, guided review form

Consider asking reviewer to begin by:
• *Summarizing the main findings (to be certain reviewer has understood the article)*
• *Strengths*
• *Areas for improvement*

before listing the detailed comments
The study provides important new physiologic data of interest to readers. With substantive revision to address study design and animal selection and sampling details, I believe the study merits publication.
COMMENTS FOR THE AUTHORS:

General comments:

(What they did) The authors have determined glucose and protein values in neonatal werewolves between birth and weaning and evaluated age-related differences over time and between neonates and adults. (The positives) These findings update and expand previous work in this area and have important diagnostic implications for neonatal werewolf medicine. (The negatives) Of concern is the small size and limited diversity of the population evaluated. In addition, important details need to be clarified in methods. (The directive) With the addition of a hypothesis and added methodological detail, the validity of the study design and results can be better assessed.

Major comments: Organize by manuscript section or by importance

1. The study lacks a hypothesis, which is important for determining whether study design is appropriate.
2. Methods: Inclusion and exclusion criteria must be clearly defined. How was it determined that the werewolves were healthy?

Minor comments: Not needed if serious major flaws are identified

1. Page 2, line 5: What was the source of the shewolves and where were they housed?
2. The authors are referred to Carlson et al (Werewolf J 1995;77:7) for a good discussion on prioritizing laboratory tests for neonates.
3. A few spelling and typographical errors are noted throughout the manuscript.
Guidelines and Training for Reviewers

Provide guidelines to reviewers

• Areas for comments to authors and confidential comments to editor
• Reviewer’s recommendation – only to editor (not to authors) – reject, major revision, minor revision, accept
Guidelines and Training for Reviewers

Stress importance of confidentiality

Training for reviewers

• Institutional, publishers, Publons, organizations (Cochrane)
• Share other reviews with reviewer

There is a need to evaluate the impact of training programs on quality of peer reviews
Peer review training

Peer review is a good opportunity for early career researchers to play a role in the research community and gain skills to help improve your own research writing. If you would like to get involved in peer review or are looking for tips on how to be a great reviewer, we have many resources for you including the following:

Guide to peer review
Three-part introductory video series on the basics of peer review

Part I: Why Peer Review
Part II: The Peer Review Process
Part III: Types of Peer Review

Top tips for peer review
Our top ten tips for being a great reviewer

Video
Infographic
Blog Post

A practical guide for review early career researchers
Detailed information on the review process, how to do peer review, and the most common dos and don’ts.

Webinar

Trust and transparency in peer review
Explore the foundations of trust in peer review, with expert speakers sharing their different perspectives

From peer to peer: advice for new reviewers
Journal editors and researchers answer questions on peer review

Videos: Advice for New Reviewers,

Getting recognition for reviewing
Experts at Wiley, Publons, and ORCID discuss how to get recognition for reviewing

Guidelines for peer reviewers

COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers

COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers - English [PDF, 145 KB, Version 2, September 2017.]
COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers - Chinese [PDF, 648KB, Version 1, February 2017]

Sign Up

Welcome to Publons Academy
Become a master of peer review

The Publons Academy is a practical peer review training course for early career researchers developed together with expert academics and editors to teach you the core competencies and skills needed of a peer reviewer.
Peer Review

Process can be slow, subjective, uneven, inadequate...
Is peer review a perfect system?

No...but it’s the best system we have and remains in wide use.
Improving Peer Review

• Adopt the best model
• Provide access to training materials: online, workshops
• Provide detailed guidelines, checklists, reviewer forms to guide review
• Select reviewers carefully
Peer Review

As a mentoring tool

- Mentor trainee by reading manuscript before submission, providing comments
- Mentor trainee in writing: peer review mirrors scientific writing
- Guide trainee in critical review of a manuscript
Guidelines for Authors

• Aims and scope
• Types of manuscripts and other features
• Formatting requirements
• Ethical policies
• Peer review, editorial, and publication processes
• Fees
• Detailed and accessible: online and/or in print
Guidelines for Authors

Aims and Scope

• Sometimes includes a mission statement
  What is your goal?
  Who are the readers you wish to reach?
  Generalists? Specialists?

