



**Baishideng
Publishing
Group**

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Publication Ethics

The key features of the open access (OA) publishing model, namely free access to articles supported by a one-time author payment, have manifested many new challenges in the field of science and medicine communication, particularly in relation to protecting the integrity of peer-review publishing. Our publishing philosophy at the [Baishideng Publishing Group \(BPG\)](#) is to discover and disseminate salient and timely knowledge. We handle ethical issues in accordance with the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#) guidelines, which are continuously applied to the development and revision of our own codes of conduct, policies, and processes.

As a publisher of OA journals, our duties and responsibilities remain as: (1) Following the core practices for peer-review publishers; (2) Publishing peer reviewed articles in a standardized, open and transparent manner; (3) Disclosing important publishing information; (4) Establishing and implementing a reasonable publishing expenditure and pricing system as well as a comprehensive academic quality management system and an efficient management system to avoid plagiarism and citation manipulation; and (5) Proclaiming and demonstrating our determination in and dedication to controlling the highest quality in editing and publishing.

1 CORE PRACTICES FOR PEER-REVIEW PUBLISHERS

1.1 Following the [COPE Core Practices](#) for publishers: The manuscript publishing process of the BPG is founded upon a clear definition of the relationship between authors, peer reviewers and our staff. That foundation is strengthened by consistent respect for the



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privacy of the authors and peer reviewers, protection of intellectual property and copyright, and fostering of editorial independence.

1.2 Following the [COPE Core Practices](#) for journal editors: The manuscript editing process of the *BPG* begins with ensuring that editors understand their general duties and responsibilities, so that they may efficiently and effectively recognize manuscripts that fit the views and scope of the journal that they represent. This knowledge will also promote their activities and motivations to meet the needs of readers and authors, to constantly improve the journal they represent. The manuscript editing process has systematic steps in place to assure the quality of the material selected for publication. Each step is rooted in the core values of championing freedom of expression, maintaining integrity of the academic record, ensuring the business needs do not compromise intellectual and ethical standards, and publishing corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed.

1.3 Following the [Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association \(OASPA\) Best Practices](#): All of our journals are published according to the basic guide to best practices in licensing and attribution in open access publishing developed by the OASPA.

1.4 Following the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\) Recommendations](#): All of our 46 English-language journals are edited according to the recommendations for conduct, reporting, editing and publication of scholarly work in medical journals developed by the ICMJE.

1.5 Following academic rules and norms: All of our 46 English-language journals follow the academic rules and norms. Authors must provide human/animal rights statement(s)



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as appropriate, including institutional review board statement and institutional animal care and use committee statement, informed consent statement, clinical trial registration statement, biostatistics statement, conflict-of-interest statement, and data sharing statement. These statements (and confirmatory documents, where applicable) are published online together with the manuscript. For information on the academic rules and norms, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/243>.

2 TRANSPARENCY OF ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

2.1 Peer review process: All of our [46 English-language journals](#) use single-blind peer review. In order to standardize the manuscript peer-review activity of Editorial Board Members and Peer Reviewers, *BPG* has adopted a registration system for Editorial Board Members and Peer Reviewers, built upon our primary goal of publishing only credible, high-quality studies following peer review. The peer-review process, by which an academic manuscript is reviewed by experts in the relevant field, *i.e.* external reviewers, before a decision is made on whether to publish the manuscript or not, is core to the collective efforts of *BPG* journals' Editorial Board Members and Peer Reviewers. For more information on the manuscript peer review process, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/241>.

2.2 Manuscript decision: The manuscript decision process of *BPG's* 46 English-language journals includes the following three major steps: First decision, second decision, and final decision. For more information on the academic integrity, steps of manuscript decision, and manuscript decision standards, please visit our website at <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/Gerinfo/316>.

2.3 Editorial team/contact: *BPG* possesses a professional editing and publishing team. For



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more information on the *BPG* management team, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/members.htm>. For contact details, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/contact.htm>.

2.4 Appeals and Complaints: *BPG* takes each appeal and complaint seriously. To better respond to people when appeals and complaints are raised, *BPG* handles these appeals and complaints in consultation with all relevant guidelines published by [COPE](#) and in alignment with [BPG's Policies on Handling Appeals and Complaints](#).

