

**International Union of Nutritional Sciences review of
publishing Ethics:
Recommendations**

**Report prepared by:
Barrie Margetts, D'Ann Finley, Carlos Monteiro, Ruth Oniang'o,
Prakash Shetty**

Terms of Reference

The International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS) council agreed to the creation of a group of nutritionists with experience in editing nutrition journals with the view to developing a code of practice for the way nutrition research is published and disseminated. This group will help in opening views on: ethical matters and increase transparency of declaration of interest of authors, reviewers and editors of journals that will be followed by a wider code of practice that is needed and required for the profession as a whole.

Council suggested that the group:

- Establish a small working group of editors/journal representatives
- Engage all editors (about 55 nutrition journals included in impact factor list) and assess current policies on publishing ethics
- Emphasis and circulate that a code of practice of nutrition science is required
- Disseminate through nutrition journals agreed best practice suggested by the group.
- The group would advocate that the newly developed code is a corner stone of IUNS policy that 'accredited journals' would sign up to the developed code of practice.
- The group would define conflict of interests and wider publishing ethics (including fraud and misconduct for authors, reviewers, editors, etc).

Barrie Margetts was nominated to chair the group and recruit members of the working group. The authors named on this report agreed to be members of the working group.

Introduction and rationale

In 2006 an editorial “ Stopping the rot in nutrition science “ (Margetts 2006) argued that IUNS “should prepare, publish, publicise and practice an ethical code for nutritional sciences”. This editorial was written in response to a number of cases of fraud that came to light over the previous year or so, and a concern that the nutrition community was not well placed to prevent future cases. The editorial acknowledged that fraud could not be completely eliminated, but argued that it could be minimized by greater transparency and openness in the way that potential conflicts of interest were dealt with in the nutrition community. It was recognized that a number of organizations have already been established to strengthen publishing ethics, such as The Committee on publishing Ethics (COPE) and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). A number of nutrition journals have joined one or other of these associations and have agreed to adopt their guidance on best practice. From a superficial review of nutrition journals it was not clear how widespread explicit guidance was for authors and reviewers about how journals handled ethical issues. The working group was established to review existing practice, and to propose to IUNS council recommendations for adoption and wider dissemination.

Methods and review findings

A desk review was undertaken of the current policies about declaration of interests and guidance to authors of journals that are included in the Web of Science under the heading of nutrition. Where possible all online journal web sites were reviewed and the relevant information extracted. Where data were missing editorial officers were contacted to seek further information, although this was not possible for all journals. Appendix 1 summarises the main findings from these journals. In addition we have included the policies of a number of other leading medical journals (in appendix 2) for comparison and guidance.

In all 51 journals were reviewed, 22 journals did not have an explicit statement about the requirement to declare conflicts of interest. Of the 29 journals for which some information was available (mostly the more highly ranked in terms of impact factors) , the majority required that authors indicated the source of funding for the work, and to make a declaration of competing interests. These competing/conflicting interests were defined in a number of different ways; mostly the declaration was to be included in the published paper.

Seven journals made brief statements as to their current policies, but indicated that they comply either with the Committee on Publishing Ethics (COPE), or the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) guidelines and asked authors to refer to these guidelines for further details or clarification. Details of the COPE and ICMJE guidelines are included in appendix 3.

As far as we could assess only one journal (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition) had a published and openly accessible list of conflicts of interest of journal editors, although we know from personal experience that another journal (Public Health Nutrition) has a list of editors conflicts of interest which can be accessed by contacting the editor-in-chief, although this is not widely publicised.

The COPE and ICMJE provide guidance for authors, reviewers, and editors about conflict of interests.

COPE

Conflicts of interest

Definition

Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgements on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived. They may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial. "Financial" interests may include employment, research funding, stock or share ownership, payment for lectures or travel, consultancies and company support for staff.

Action

- (1) Such interests, where relevant, must be declared to editors by researchers, authors, and reviewers.
- (2) Editors should also disclose relevant conflicts of interest to their readers. If in doubt, disclose.
- (3) Editors should also consider disclosing to readers their own conflicts of interest and those of their teams, editorial boards, managers, and owners.
- (4) Sometimes conflicts of interest may be so extreme that publication will not be possible or people (for example, reviewers or editors) may have to be excluded from decisions on publication.