• Topics
• Broad or narrow scope
Guidelines for Authors

Types of manuscripts and other features

• Original research
  Is supplemental material (data, videos) permitted?

• Case reports

• Brief communications

• Review articles (narrative and systematic)

• Other features (invited or unsolicited):
  Editorials, letters to the editor, commentaries
  Book reviews, special features, new
  Errata
Guidelines for Authors

Specify for each article type:

• Organization (e.g., Title Page, Abstract, Key Words, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion)
• Word counts and number of references
• Format and file types for text, tables and figures, captions
• Reporting guidelines: Which ones? Required or recommended?
• Style: language, abbreviations, units, references and citations
Guidelines for Authors

Ethical policies

• Original unpublished work
  State whether you check for plagiarism using programs such as iThenticate/Cross Check

• Authorship requirements: many journals cite ICMJE
  Author contributions to the work

• Copyright

• Conflicts of interest, disclosures

• Animal care and use, client consent, human subjects
  Cite required guidelines
  Institutional approval for study
Guidelines for Authors

Include descriptions of:

• Peer-review process
• Editorial workflow
  What can authors expect as their manuscript moves from submission to review to decision?
• Publication process
  What happens after the manuscript is accepted?
  Will the editor ask for additional revisions?
  When will proofs be received?
  When will the article be published?
  What post-production service are available?
Guidelines for Authors

Best practice:
- Provide detailed and accessible guidelines
- Online and/or in print

Challenges:
- Do authors read the guidelines?
- Do authors follow them?
- What is your enforcement policy?
Reporting Guidelines and Checklists

Enhancing the QUALity and Transparency Of health Research

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

Not sure which reporting guideline to use?

Reporting guidelines under development

Visit the library for more resources

Reporting guidelines for main study types

- Randomised trials
  - CONSORT
  - Extensions
  - Other
- Observational studies
  - STROBE
  - Extensions
  - Other
- Systematic reviews
  - PRISMA
  - Extensions
  - Other
- Case reports
  - CARE
  - Extensions
  - Other
- Qualitative research
  - SRQR
  - COREQ
  - Other
- Diagnostic / prognostic studies
  - STARD
  - TRIPOD
  - Other
- Quality improvement studies
  - SQUIRE
  - CHEERS
  - Other
- Economic evaluations
  - CHEERS
  - Other
- Animal pre-clinical studies
  - ARRIVE
  - Other
- Study protocols
  - SPIRIT
  - PRISMA-P
  - Other
- Clinical practice guidelines
  - AGREE
  - RIGHT
  - Other

See all 377 reporting guidelines

EQUATOR resources in Portuguese | Spanish
Purpose of Reporting Guidelines

• Improve reliability and value of published health research by:
  Promoting transparent and accurate reporting
  Wider use of robust reporting guidelines

• The EQUATOR Network provides an extensive list of guidelines
  With accompanying checklists and flowcharts
• Research intended to advance scientific knowledge and improve detection, treatment, and prevention of disease MUST be published
  Otherwise, it’s as if the study was never done
• Published studies should include enough data to allow readers to evaluate the information, reach their own conclusions, and repeat the study
• Research must be reliable!
Background

• Reporting guidelines:
  Provide minimal batch of items required for clarity and transparency
  What was done?
  What bias might be present?
• Evidence-based reporting
• Essential to assess reliability of the study
Editors of Veterinary Journals

BMC Veterinary Research

A survey of the awareness, knowledge, policies and views of veterinary journal Editors-in-Chief on reporting guidelines for publication of research

Douglas JC Grindlay, Rachel S Dean, Mary M Christopher and Marnie L Brennan

BMC Veterinary Research 2014 10:10  https://doi.org/10.1186/1746-6148-10-10
© Grindlay et al.; licensee BioMed Central Ltd. 2014
Received: 5 August 2013 | Accepted: 26 November 2013 | Published: 10 January 2014
Editors of Veterinary Journals

Thirty-six of 68 editors (52.9%) stated they knew what a reporting guideline was before receiving the questionnaire.

Twenty of 57 respondents (35.1%) said their journal referred to reporting guidelines in its instructions to authors.