2.5 Article processing charge: Information on the *article processing charge* (*APC*) for articles published by *BPG* and on waiving of the *APC* are provided on the journal's home page. For information about the *APC*, please visit our website at <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/242>.

2.6 Copyright: For all articles published by *BPG*, the copyright is owned by the article's authors. All HTML or PDF articles published by *BPG* specifically state the following copyright information: "©The Author(s). Published by Baishideng Publishing Group Inc. All rights reserved."

2.7 Publication misconduct: Publication misconduct includes plagiarism, citation manipulation, and data falsification. Immediately upon identification of any form of publication misconduct, *BPG* directly addresses it according to our policy of dealing with publication misconduct. For more information on our policy of dealing with publication misconduct, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/208>.

2.8 Ownership and management: All 47 journals published by *BPG*, including 1 Chinese-



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language journal and 46 English-language journals, are owned by *BPG*. All of these journals are now published in the United States and registered in the [United States National Library of Medicine](#). The editing and publishing of the 47 journals are managed by *BPG*.

2.9 Journal website: The website home pages of the 47 *BPG* journals display important information on the copyright license agreement, editorial board members, publication misconduct, publication ethics, current issue, E-bound journals, E-journals, high impact articles, journal scope and aims (*i.e.* 'about the journal'), all issues, open access, peer-review process, guidelines for authors, *APC*, permissions, and how to submit a manuscript.

2.10 Journal name: The names of the 47 journals published by *BPG* are registered at [issn.org](#) [website of the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) International Centre], with ISSN numbers obtained.

2.11 Conflict-of-interest: *BPG* has formulated a policy for managing conflicts of interest for authors, editorial board members, peer reviewers, and our staff. A conflict-of-interest statement is required for all article and study types. Once any undeclared conflict of interest is found by reviewers, the manuscript is required to be sent back to the Editorial Office immediately. For more information on the conflict-of-interest statement, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/236>.

2.12 Online access to articles: All of the 47 journals published by *BPG* are published as OA Journals. Readers can read and download all of the published articles for free.

2.13 Revenue sources: All of the 47 journals published by *BPG* adopt the OA publishing



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model. The revenue sources are the *APC*, exclusive journal database cooperation agreement, copyright permission, and reprints. For more information on the revenue sources, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/265>.

2.14 Advertising: The business identifier (trademark, logo, and/or unique name) of the advertiser must be prominently displayed in all advertisements appearing in publications of the *BPG*. The content of all advertisements must be clearly germane to the practice of medicine. The advertiser warrants that all information and representations in advertisements, as well as the pharmaceutical products being advertised, are in compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations in the country where the advertisement will be seen. Advertisements for pharmaceutical products, including drug products under new drug application review, that are subject to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversight must comply with [FDA regulations regarding advertising and promotion](#).

2.15 Publication frequency: For all of the 47 journals published by *BPG*, the publication frequency is indicated on each journal's respective website. For information on publication frequency, please visit our website at <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/271>.

2.16 Archiving: All of the 47 journals published by *BPG* are archived by *BPG* itself, and 23 are also archived in [PubMed Central](#).

2.17 Direct marketing: All of the 47 journals published by *BPG* propagandize themselves or invite manuscripts through important international congresses in the relevant field or the *BPG* highly influential scientists database.



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3 DISCLOSURE OF IMPORTANT PUBLISHING INFORMATION

3.1 Peer Review Report: All Peer Review Reports, including the Re-Review Reports and Editor-in-Chief's Review Report, are released online together with the manuscript. The names of peer reviewers and the peer review report's classifications for academic quality and language quality are released as footnotes in the HTML version.

3.2 Response to Reviewer's Comments: The authors' Response to Reviewers is released online together with the manuscript.

3.3 Study approval report for studies involving human participants, organ transplantations or animals: The documents confirming the Institutional Review Board statement and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee statement provided by the authors' institution are released online together with the manuscript. For human organ transplantation studies, the authors must provide a statement that affirms their experiments were performed with prior obtainment of informed consent from each participant, along with the name of the institution(s)/clinic(s)/department(s) from which the organ(s)/tissue(s) were obtained.

3.4 Clinical trial registration: The clinical trial registration statement provided by the authors is released online together with the manuscript.

3.5 Biostatistics statement: The biostatistics review certificate provided by the authors is released online together with the manuscript.

3.6 Source of funding: The documentation confirming the funding source provided by



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the authors' institution is released online together with the manuscript.

