

Author or contributor?

Fringe at RCN Conference

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Outline

- Definitions of authorship and contributorship
- World Association of Medical Editors (www.wame.org)
- International Committee for Medical Journal Editors (www.icmje.org).
- Rights and responsibilities of authors
- Reflecting all contributions to research teams, incl service users.

- Your experiences of preparing abstracts and papers for publication

- Your preferences regarding RCN Research Conference abstracts

WAME: Authorship

- Authorship is a way of making explicit both credit and responsibility for the contents of published articles.
- Credit and responsibility are inseparable. The guiding principle for authorship decisions is to present an honest account of what took place.
- Criteria for authorship apply to all intellectual products, including print and electronic publications of words, data, and images.
- Journals should make their own policies on authorship transparent and accessible.

WAME *Criteria for Authorship*

- Everyone who has made substantial intellectual contributions to the study on which the article is based eg
 - the research question,
 - design,
 - analysis,
 - interpretation,
 - and written description, should be an author.
- It is dishonest to omit mention of someone who has participated in writing the manuscript (“**ghost authorship**”) and unfair to omit investigators who have had important engagement with other aspects of the work.

- Only an individual who has made substantial intellectual contributions should be an author.
- Performing technical services, translating text, identifying patients for study, supplying materials, and providing funding or administrative oversight over facilities where the work was done are not, in themselves, sufficient for authorship, although these contributions may be acknowledged in the manuscript.
- It is dishonest to include authors only because of their reputation, position of authority, or friendship (“**guest authorship**”).

WAME *Criteria for Authorship*

- Many journals publish the names and contributions of everyone who has participated in the work (“contributors”). *BMJ* 1997;315:696 (20 September)
Authorship is dying: long live contributorship
- Not all contributors necessarily qualify for authorship. The nature of each contributors’ participation can be made transparent by a statement, published with the article, of their names and contributions and WAME encourages this practice.
- One author (a “guarantor”) should take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole. Often the corresponding author, the one who sends in the manuscript and receives reviews, but other authors can have this role.
- All authors should approve the final version of the manuscript.

WAME

It is preferable that all authors be familiar with all aspects of the work. However, modern research is often done in teams with complementary expertise so that every author may not be equally familiar with all aspects of the work.

All authors should comply with the journals' policies on conflict of interest.

Number of Authors

- Editors should not arbitrarily limit the number of authors.
- A subset of authors may be listed with the title, with the notation that they have prepared the manuscript on behalf of all contributors.
- OR a “Group” name represents all authors in a named study may be listed.
- ALL individuals listed as authors should meet criteria for authorship whether or not they are listed explicitly on the byline.

WAME *Order of Authorship.*

- The authors themselves should decide the order in which authors are listed in an article.
- No one else knows as well as they do their respective contributions and the agreements they have made among themselves.
- Many different criteria are used to decide order of authorship: relative contributions to the work, alphabetical or random order.
- Readers cannot know, and should not assume, the meaning of order of authorship unless the approach to assigning order has been described by the authors.

Your experiences

- Deciding on authorship / contributorship
 - When
 - Who
 - Order?
 - Contribution statements

For the Research Conference..

- How best to support best practice?
 - Authorship or contributorship.....