

Basrah Journal of Surgery

Publications ethics and malpractice statement

Research is a must for the progress of science and a well-written research paper adds to the knowledge of the society, apart from bringing honor to its authors.

The Declaration of Helsinki is a recognized statement developed by the World Medical Association that provides ethical guidelines that physicians and other medical research participants should adhere to when conducting research that uses human subjects.

1. Human subject should provide voluntary consent and know the risks of participation.
2. The experimental results must be for the greater good of society.
3. Experiment should be based on previous animal experimentation.
4. Experiment should avoid unnecessary physical and mental suffering.
5. No experiments should be conducted if it is believed to cause disability or death.
6. Benefits must always outweigh the risks.
7. Adequate facilities should be used to protect subjects.
8. Experiment should be conducted only by qualified scientists.
9. Subject should always be at liberty to stop at any time.
10. Scientist in charge must be prepared to terminate the experiment where injury or death is likely to occur.

Publication ethics

- avoid misconduct
- protect patients' identities
- report clearly:
- informed consent
- any deviation from usual practice
- full burden imposed on participants
- total risks posed to participants or others
- benefits to participants, patients, society
- It's not always enough to state that the study was approved by an ethical committee

Protect patients' confidentiality

- Beware identifiers: age, sex, location, clinical details, test results
- unusual personal story
- photo (even if of a body part or clinical image)

patients have a right to privacy that should not be violated without informed consent. Identifying information including names, initials, or hospital numbers, should not be published in written description, photographs or history, unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient or parents give written informed consent for publication. Informed consent for this purpose requires that an identifiable patient be shown the manuscript to be published. Nonessential identifying details should be omitted.

Masking the eye region in photographs of patients is inadequate

Misconduct (Bad behavior)

Fabrication: making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

Falsification: manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

Presenting unconfirmed facts or data and changing or selecting certain data to achieve a desired result. Also it is misrepresenting evidence, facts, or authorship.

Plagiarism: the use of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit and attribution.

The honest article

- describe sources of information and methods of selection
- declare opposing interests
- don't ignore important data
- don't ignore important work of others
- If the work is financially supported by some commercial organization or pharmaceutical company, the source of funding must be acknowledged

When presenting results of randomized controlled trials, authors should indicate clearly how many patients were screened, randomized, assessed, and included in the study. All the citations mentioned in the write up should be stated in the reference list and they should be checked carefully for their accuracy in all respects.

The authors must keep in their mind that their statement on conclusion derived from the study will determine the treatment of countless number of patients. Therefore, they should act honestly for the benefit of patients and public at large, and they should write only the facts which have emerged from the study.

Rules of good ethics

- Honesty

struggle for honesty in all scientific communications. Honestly report data, results, methods and procedures. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data. Do not deceive colleagues, research sponsors, or the public.

- Objectivity

Strive to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. Avoid or minimize bias or self-deception

- Integrity

Keep your promises and agreements; act with honesty; try hard for consistency of thought and action.

- Carefulness

Avoid careless errors and negligence; carefully and critically examine your own work and the work of your peers. Keep good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with agencies or journals.

- Openness

Share data, results, ideas, tools, resources. Be open to criticism and new ideas.

- Respect for Academic Property

Honor copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Give proper acknowledgement or credit for all contributions to research. Never plagiarize.

- Confidentiality

Protect confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records.

- Responsible Publication

Publish in order to advance research and scholarship, not to advance just your own career. Avoid wasteful and duplicative publication.

- Social Responsibility

Strive to promote social good and prevent or reduce social harms.

- Non-Discrimination

Avoid discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors not related to scientific competence and integrity

- Animal Care

Show proper respect and care for animals when using them in research. Do not conduct unnecessary or poorly designed animal experiments.

- Human Subjects Protection

When conducting research on human subjects, minimize harms and risks and maximize benefits; respect human dignity & privacy.

There are many other activities that the society does not define as "misconduct" but which are still regarded by most researchers as unethical:

- Submitting or publishing the same paper in two different journals without telling the editors
- Including a colleague as an author on a paper in return for a favor even though the colleague did not make a serious contribution to the paper
- Discussing with your colleagues confidential data from a paper that you are reviewing for a journal
- Using an inappropriate statistical technique in order to enhance the significance of your research
- Bypassing the peer review process and announcing your results through a press conference without giving peers adequate information to review your work
- Stretching the truth on a grant application in order to convince reviewers that your project will make a significant contribution to the field
- Giving the same research project to two graduate students in order to see who can do it the fastest
- Overworking, neglecting, or making use of graduate or post-graduate students

Editor
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