Forty-four of 68 respondents (68.2%) believed that reporting guidelines should be adopted by all refereed veterinary journals.
The importance of clarity, transparency, and accuracy in research publications

Doug Altman

Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Oxford, UK and EQUATOR Network
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Type</th>
<th>Reporting Guideline</th>
<th>Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Randomised trials</td>
<td>CONSORT</td>
<td>Extensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational studies</td>
<td>STROBE</td>
<td>Extensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic reviews</td>
<td>PRISMA</td>
<td>Extensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case reports</td>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>Extensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative research</td>
<td>SRQR</td>
<td>COREQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic / prognostic studies</td>
<td>STARD</td>
<td>TRIPOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality improvement studies</td>
<td>SQUIRE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic evaluations</td>
<td>CHEERS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal pre-clinical studies</td>
<td>ARRIVE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study protocols</td>
<td>SPIRIT</td>
<td>PRISMA-P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical practice guidelines</td>
<td>AGREE</td>
<td>RIGHT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The REFLECT statement: methods and processes of creating reporting guidelines for randomized controlled trials for livestock and food safety by modifying the CONSORT statement

Reporting guideline provided for? (i.e. exactly what the authors state in the paper)  Reporting randomised controlled trials for livestock and food safety
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper section and topic</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Descriptor of REFLECT statement item</th>
<th>Reported on Page #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title &amp; Abstract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>How <strong>study units</strong> were allocated to interventions (e.g., &quot;random allocation,&quot; &quot;randomized,&quot; or &quot;randomly assigned&quot;). <strong>Clearly state whether the outcome was the result of natural exposure or was the result of a deliberate agent challenge.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction Background</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Scientific background and explanation of rationale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods Participants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eligibility criteria for owner/managers and study units at each level of the organizational structure, and the settings and locations where the data were collected.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Precise details of the interventions intended for each group, <strong>the level at which the intervention was allocated</strong>, and how and when interventions were actually administered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4b</td>
<td><strong>Precise details of the agent and the challenge model, if a challenge study design was used.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Specific objectives and hypotheses. <strong>Clearly state primary and secondary objectives (if applicable).</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Clearly defined primary and secondary outcome measures and the levels at which they were measured, and, when applicable, any methods used to enhance the quality of measurements (e.g., multiple observations, training of assessors).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>How sample size was determined and, when applicable, explanation of any interim analyses and stopping rules. <strong>Sample-size considerations should include sample-size determinations at each level of the organizational structure and the assumptions used to account for any non-independence among groups or individuals within a group.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomization --</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Method used to generate the random allocation sequence <strong>at the relevant level of the organizational structure</strong>, including details of any restrictions (e.g., blocking, stratification)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence generation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomization --</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Method used to implement the random allocation sequence <strong>at the relevant level of the organizational structure</strong>, (e.g., numbered containers or central telephone), clarifying whether the sequence was concealed until interventions were assigned.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basic Statistical Reporting for Articles Published in Biomedical Journals: The "Statistical Analyses and Methods in the Published Literature" or The SAMPL Guidelines

Thomas A. Lang\textsuperscript{a} and Douglas G. Altman\textsuperscript{b}
\textsuperscript{a}Principal, Tom Lang Communications and Training International
\textsuperscript{b}Director, Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Oxford University
The CARE Guidelines: Consensus-based Clinical Case Reporting Guideline Development

Reporting guideline provided for? (i.e. exactly what the authors state in the paper)

For completeness, transparency and data analysis in case reports and data from the point of care.