The *British Medical Journal* requires all staff as well as authors and reviewers to complete a questionnaire which covers the last five years.

1. Have you in the past five years accepted the following from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter:

----- Reimbursement for attending a symposium?

----- A fee for speaking?

----- A fee for organising education?

----- Funds for research?

----- Funds for a member of staff?

----- Fees for consulting?

2. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?
3. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?
4. Have you acted as an expert witness on the subject of your study, review, editorial, or letter?
5. Do you have any other competing financial interests? If so, please specify.

The overriding principle of best practice is best covered by the maxims of 'if in doubt, declare it', or 'if it would be embarrassing for an undisclosed interest to be disclosed, disclose it'.

It may be that we have mis-represented current practice by some journals, because we have not been able to obtain sufficient detail; we argue, however, that such information should be available to all readers and potential authors. We argue that it is better to make assumptions explicit, rather than implicit.

Recommendations

Out of the review we make the following recommendations

1. IUNS should hold and publicise a register of accredited journals that comply with best practice. The accreditation process should be simple, but require editors to complete a questionnaire which outlines how they deal with competing interests for authors, reviewers and editors. Proof of current membership of COPE or ICMJE should be sufficient proof for such accreditation.
2. These recommendations should be widely disseminated through IUNS affiliated bodies.

For authors

3. Author attribution: each author should state what role they played in the design, conduct, analysis, and writing up of the work submitted for publication.
4. Each author should declare that they have read and agree with the final version of the paper before publication.
5. The source of funding for the work undertaken should be declared, as well as any resources or support in kind from companies or organisations.
6. Acknowledgements: any person who is acknowledged as helping or contributing in some way to the work, but who is not an author, should agree (and sign a form to that effect) to being so named in the acknowledgments section.
7. Competing Interests:
 - a. We recommend using the guidance of COPE which define competing interests “as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived. They may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial. “Financial” interests may include employment, research funding, stock or share ownership, payment for lectures or travel, consultancies and company support for staff”.
 - b. Journals may find it easier to adopt the questions used by the British Medical Journal, although we do not recommend that this be done for the least five years, the last *three years* would seem to be adequate.
 - c. We recommend that, where authors know of potential competing interests within their department among colleagues, they should include this in a covering letter to the editor, but that this would not be included in the published article.

For reviewers

8. Reviewers should follow the guidance of declaring interest that is used for authors.

For editors

9. Journals should keep records, which are open to the public, of the interests of editors. If the journal has associate editors, they should also keep an annual return of competing interests which should be available on request.
10. Editors should be required to declare any competing interests in regard to any submission for publication, whether it be in reviewing a letter, editorial, original submission, or any other material to be published in the journal. If a conflict is

identified, the editor should not be involved in anyway in the decision making or publication process.

11. The journal should explicitly ensure that, if they receive revenue from advertising, that there is no link between editorial policy and advertising revenue.

Appendix 1 Review of guidance issues to authors regarding declarations of interests. (No indicates that no information was available or found for that journal)

Publication	Guidance to Authors
Annals of Nutrition & Metabolism	Authors are required to disclose any sponsorship or funding arrangements relating to their research and all authors should disclose any possible conflicts of interest. Conflict of interest statements will be published at the end of the article.
American Journal of Clinical Nutrition:	Acknowledge only persons who have made substantive contributions to the study. Authors are responsible for obtaining written permission from everyone acknowledged by name and for providing to the Editor a copy of the permission, if requested. Each author is required to list his or her contribution to the work (such as design of the experiment, collection of data, analysis of data, writing of the manuscript, or provision of significant advice or consultation) and to disclose any financial or personal relationships with the company or organization sponsoring the research at the time the research was done. Such relationships may include employment, sharing in a patent, serving on an advisory board or speakers' panel, or owning shares in the company. The source of support for the research reported in the paper should be listed on the title page, not as an acknowledgement.
Annual Review of Nutrition:	<p>Disclosure of Potential Bias</p> <p>A potential bias does not mean that the work presented has been compromised, nor does it disqualify authors from publication. However, in an effort to provide readers with information relevant to factors that might be viewed as biasing a literature review, Annual Reviews asks all authors to complete a disclosure statement. This statement may be published in the final section ("Disclosure Statement") of the article.</p> <p>Potential bias arises from any affiliations, funding, or financial holdings that may be viewed as affecting the objectivity of the review. Such factors may include, although they are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment, professional affiliations, paid consultancies, membership in related advocacy organizations • Funding, support, and/or grants received within the past three years • Significant financial holdings or patents <p>All authors are asked to sign and submit the Disclosure of Potential Bias form during the publication process.</p>

