What constitutes good practice in sponsor review of research publications?
Editor’s view

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Competing interests

I’m editor in chief of *BMJ Open* and Director of academic outreach and advocacy at BMJ, a wholly owned subsidiary of the British Medical Association

Part of the revenue for BMJ (the company) comes from drug & device manufacturers through advertising, reprint sales, & sponsorship. *The BMJ* and *BMJ Open* are open access journals that charge author fees for research

I’m editorial lead for the BMJ Research to Publication eLearning programme for early career health researchers (by subscription)

My annual bonus scheme is based partly on the overall financial performance of both BMJ and BMJ Research to Publication
Another kind of ghost?
‘Ghost management’ of publications

“... pharmaceutical companies and their agents control or shape multiple steps in the research, analysis, writing, and publication of articles...

...surveys to quantify rates of ghost writing do not address the ghost management phenomenon, because management may not involve writing, and writing may not be managed.” Sismondo, S 2007

But what about academic internal review?

ICMJE declarations on sponsors’ roles

Sponsor names along with explanations of role, if any, in:
• study design; collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; writing; decision to submit
• or a statement declaring that the supporting source had no such involvement

Editors may request a statement, such as “I had [and/or have ongoing] 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.”
ICMJE recommendations: an example at The BMJ

The Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) project (the sponsor) had a role in the design and conduct of the study and in the collection and management of the data. The sponsor did not have a role in analysis and interpretation of the data, the preparation of the manuscript, or the decision to submit the manuscript for publication. [Access to data??]

Review and approval of the manuscript was carried out by committees composed of WHI investigators and NHLBI representatives.

Crandall CJ et al. Postmenopausal weight change and incidence of fracture: post hoc findings from Women’s Health Initiative Observational Study and Clinical Trials. BMJ 2015; 350 :h25
http://www.bmj.com/content/350/bmj.h25
What does the MPIP author toolkit suggest?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Suggestion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication plan</td>
<td>Clarify sponsor’s timing, review processes, etc to set appropriate expectations and implement publication process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target journal</td>
<td>Canvas fellow authors and contributors, sponsors, and other investigators for journal suggestions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Evaluate how each target journal might meet the needs of coauthors and research sponsors as appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presubmission review of MS</td>
<td>Ask senior colleagues, research sponsors, and other investigators to help review the manuscript before submission</td>
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Thanks

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