The Oxford PharmaGenesis publication policy

Ethical, accurate and timely publications

BACKGROUND

- Effective communication of clinical research is important for advancing patient care. We believe that professional medical writing support can help to ensure ethical,[1] accurate[2–5] and timely[6] publication of research, whether supported by industry, academia or other bodies.[7]
- Our research with independent investigators has shown that professional medical writing support improves the reporting of clinical trials in peer-reviewed journals in terms of both compliance with reporting guidelines and the quality of writing.[3,8]
- When assisting authors with communication of the results of company-sponsored research, we will aim to:
  - follow the Joint Position Statement on the role of professional medical writers,[9] Good Publication Practice 3 (GPP3) guidelines[10] and International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations[11]
  - consult appropriate reporting guidelines (e.g. CONSORT[12] and others collated by the EQUATOR Network)[13]
  - ensure that the authors and sponsors are aware of their obligations under these guidelines[10–14]
  - keep up to date with advances in medical communications ethics and best practices.
- In line with the above guidelines and our company philosophy, the aim of the Oxford PharmaGenesis publication policy is to provide clear ethical guidance on our involvement in the preparation of:
  - articles and supplementary content for publication in peer-reviewed journals
  - abstracts, posters and oral presentations for scientific and medical congresses.

ACKNOWLEDGING MEDICAL WRITING SUPPORT

- Medical writing support will be acknowledged in manuscripts and congress presentations, including the:
  - nature of the support
  - name of the lead writer(s) involved and their highest relevant qualification(s) and, if appropriate, Certified Medical Publication Professional credentials
  - writers' affiliation with Oxford PharmaGenesis
  - source(s) of funding.
- We encourage transparency of contributions to publications through the use of tools such as the Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID).[15]
- A draft acknowledgement statement is provided below, although the final version may be subject to specific journal/meeting or client requirements.

The authors thank [name, ORCID identifier and qualifications] of Oxford PharmaGenesis [PharmaGenesis office name, city, country] for providing medical writing support funded by [sponsor name], in accordance with Good Publication Practice 3 (GPP3) guidelines (http://www.ismpp.org/gpp3).[10]

ACKNOWLEDGING THE CONTRIBUTION OF PATIENTS

- The unique contribution of patients involved in clinical research will be acknowledged in manuscripts and congress presentations.[16,17]
- A draft acknowledgement statement is provided here, although the final version may be subject to specific journal/meeting or client requirements.

"We thank all the patients [and their families] who kindly participated in this study."

AUTHORSHIP

- In accordance with the ICMJE guidelines,[11] to qualify for authorship, contributors should meet all four of the following criteria:
  - making substantial contribution to the conception or design of the work, or to the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work
  - drafting or critically revising work for important intellectual content
  - giving final approval of the version to be published
  - taking accountability for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.
- Because ICMJE guidelines[11] state that authors should make a "substantial intellectual contribution" to the research and manuscript, we encourage the use of *"on behalf of the [number of] study investigators"* when groups of more than 10 investigators are involved (as highlighted in GPP3).[10]
  - Exceptions may include clinical practice guidelines, expert consensus statements and meeting proceedings.
- In some circumstances, a professional medical writer may qualify for authorship.[18] When appropriate, this will be raised with the other authors as early as possible. Examples of such circumstances include:
  - writing of systematic reviews when the medical writer has also taken the lead in designing the review (e.g. development of search terms and inclusion/exclusion criteria plus conduct of the searches)
  - writing of primary manuscripts when the medical writer has also made a significant contribution to the conception or design of the study, or to the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of study data.

ACCESSIBILITY

- To maximize the accessibility of published research, we recommend:
  - publishing in journals that are indexed in MEDLINE/PubMed and/or Embase
  - including clinical trial registration numbers in abstracts for indexing and disclosure tracking[19]
  - publishing in journals that enable their content to be made freely accessible, either immediately or after a delay of no more than 6 months.
- To maximize the accessibility of our own research, we commit to publishing the research we fund open access under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence with no additional restrictions.[20]

Above all, we aim to deliver the highest quality medical writing and project management support to provide the most value to our clients, healthcare professionals and patients.

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