Appetite:	No mention of conflict of interests
Archives of Latin American Nutrition	Not available in English
Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition	Conflict of Interest and Funding Disclosure Authors should declare any financial support or relationships that may pose a conflict of interest. The source of financial grants and other funding should be acknowledged, including a frank declaration of the authors' industrial links and affiliations.
British Journal of Nutrition	The manuscript must include a statement reporting any conflicts of interest, all sources of funding and the contribution of each author to the manuscript. This statement should be placed at the end of the text of the manuscript before the references are listed. If there are no conflicts of interest this must be stated. This journal adheres to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines on research and publications ethics (http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/guidelines).
Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice & Research:	Acknowledgments Authors may wish to acknowledge, with their permission, persons who have made a substantial contribution to the work through technical help or advice. Authors must inform the Editor that such permission has been obtained by including the names of individuals where indicated on the online manuscript submission system. Authors should also disclose financial support in the form of grants, gifts, equipment or supplies in the acknowledgement. Sources of financial support should be identified on the Author's Page (see below).
Central Food Research Institute	No
Clinical Nutrition:	A statement of disclosure of financial conflict of interest for all authors. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. These statements will be treated confidentially, although a general statement regarding any conflicts will be published.
Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition:	No
Current Opinion in Clinical	Can't access without membership

Nutrition and Metabolic Care	
ECOL FOOD NUTR	No
EUR J CLIN NUTR	Acknowledgements: These should be brief, and should include sources of support including sponsorship (e.g. university, charity, commercial organization) and sources of material (e.g. novel drugs) not available commercially.
European Journal of Lipid Science and Technology	No
European Journal of Nutrition	No
Food Chemistry:	No
The Food and Drug Law Institute	Membership required
Food Policy:	No
Open Nutrition Journal	No
Food Reviews International	No
International Journal of Eating Disorders	No
International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition	<p>Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>It is the sole responsibility of authors to disclose any affiliation with any organisation with a financial interest, direct or indirect, in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript (such as consultancies, employment, expert testimony, honoraria, speakers' bureaus, retainers, stock options or ownership) that may affect the conduct or reporting of the work submitted. If uncertain as to what might be considered a potential conflict of interest, authors should err on the side of full disclosure. Information about potential conflict of interest should be clearly stated at the point of submission (for example in a cover letter, or where available within the appropriate field on the Journal's Manuscript Central site). This may be made available to reviewers and may be published with the</p>

	manuscript at the discretion of the Editors.
International Journal of Obesity	<p>Conflicts of interest All authors must give signed consent to publication and disclose potential conflicts of interest in a letter sent with the manuscript. The conflicts of interest statement should disclose funding sources, relevant patents, financial and business relationships to sponsors, companies related to the research or the outcome of the studies in the manuscript. Authors should refer to the section on publication ethics of the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals. Please see http://www.icmje.org.</p>
International Journal for Vitamin and Nutrition Research	No
J AM COLL NUTR	<p>Acknowledgments Any grant or corporate sponsorship should be noted here. Authors may also acknowledge any contributions to the work by non-authors. Title page Any personal financial interest in the work or with a commercial sponsor should be disclosed here.</p> <p>A cover letter must contain a statement that all coauthors accept responsibility for content of the manuscript. If there are no conflicts of interest listed on the title page, the letter must state this</p>
Journal of the American Dietetic Association	<p>Disclosure Each author must disclose any financial, economic or professional interests that may influence positions presented in the article. This disclosure will be published with the article. The conflict of interest form on which disclosure must be made is available online in PDF format and may be reproduced. The form must be signed by each author and submitted with the manuscript (either scanned and uploaded on Manuscript Central or faxed to the JADA editorial office at 1-480-219-6102). Manuscripts submitted without the form will not be reviewed until JADA receives the signed form.</p>
J CLIN BIOCHEM NUTR	Yes
Journal of Human Nutrition & Dietetics	Source of Funding and Conflict of Interest