3.7 Conflict-of-interest statement: The conflict-of-interest statement provided by the authors is indicated in the article.

3.8 Author contributions statement: The author contributions statement provided by the authors is published in the article.

3.9 Copyright License Agreement: The Copyright License Agreement, signed by all of the authors, is released online together with the manuscript.

3.10 Language editing certificate: The language editing certificate provided by non-native speakers of English authors is released online together with the manuscript.

3.11 Academic misconduct detection report: The [iThenticate](#) detection reports are released online together with the manuscript.

4 PUBLISHING EXPENDITURE AND PRICING SYSTEM

Reasonable *APC* can be calculated based on the following expenditures:

4.1 Renting an office.

4.2 Purchasing server and broadband service.

4.3 Employing the general managers, editors; and paying the review fees.

4.4 Training of all staff.

4.5 Creating all edited and published documents, including guidelines for authors and guidelines for manuscript preparation and the editing and publishing process.

4.6 Developing and maintaining the electronic system for manuscript submission, peer



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review, and production.

4.7 Developing and maintaining the journal website and the publication release system.

4.8 Developing and maintaining the editorial board members database.

4.9 Developing and maintaining the highly influential scientists database.

4.10 Costs for editors to attend important international academic conferences and publishing industry conferences.

5 ACADEMIC PUBLISHING QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

5.1 Technical quality management by the assistant editor: The assistant editor from the Editorial Office controls the technical quality of manuscripts by conducting a technical preliminary review of the manuscript submission, including retrieval of the authors' submission histories, detection of duplicate publication, overview of the submitted manuscript and its registered information, and culminating in formal confirmation of manuscript receipt. Manuscripts meeting the editorial standards are forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief for an academic quality assessment, leading to an initial decision: Send for external peer review or reject.

5.2 Academic quality management by the peer reviewers: The external peer reviewers control academic quality through their participation in and adherence to the manuscript peer review process.

5.3 Editing quality management by the editor: The editor from the Editorial Office controls the editing quality according to the manuscript editing process. The manuscript editing process includes the following steps: The editor conducts the iThenticate screening for detection of plagiarism in the manuscript; the editor checks whether the language of the manuscript meets the standard; the editor sequentially checks the title, author



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information, author contributions, funding information, corresponding author information, academic rules and norms, abstract, key words, core tip, main headings of the text, references, line drawings, images, tables, abbreviations, and units and statistical expressions in the manuscript; the editor checks all the files authors have submitted; the editor edits the revised manuscript and sends the edited manuscript and all related documents to the Editorial Office director for further review.

5.4 Editing quality management by the Editorial Office director: The Editorial Office director controls editing quality according to the manuscript finalization process. The manuscript finalization process includes the following steps: The Editorial Office director checks and reviews the edited manuscript and all its related documents submitted by the editor; and then the Editorial Office director assigns the manuscript to the Editor-in-Chief for evaluation of the academic quality.

5.5 Academic quality management by the Editor-in-Chief: The Editor-in-Chief controls the academic quality according to the following work flow: (1) Initial assessment of the scientific merit, innovativeness, and potential academic misconduct of the manuscript, leading to an initial decision (send for external peer review or reject); and (2) Second decision involving thorough review of all of the documents submitted by the authors with the revised manuscript, re-evaluation of the innovativeness and importance of the manuscript, and determination of a decision (acceptance, revision, or rejection) based on re-review comments.

5.6 Publishing quality management by the Editorial Office director: The Editorial Office director controls the publishing quality according to the following work flow: Review of all the documents relevant to the academic rules and norms, the Peer Review Report, the



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authors' comments in their Response to Reviewers, the academic misconduct detection report, and the language editing certificate provided by non-native speakers of English; checks to ensure that the manuscript's editing meets the quality standard; and completion of the task list to approve the manuscript's final decision.

5.7 Publishing quality management by the language editor: The language editor conducts language editing and controls the manuscript's language quality according to the following work flow: Confirmation of the manuscript's language quality classification that has been made by peer reviewers and the editor-in-chief; verification of the language editing certificate; and editing of the entire text. In general, the *BPG* expects manuscripts submitted by non-native English-speaking authors (for example, Chinese authors) to have been edited by a native English-speaking editor and then confirmed by an editor with knowledge of the original language (for example, a Chinese-speaking English-language editor) to ensure the language quality.