CARE checklist (PDF) - 2016 Update
2013 CARE Checklist

1. **Title** – The area of focus and “case report” should appear in the title
2. **Key Words** – Two to five key words that identify topics in this case report
3. **Abstract** – (structure or unstructured)
   a. Introduction – What is unique and why is it important?
   b. The patient’s main concerns and important clinical findings.
   c. The main diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes.
   d. Conclusion—What are one or more “take-away” lessons?
4. **Introduction** – Briefly summarize why this case is unique with medical literature references.
5. **Patient Information**
   a. De-identified demographic and other patient information.
   b. Main concerns and symptoms of the patient.
   c. Medical, family, and psychosocial history including genetic information.
   d. Relevant past interventions and their outcomes.
6. **Clinical Findings** – Relevant physical examination (PE) and other clinical findings.
7. **Timeline** – Relevant data from this episode of care organized as a timeline (figure or table).
8. **Diagnostic Assessment**
   a. Diagnostic methods (PE, laboratory testing, imaging, surveys).
   b. Diagnostic challenges.
   c. Diagnostic reasoning including differential diagnosis.
   d. Prognostic characteristics when applicable.
9. Therapeutic Intervention
   a. Types of intervention (pharmacologic, surgical, preventive).
   b. Administration of intervention (dosage, strength, duration).
   c. Changes in the interventions with explanations.

10. Follow-up and Outcomes
    a. Clinician and patient-assessed outcomes when appropriate.
    b. Important follow-up diagnostic and other test results.
    c. Intervention adherence and tolerability (how was this assessed)?
    d. Adverse and unanticipated events.

11. Discussion
    a. Strengths and limitations in your approach to this case.
    b. Discussion of the relevant medical literature.
    c. The rationale for your conclusions.
    d. The primary “take-away” lessons from this case report.

12. Patient Perspective – The patient can share their perspective on their case.

13. Informed Consent – The patient should give informed consent.

Visit “Downloads” to find translations of the CARE Checklist and other tools in the CARE toolkit.
Downloads

The CARE toolkit was designed to increase the accuracy and transparency of evidence from the point of care that it can inform clinical research, clinical practice guidelines, and medical education. This toolkit contains the CARE checklist and Writing Templates in multiple languages, Timeline Writing Instructions and Timeline Examples in English and CARE extensions. CARE extensions from specialty groups with whom we have collaborated are available on this site as well. These tools are available to improve the completeness, transparency, and usefulness of case reports for clinicians, researchers, educators, and patients.

Writing Template

Chinese  
Dutch  
English  
French  
German  
Japanese  
Korean  
Portuguese  
Spanish  
Russian
Resources: The EQUATOR Network

- Guidelines for editors
  - Journal needs
  - Policy: endorse? recommend? require?
  - Launching your new policy
- Selecting the appropriate guideline
- Teaching research skills
- Writing research: how to write a great paper using reporting guidelines
- Extensive library with translations of guidelines in some languages

The EQUATOR wizard: a new tool to help authors find the right reporting guideline
Reporting Guidelines: Challenges

• How to enforce?
• Will requirements discourage submissions?
• Authors need to be educated:
  editorials, conferences, workshops?
• Will “checklist” format prevent authors from telling a story?
• Burden on editorial staff, reviewers, statisticians
Response to Challenges

• *Guidelines*, not requirements
• The “checklist” helps authors include all the necessary items in the manuscript, but does not dictate how the story is told
  No need to write the manuscript as a checklist
• Importantly, reporting guidelines do NOT guarantee the study is of high quality
• Growing concerns about flawed research – in methodology and/or reporting
  ★ *Methodological quality must precede reporting*
  ★ *But high-quality studies must be reported accurately and completely*
Implementing Reporting Guidelines: Why and How, for Journal Editors

Margaret Winker, MD
Building your journal
Small journals have unique challenges

• An academic or scholarly journal where the Editor-in-Chief is not a full-time position

• Represents a small scientific community
  – A small research community
  – Lack of financial support
  – Language barrier

• But... they often have an important defining role in their community
Small journals: the vicious cycle

- Author pool
- Reviewer pool
- Finances
- Language
- Product
- No. and quality of manuscripts
- Review process
- Technical resources
- English
- Journal
- LOW QUALITY
- LOW
- INADEQUATE
- IMPEFECT
- POOR visibility

Breaking the cycle: building your journal

- Scientific quality
- Editorial quality
- Production quality
- Visibility and access
Define your publishing niche

- What is your journal’s purpose and mission?
- What subjects and types of articles do you publish?
- Who is your target audience?
- With what organization(s) is the journal affiliated?
Get feedback from your stakeholders

- Who are the stakeholders?
- What do they expect from the journal?
- What is important to authors, reviewers, editors, readers?
E-journal survey – Vet Clin Pathol