	<p>The Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics requires that sources of institutional, private and corporate financial support for the work within the manuscript must be fully acknowledged, and any potential conflicts of interest noted. As of 1st March 2007, this information will be a requirement for all manuscripts submitted to the Journal and will be published in a highlighted box on the title page of the article. Please include this information under the separate headings of "Source of Funding" and "Conflict of Interest" at the end of your manuscript.</p>
<p>Journal of Medicinal Food</p>	<p>CONFLICTS OF INTEREST</p> <p>All authors must disclose any associations that pose real or perceived conflicts of interest in connection with the manuscript. Authors must acknowledge all funding sources supporting the work. Authors should also disclose any financial interests that they may have in the company supporting the work.</p>
<p>Journal of Nutrition</p>	<p>Conflict of Interest and Funding Disclosure:</p> <p>Any existing financial arrangements between an author and a company whose product figures prominently in the submitted manuscript should be brought to the attention of the Editor in the cover letter that accompanies the manuscript submission. In addition, all authors must declare all sources of funding for research reported in their manuscript and report all potential conflicts of interest in separate footnotes on the manuscript title page. If an author has no conflicts of interest, the footnote should list the author's name, followed by "no conflicts of interest". A conflict of interest includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any significant financial interest in a company/supplement sponsor a current grant, contract or subcontract, or consulting agreement with the supplement sponsor employment by supplement sponsor or financial interest in a product or procedure that is mentioned in an article included in the publication the receipt of compensation from the supplement sponsor for services performed as guest editor is considered a potential conflict of interest. Compensation from supplement sponsor for attending, speaking at or organizing a meeting or symposium Compensation from supplement sponsor for organizing, writing, editing or reviewing a manuscript, collection of manuscripts, supplement publication, book or other published work. Holding stocks or shares in supplement sponsor or other organization that may gain or lose financially from the information included in supplement publication.

	Acting as an expert witness on the topic of the supplement publication
Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry	<p>Conflict of Interest Policy</p> <p>Authors are required to disclose commercial or similar relationships to products or companies mentioned in or related to the subject matter of the article being submitted. Sources of funding for the article should be acknowledged in a footnote on the title page. Affiliations of authors should include corporate appointments relating to or in connection with products or companies mentioned in the article, or otherwise bearing on the subject matter thereof. Other pertinent financial relationships, such as consultancies, stock ownership or other equity interests or patent-licensing arrangements, should be disclosed to the Editor-in-Chief in the cover letter at the time of submission. Such relationships may be disclosed in the Journal at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief in footnotes appearing on the title page.</p>
Journal of Nutrition Education & Behaviour	Authors of Letters to the Editor must acknowledge financial and other conflicts of interest within the letter.
JOURNAL OF NUTRITIONAL SCIENCE AND VITAMINOLOGY	No
Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition	<p>The journal follows the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' <i>Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals</i> (URM).</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Disclosure: A DESCRIPTION OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR ALL OF THE AUTHORS MUST BE PROVIDED. The journal also requires authors to identify any financial interests or affiliations with institutions, organizations, or companies that are mentioned in the manuscript or whose products or services are discussed.</p> <p>The Conflict of Interest Disclosure statement will be included in the published article.</p>
Journal of Renal Nutrition	No
LIPIDS	No

