The concept of ‘guarantors’ (i.e. individuals identified to take responsibility for some or all of the study being reported) appears in ICMJE guidelines provide relatively complete and clear guidance on the issues we studied. Variations and notes are as follows:

1. Journal editor organizations, WHO and WMA

ICMJE guidelines provide relatively complete and clear guidance on the issues we studied. Variations and notes are as follows:

- The concept of a guarantor (i.e., individuals identified to take responsibility for some or all of the study being reported) appears in ICMJE guidelines.

- COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) Guidelines on good publication practice. Located at http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/


- WAME provides a useful definition of ‘guarantor’, and suggests that addressing the roles of marketing, communications, and educational companies should be a solution to the ‘ghost authorship’ problem.

- The BMJ prefers the term ‘Advice to Contributors’ rather than ‘Advice to Authors’ on its article submission page: BMJ: “We believe definition of authorship by ICMJE has some serious flaws, and believes contributor definition addresses this.

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- All three institutions studied describe who should be included in acknowledgements in different ways.

2. Industry

Pharmaceutical industry guidelines typically follow ICMJE guidelines, except for the following:

- There is an emphasis on training from ICMJE on describing the role of company employees or consultants in the research and publications process.

- The role of the sponsor in reviewing research they have sponsored is described in the PHRAU guidelines.

- Note that the presence of conflict of interest is implicit for industry and it is assumed that it should be disclosed.

3. Academia

We analyzed policies from the Faculty of Medicine at Harvard University, Yale University School of Medicine, and Cambridge University. These institutions closely follow the ICMJE guidelines, except in the following ways:

- Yale requires that senior faculty take responsibility for research produced in their laboratories.

- All three institutions studied describe who should be included in acknowledgements in different ways.

- The role of the sponsor in publication development is not typically defined by academic institutions, with Cambridge University being an exception.

4. Journals

We analyzed policies from NEJM, JAMA, Lancet, BMJ, Annals of Internal Medicine and Anesthesiology. Most policies are in line with ICMJE. There are some additional differences among such journals:

- NEJM: Authors should take responsibility for a particular section of the work, including data collection.

- Lancet: Authors should take responsibility for a particular section of the work, including data collection.

- BMJ: Authors should take responsibility for a particular section of the work, including data collection.

- JAMA: Authors should take responsibility for a particular section of the work, including data collection.

5. Medical writer organizations

We analyzed policies from AAMW and WAMW. Medical writers’ groups are in line with ICMJE. However, there are some unique emphases such as:

- Encouragement for transparency regarding appropriate acknowledgement including listing of medical writers who are not listed in the contributor section of the author(s).

- Medical writers’ responsibilities regarding author involvement at earliest possible stage and having access to data for publication.

Conclusions

We found a large number of relevant guidelines from diverse bodies, ranging from editors’ groups, journals, industry, and academia to medical writing organizations.

DONT PANIC! They are all broadly in line with ICMJE and provide approximately the same guidance.

BUT BE AWARE! ICMJE guidelines alone may not provide adequate advice for all situations, in particular for publications written by consultants or pharmaceutical companies.

WATCH THIS SPACE! This poster represents the first step in developing recommendations. The second step is to produce a white paper for OSP/IPP members with summaries for best practices in preparing publications.

Acknowledgments

CD sought advice from editor colleagues at the meeting on industry and academic interest. WP examined the journal information. JS searched for medical writer information.

All authors contributed in writing and revising the final manuscript. All had full access to the project data, and have final approval of the submitted version.