5.8 Publishing quality management by the production editor: The production editor controls the publishing quality according to the following work flow: Preparation of the manuscript layout, including the figures and tables; proofreading and revision; return to the authors to check and verify the PDF proof; return to the responsible production editor for revision according to the authors' comments on the PDF proof; preparation and proofreading of the complete electronic version of the manuscript; provision to the Production Department's director for their proofreading of the electronic version of the manuscript; return to the production editor for preparation and release of the online version; and preparation of the online version for PubMed Central/Web of Science archiving.



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5.9 Publishing quality management by the Production Department's director: The Production Department's director controls the publishing quality according to the following work flow: Checks of the journal cover, journal table of contents, and the text, tables, figures, references, documents relevant to the academic rules and norms, and page numbers/article numbers of the electronic version for each manuscript. The PDF and HTML versions of all articles are verified to meet the overall publishing quality standards.

5.10 Post-publication debate: All of *BPG* journals allow debate post publication through Letters to the Editor. *BPG* handles post-publication debate in consultation with all relevant guidelines published by [COPE](#) and in alignment with our [Guidelines on Methods of Post-Publication Debate](#). If a Letter to the Editor stimulates any amendments to a published article, the original authors of the critiqued article will be notified immediately after the Letter to the Editor is published, and the original authors of the critiqued article will be invited to write their own reply to the published Letter to the Editor and to submit it as another Letter to the Editor.

5.11 Errata and retractions for published articles: All of our journals allow authors to correct and retract their published articles when necessary. *BPG* follows the [Errata, Retraction, Duplicate Publication and Comment Policy by National Library of Medicine®](#).

6 MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

For all of the 46 English-language journals edited and published by *BPG*, we strictly control the risk of academic misconduct from the time of manuscript submission. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, duplicate submission/multiple submissions, overlapping publication, and inappropriate



authorship. We take the following measures to control risk of academic misconduct:

6.1 Academic rules and norms: All manuscripts submitted to our journals must follow *BPG's* academic rules and norms. For information on the academic rules and norms, please visit our website at <http://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/243>.

6.2 Ethics Committee of *BPG*: To better handle ethics-related affairs of *BPG* journals, *BPG* has established its own Ethics Committee, which holds the specific responsibility for all ethical issues of *BPG* journals. For information on the Ethics Committee of *BPG*, please visit our website at <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/317>.

6.3 Bing search of the manuscript title: The editor from the Editorial Office performs a [Bing](#) search of the title of the manuscript before the manuscript is sent for peer review. The purpose of this is to check whether there is duplicate publication or plagiarism.

6.4 iThenticate detection of the complete manuscript: Before the manuscript is sent for further review, the editor from the Editorial Office performs iThenticate detection of the revised manuscript returned by the authors. The iThenticate Detection Report will be published online together with the manuscript.

6.5 Recommendation of peer reviewers by authors: We allow authors to suggest reviewers in an ethical way. However, reviewers suggested by authors are only for the Editorial Office's reference, and the Editors may not necessarily select the reviewers suggested by authors. The Editorial Office have final decision-making authority for the selection of reviewers.



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6.6 Crossover peer review: In order to prevent potential academic misconduct that may arise from authors and peer reviewers from the same institution knowing one another and/or colluding, the editor from the Editorial Office chooses peer reviewers from an institution different from that of the authors.

6.7 Manuscript withdrawal: In our manuscript acceptance letter and Copyright Transfer document, we remind authors that the manuscript will be withdrawn and the authors will be punished immediately upon discovery of plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, duplicate submission/multiple submissions, overlapping publication, or inappropriate authorship.

6.8 Citation manipulation: In order to prevent citation manipulation, the editor from the Editorial Office and Editorial Office director check whether the manuscript's citations meet the rules and norms; for example, self-citation and citation of other journals published by *BPG* are considered. Upon discovery of citation manipulation, the manuscript will be rejected/withdrawn.

6.9 Allegations of misconduct: To better respond to people when concerns about a published article are raised, for example, concerns about the soundness of published data, plagiarism, figure manipulation, or other forms of misconduct, *BPG* handles these allegations in consultation with the relevant guidelines published by [COPE](#) and in alignment with [BPG's Policies on Handling Allegations from Whistleblowers](#).