Maternal and Child Nutrition:	<p><i>Maternal & Child Nutrition</i> adheres to the definition of authorship set up by The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).</p> <p>Conflict of Interest and Source of Funding Conflict of Interest: Authors are required to disclose any possible conflict of interest. These include financial (for example patent, ownership, stock ownership, consultancies, speaker's fee).</p> <p><i>Maternal & Child Nutrition</i> requires that sources of institutional, private and corporate financial support for the work within the manuscript must be fully acknowledged, and any potential conflicts of interest noted. As of 1 March 2007, this information will be a requirement for all manuscripts submitted to the Journal and will be published in a highlighted box on the title page of the article. Please include this information under the separate headings of 'Source of Funding' and 'Conflict of Interest' at the end of your manuscript.</p> <p>If the author does not include a conflict of interest statement in the manuscript then the following statement will be included by default: 'No conflicts of interest have been declared'.</p>
Japanese Society for Bioscience, Biotechnology and Agrochemistry:	<p>No</p>
NUTR CANCER:	<p>No</p>
NUTR METAB CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES:	<p>No</p>
Nutritional Neuroscience	<p><i>Nutritional Neuroscience</i> supports the ethical principles set out by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) available on their website (http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/).</p> <p>The authors will normally have to confirm that the study has been approved by a named Research Ethical Committee to be considered for publication. In addition the authors must ensure that there is no risk of duplicate publication. All authors of any kind of article submitted must declare any competing interests by completing a standard form, which will be sent to all authors at the conclusion of the peer review process. This</p>

	<p>should be returned with the revised manuscript. COPE has given guidance on the definition of competing interests: that they may influence the judgement of author, reviewers, and editors; that they may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial. As a rough guide, they have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived. In addition, all authors must declare that, where relevant, patient consent has been obtained and that all reasonable steps have been taken to maintain patient confidentiality report (see http://jama.ama-assn.org/ifora_current.dtl for full requirements of informed consent).</p>
Nutrition Research	No
Nutrition Research Reviews	No
Nutrition Reviews	<p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>Any affiliation or financial involvement (e.g., employment, consultancies, honoraria, stock ownership or options, expert testimony, grants or patents received or pending, royalties) with any organization or entity with a financial interest in or in financial competition with the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript must be completely disclosed in the form of an acknowledgment at the end of the text.</p>
Nutrition Journal	<p>Competing interests</p> <p>A competing interest exists when your interpretation of data or presentation of information may be influenced by your personal or financial relationship with other people or organizations. Authors should disclose any financial competing interests but also any non-financial competing interests that may cause them embarrassment were they to become public after the publication of the manuscript.</p> <p>Authors are required to complete a declaration of competing interests. All competing interests that are declared will be listed at the end of published articles. Where an author gives no competing interests, the listing will read 'The author(s) declare that they have no competing interests'.</p> <p>When completing your declaration, please consider the following questions:</p> <p><i>Financial competing interests</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past five years have you received reimbursements, fees,

	<p>funding, or salary from an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? Is such an organization financing this manuscript (including the article-processing charge)? If so, please specify.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? If so, please specify. • Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript? Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript? If so, please specify. • Do you have any other financial competing interests? If so, please specify. <p><i>Non-financial competing interests</i></p> <p>Are there any non-financial competing interests (political, personal, religious, ideological, academic, intellectual, commercial or any other) to declare in relation to this manuscript? If so, please specify.</p> <p>If you are unsure as to whether you, or one your co-authors, has a competing interest please discuss it with the editorial office.</p>
Obesity:	<p>DUALITY OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM</p> <p>Please indicate below whether you have or have not had, in the previous 12 months, a relevant duality of interest with a company whose products or services are directly related to the subject matter of your manuscript. A relevant duality of interest includes employment, membership on the board of directors or any fiduciary relationship, membership on a scientific advisory panel or other standing scientific/medical committee, ownership of stock, receipt of honoraria or consulting fees, or receipt of financial support or grants for research. Company is defined as a for-profit concern engaged in the development, manufacture, or sale of pharmaceutical or biomedical devices or supplies. Any conflict of interest on the part of any of the authors must be revealed in the manuscript.</p>
Plant Foods For Human Nutrition	No
Proceedings of the Nutrition Society	It is essential that any conflicts of interest are declared when the paper is submitted and that all authors adhere to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines on research and publications ethics (http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/guidelines).
Progress In Lipid Research	No

Public Health Nutrition	<p><i>Acknowledgments:</i> these should be given in a single paragraph after the discussion and include the following information: source of funding, declaration regarding any conflicts of interest and a brief statement as to the contribution(s) of each author.</p> <p>This journal adheres to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines on research and publications ethics (http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/guidelines).</p>
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Appendix 2 Examples from other journals