[Bar chart showing various features and their importance level for respondents]

- Ability to search
- PDFs for current
- Browsing capabilities
- PDFs for archive
- Electronic submission
- Electronic reviewing
- Links to MEDLINE
- Links from PubMed
- Image database
- Hyperlinks of references
- Links to related articles
- Direct IP library access
- E-TOC
- Full-text html
- Preprints

% of Respondents

- Very important, I would use often
- Somewhat important, I might use
- Not important, I would not use
SWOT analysis of your journal

**STRENGTHS**
- Internal resources and capabilities

**WEAKNESSES**

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Factors external to the organization or group

**THREATS**

SWOT analysis of your journal

**STRENGTHS**

**WEAKNESSES**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**THREATS**

In small journals, the weaknesses and external threats to the job outweigh the strengths and opportunities provided by the global editorial community.

Scientific quality

• Increase the number and quality of submissions
  – Annual call for papers
  – Editorial board contributions
  – Solicit invited reviews
  – Consensus/policy papers
  – Solicit good conference papers
  – Develop theme issues
Increase number and quality of submissions

• Offer authors a positive publishing experience (what is important to your authors?)
  – Short time to publication
  – Timely communication
  – Clear rationale for decisions
  – Quality technical services

• Enhanced article visibility
  – Editorials and letters
  – Social media, marketing, article-level metrics

• Best paper awards
Increase the quality of peer reviews

• Problems with peer review
  – Inconsistent, slow, expensive, subjective, biased, open to abuse, poor at identifying errors, cannot be taught, small pool

• Who makes the best reviewers?
  – Under 40, good institution, known to the editors

• What would improve the quality of reviewers?
  – Reward/credit/acknowledgment, careful selection, training, structured format, greater accountability
Editorial quality

• What are the main editorial problems with manuscripts?
  – Failure to follow Guidelines for Authors
  – Poorly organized or written
  – Tables and figures
  – Accuracy of references

• Where is editorial quality addressed in the manuscript workflow?

• Editor training, acknowledgment, reward
Production and technical quality

• Develop a business plan
  – Financial, organizational
  – Benchmarking
• Regular publication schedule
  – Reliable source of content
• Language services
• Technical services
  – Print and website
Visibility and access

- Who is your target audience?
- Subscriptions
- Open access
- Indexing
- Marketing
- Advocate for your journal
How indexing and a change in publisher affected submissions at *Vet Clin Pathol*

Submissions (est.)

- MEDLINE indexing
- Wiley Publishing
SWOT analysis of your journal

**STRENGTHS**
- What advantages do you have?
- What do you do well?
- What are your resources?
- What do other people see as your strengths?

**WEAKNESSES**
- What could you improve?
- What do you do badly?
- What should you avoid?

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- What opportunities do you see?
- What interesting trends are you aware of?
- Are there changes in your environment?

**THREATS**
- What obstacles do you face?
- What is your “competition” doing?
- Are the expectations for your journal changing?
- Do you have financial problems?
Building your journal

• Define your niche
• Query your stakeholders
• Develop a strategic plan, with benchmarks
  – Scientific quality
  – Editorial quality
  – Production/technical quality
  – Visibility and access
Working with the Society/University/Owner/Publisher

The Organization
(University, Institute, Association, Society)

The Journal is often the face of the organization
The Organization

Responsible to and for core mission and values of the University, Institution, Society, or Association

Fiduciary responsibilities in implementation of mission
The Editor-in-Chief

Has authority, responsibility, and accountability for editorial content

Provides leadership in implementing a vision that advances the mission

Defines
• Scope of work
• Integrity and quality of processes established to identify and evaluate content
• Integrity and quality of content published in the journal
Editorial Independence

• Editors declined to publish article from a senior colleague at the Zagreb Medical School because the authors refused to address criticisms from the reviewers.

• Other incidents involving plagiarism and retractions created great conflict between the editors and the journal’s owners, 4 medical schools in Croatia.