Lancet	<p>Conflict of interest and source of funding</p> <p>A conflict of interest exists when an author or the author's institution has financial or personal relationships with other people or organisations that inappropriately influence (bias) his or her actions. Financial relationships are easily identifiable, but conflicts can also occur because of personal relationships, academic competition, or intellectual passion. A conflict can be actual or potential, and full disclosure to The Editor is the safest course. Failure to disclose conflicts may lead to publication of a Department of Error. All submissions to <i>The Lancet</i> must include disclosure of all relationships that could be viewed as presenting a potential conflict of interest (see Lancet 2001; 358: 854–56 and Lancet 2003; 361: 8–9). The Editor may use such information as a basis for editorial decisions, and will publish such disclosures if they are believed to be important to readers in judging the manuscript.</p> <p><i>Conflict of interest statements for authors</i></p> <p>The corresponding author should state that he or she had full access to all the data in the study and had final responsibility for the decision to submit for publication. At the end of the text, under a subheading "Conflict of interest statement", all authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organisations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of financial conflicts include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patents or patent applications, and travel grants, all within 3 years of beginning the work submitted. If there are no conflicts of interest, authors should state that there are none. For Comment, Seminars, Reviews, and Series, <i>The Lancet</i> will decide not to publish if an author, within the past 3 years, and with a relevant company or competitor, has any stocks or shares, equity, a contract of employment, or a named position on a company board; or has been asked by any organisation other than <i>The Lancet</i> to write, be named on, or to submit the paper (see Lancet 2004;363: 2–3). At the external peer review stage we will ask you to</p>

	<p>send us signed copies of these statements for all authors.</p> <p><i>Role of the funding source</i></p> <p>All sources of funding should be declared as an acknowledgment at the end of the text. At the end of the Methods section, under a subheading "Role of the funding source", authors must describe the role of the study sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the paper for publication. If there is no Methods section, the role of the funding source should be stated as an acknowledgment. If the funding source had no such involvement, the authors should so state.</p> <p><i>Role of medical writer or editor</i></p> <p>Was a medical writer or editor involved in the creation of your manuscript? If yes, we need a signed statement from the corresponding author to include the name and information on funding of this person. This information should be added to the Acknowledgment and/or Contributors section. In addition, you will need to send us a signed statement from this person declaring that he or she has given you permission to name him or her as an author, as a contributor, or in the Acknowledgment section.</p>
<p>British medical Journal</p>	<p>A competing interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (such as the validity of research or the choice of an external supplier) may be influenced by a secondary interest (such as financial gain).</p> <p>We believe that the best decisions are made when knowledge of any competing interests is shared among all parties to a decision. We are not aiming to eradicate competing interests -- they are almost inevitable.</p> <p>We used to ask about any competing interests, but we have decided to restrict our request to financial interests for the time being. This is largely a tactical move. We hope that it will increase the number of disclosures of competing interests.</p> <p>Competing interests</p> <p>Guidance for authors and referees</p> <p>Guidance for authors</p> <p>To be completed by all authors before publication can go ahead</p> <p>Article No _____</p> <p>Please answer the following questions (all authors must answer)</p>

6. Have you in the past five years accepted the following from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter:

----- Reimbursement for attending a symposium?

----- A fee for speaking?

----- A fee for organising education?

----- Funds for research?

----- Funds for a member of staff?

----- Fees for consulting?

7. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?

8. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?

9. Have you acted as an expert witness on the subject of your study, review, editorial, or letter?

10. Do you have any other competing financial interests? If so, please specify.

If you have answered "yes" to any of the above 5 questions, we consider that you may have a competing interest, which, in the spirit of openness, should be declared. Please draft a statement to publish with the article. It might, for example, read:

- Competing interests: RS has been reimbursed by Shangri La Products, the manufacturer of elysium, for attending several conferences; TD has been paid by Shangri La Products for running educational programmes and has her research registrar paid for by the company; JS has shares in the company.

If you did not answer "yes" to any of the four questions above, we will publish "Competing interests: None declared." (But see next paragraph)

We are restricting ourselves to asking directly about competing financial interests, but you might want to disclose another sort of competing interest that would embarrass you if it became generally known after publication. The following list gives some examples.

- A close relationship with, or a strong antipathy to, a person whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- An academic link or rivalry with somebody whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- Membership of a political party or special interest group whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- A deep personal or religious conviction that may have affected what you wrote and that readers should be aware of when reading your paper.

If you want to declare such a competing interest then please add it to your statement.

To learn more about the thinking that has led to this policy please read the editorial [Beyond conflict of interest](#).

Guidance for referees

Please answer the following questions

1. Have you in the past five years accepted the following from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper:
 - _____ Reimbursement for attending a symposium?
 - _____ A fee for speaking?
 - _____ A fee for organising education?
 - _____ Funds for research?
 - _____ Funds for a member of staff?
 - _____ Fees for consulting?
2. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?
3. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?
4. Have you acted as an expert witness on the subject of your study, review, editorial, or letter?
5. Do you have any other competing financial interests? If so, please specify.

We are restricting ourselves to asking directly about competing financial interests, but you might want to disclose another sort of competing interest that would embarrass you if it became generally known after publication. The following list gives some examples.

- A close relationship with, or a strong antipathy to, a person whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- An academic link or rivalry with somebody whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- Membership of a political party or special interest group whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
- A deep personal or religious conviction that may have affected what you wrote and that readers should be aware of when reading your paper.

If you want to declare such a competing interest then please add it to your statement.

To learn more about the thinking that has led to this policy please read the editorial [Beyond conflict of interest](#)

Editorial board members must also complete the following questionnaire

Question

1. Have you in the past five years accepted the following from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of papers in the BMJ?

- a. Reimbursement for attending a symposium?
- b. A fee for speaking?
- c. A fee for organising education?
- d. Funds for research?
- e. Funds for a member of staff?
- f. Fees for consulting?

2. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of papers in the BMJ?

- a. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation?
- b. Do you have any other competing financial interests?
- c. I have no competing interests/I have the following competing interests

<p>New England Journal of Medicine</p>	<p>Financial disclosure and authorship form</p> <p>How to Prepare Your Financial Disclosure Statement</p> <p>We ask that you make clear who designed the study, who gathered the data, who analyzed the data, who vouches for the data and the analysis, and who wrote the paper (see editorial in the September 13, 2001 issue). The Methods section should include a brief statement about this. We also ask that you prepare a financial disclosure statement for publication with the paper. The statement should describe the authors' relationships with companies that make products relevant to the paper. The statement should specify the type of relationships (e.g., consulting, paid speaking, grant support, equity, patents) EACH author has with EACH company. The information should be consistent with the authors' signed financial disclosure forms. The statement should be located before the Acknowledgement section of the text and labeled "Disclosure."</p>
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	<p>we are seeking analysis and opinion from acknowledged experts in a field, we will, at our discretion, place limits on the number of authors.</p>
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	<p>We are indebted to the investigators whose research reports form the core of the <i>Journal</i> each week. Our change in policy will allow those who participate meaningfully in a research project to receive the credit they deserve.</p>
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Appendix 3 Guidance from COPE and ICMJE

3.i Committee on Publishing Ethics (COPE)

Conflict of interest

Editors should have systems for managing their own conflicts of interest as well as the conflicts of interest of their staff, authors, and reviewers. Readers should be informed about who has funded research and on the role of the funders in the research.

Conflicts of interest

Definition

Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgements on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived. They may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial. "Financial" interests may include employment, research funding, stock or share ownership, payment for lectures or travel, consultancies and company support for staff.

Action

- (1) Such interests, where relevant, must be declared to editors by researchers, authors, and reviewers.
- (2) Editors should also disclose relevant conflicts of interest to their readers. If in doubt, disclose.
- (3) Editors should also consider disclosing to readers their own conflicts of interest and those of their teams, editorial boards, managers, and owners.
- (4) Sometimes conflicts of interest may be so extreme that publication will not be possible or people (for example, reviewers or editors) may have to be excluded from decisions on publication.