• In 2011, editors resigned after a decade-long struggle.
Editorial Independence

“The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) adopts the World Association of Medical Editors’ definition. According to this definition, editorial freedom, or independence, is the concept that editors-in-chief have full authority over the editorial content of their journal and the timing of publication of that content. Journal owners should not interfere in the evaluation, selection, or editing of individual articles either directly or by creating an environment that strongly influences decisions. Journal owners should not require editors to publish supplements as part of their contractual agreements.
Editorial Independence

Editors should base decisions on the **validity of the work and its importance to the journal’s readers**, not on the commercial success of the journal. Editors should be **free to express critical but responsible views** about all aspects of medicine without fear of retribution, even if these views conflict with the commercial goals of the publisher. Editors and editors’ organizations are obligated to support the concept of editorial freedom and to draw major transgressions of such freedom to the attention of the international medical, academic, and lay communities.”
Editorial Independence

Full authority over editorial content of the journal...

Includes:

• Publication model: subscription-based, open access, hybrid
• Editorial staffing
• Selection, evaluation, formatting, and timing of content
• Final decisions

...in the absence of political or commercial influence
Ensuring Editorial Independence

Public statement from organization on editorial independence and disclaimer that content does not represent the opinion of the organization (or publisher)

Formal contract....or informal understanding
Public Statement

The American Society for Veterinary Clinical Pathology (ASVCP) recognizes and fully accepts the need for editorial independence of the Society's journal, *Veterinary Clinical Pathology*, and grants the editor-in-chief full authority over the editorial content of the journal, including the type, selection, format, and timing of content for publication. For these purposes, editorial content is understood to include research articles, other types of scientific reports, special reports and consensus statements, editorials, letters to the editor, features, news, and advertising. Opinions and statements expressed in *Veterinary Clinical Pathology* are those of the contributors and, unless so stated, do not represent the official policy of the ASCVP. ASVCP management does not interfere in the evaluation, selection, or editing of content published in the journal, either directly or by establishing an environment that has an impact on decisions of the editor-in-chief.

*Approved by the ASVCP Executive Board August 2012*
Formal contract....
or informal understanding

- Job description, including authority and responsibilities of editor
- Term of appointment and renewal option
- Reporting structure
- Mechanisms for resolving conflict
- Compensation (source creates no conflict of interest)
- Support: Office, travel
Authority and Responsibilities of Editor

- Journal mission statement
- Priorities and objectives
- Measures of journal success
- Written editorial policies
- Subeditors, editorial board, assistants appointed by and report to editor
- Support (funding and staff) that enables success
- Direct communication between editor and highest level of organization (or oversight group)
Decisions

Based on validity and importance of work

• Input from subeditors/editorial board, readers, advisors
• Free of political, commercial, or personal influence
• Free of fear of retribution for publishing critical or competing work or opinions counter to those of the organization or its strategic plan
• Authority to resist pressure from organization, prominent members, authors, or reviewers, and authors …
• Right to view and refuse advertisements
The Organization and the Editor

Functional relationship founded on mutual respect and trust

• The organization should neither micromanage nor ignore the journal
• The organization should have deliberate processes for changing editors
• Editor should disclose conflicts of interest – scientific, commercial, personal
• Editor should maintain confidentiality regarding manuscripts, authors, reviews
The Organization

Financial management

- Compensation to editor and subeditors
- Office support, software
- Travel to conferences
  - Visibility of journal
  - Networking with other editors, authors
- Support development of editor
  - Training, science editing conferences, workshops
- Financial reporting to editor
  - At least annually
Questions to consider

Keeping in mind that a functional relationship is founded on mutual respect and trust...

• What is the relationship between your organization and the journal?
  o Do you have a contract with a job description and terms of appointment?
  o Are you evaluated? By what process?

• Has your organization issued a public statement acknowledging your editorial independence?
Questions to consider

• Do you have editorial independence in all matters of editorial content and staffing?

• Does the journal’s impact factor – or other metrics – play a role in the organization’s oversight of the journal?

• Is financial support sufficient to fulfill journal’s mission?
The Organization and the Editor

Functional relationship is founded on mutual respect and trust.

COPE Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors:

• Define relationship explicitly in writing and establish mechanism(s) to resolve conflict(s)

• Establish regular communication