3.ii International Committee on Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)

Conflicts of Interest

Public trust in the peer review process and the credibility of published articles depend in part on how well conflict of interest is handled during writing, peer review, and editorial decision making. Conflict of interest exists when an author (or the author's institution), reviewer, or editor has financial or personal relationships that inappropriately influence (bias) his or her actions (such relationships are also known as dual commitments, competing interests, or competing loyalties). These relationships vary from those with negligible potential to those with great potential to influence judgment, and not all relationships represent true conflict of interest. The potential for conflict of interest can exist whether or not an individual believes that the relationship affects his or her scientific judgment. Financial relationships (such as employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony) are the most

easily identifiable conflicts of interest and the most likely to undermine the credibility of the journal, the authors, and of science itself. However, conflicts can occur for other reasons, such as personal relationships, academic competition, and intellectual passion.

All participants in the peer review and publication process must disclose all relationships that could be viewed as presenting a potential conflict of interest. Disclosure of these relationships is also important in connection with editorials and review articles, because it is can be more difficult to detect bias in these types of publications than in reports of original research. Editors may use information disclosed in conflict of interest and financial interest statements as a basis for editorial decisions. Editors should publish this information if they believe it is important in judging the manuscript.

Potential Conflicts of Interest Related to Individual Authors' Commitments

When authors submit a manuscript, whether an article or a letter, they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships that might bias their work. To prevent ambiguity, authors must state explicitly whether potential conflicts do or do not exist. Authors should do so in the manuscript on a conflict of interest notification page that follows the title page, providing additional detail, if necessary, in a cover letter that accompanies the manuscript.

Authors should identify Individuals who provide writing or other assistance and disclose the funding source for this assistance.

Investigators must disclose potential conflicts to study participants and should state in the manuscript whether they have done so.

Editors also need to decide when to publish information disclosed by authors about potential conflicts. If doubt exists, it is best to err on the side of publication.

Potential Conflicts of Interest Related to Project Support

Increasingly, individual studies receive funding from commercial firms, private foundations, and government. The conditions of this funding have the potential to bias and otherwise discredit the research.

Scientists have an ethical obligation to submit credible research results for publication. Moreover, as the persons directly responsible for their work, researchers should not enter into agreements that interfere with their access to the data and their ability to analyze it independently, to prepare manuscripts, and to publish them. Authors should describe the role of the study sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the report for publication. If the supporting source had no such involvement, the authors should so state. Biases potentially introduced when sponsors are directly involved in research are analogous to methodological biases of other sorts. Some journals, therefore, choose to include information about the sponsor's involvement in the methods section.

Editors may request that authors of a study funded by an agency with a proprietary or financial interest in the outcome sign a statement such as, “I had full access to all of the data in this study and I take complete responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.” Editors should be encouraged to review copies of the protocol and/or contracts associated with project-specific studies before accepting such studies for publication. Editors may choose not to consider an article if a sponsor has asserted control over the authors’ right to publish.

Potential Conflicts of Interest Related to Commitments of Editors, Journal Staff, or Reviewers

Editors should avoid selecting external peer reviewers with obvious potential conflicts of interest, for example, those who work in the same department or institution as any of the authors. Authors often provide editors with the names of persons they feel should not be asked to review a manuscript because of potential conflicts of interest, usually professional. When possible, authors should be asked to explain or justify their concerns; that information is important to editors in deciding whether to honor such requests.

Reviewers must disclose to editors any conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the manuscript, and they should disqualify themselves from reviewing specific manuscripts if they believe it to be appropriate. As in the case of authors, silence on the part of reviewers concerning potential conflicts may mean either that such conflicts exist that they have failed to disclose, or that conflicts do not exist. Reviewers must therefore also be asked to state explicitly whether conflicts do or do not exist. Reviewers must not use knowledge of the work, before its publication, to further their own interests.

Editors who make final decisions about manuscripts must have no personal, professional, or financial involvement in any of the issues they might judge. Other members of the editorial staff, if they participate in editorial decisions, must provide editors with a current description of their financial interests (as they might relate to editorial judgments) and disqualify themselves from any decisions where they have a conflict of interest. Editorial staff must not use the information gained through working with manuscripts for private gain. Editors should publish regular disclosure statements about potential conflicts of interests related to the commitments of journal staff.