

**Department of Health Research**  
**Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**  
**New Delhi**



**“DHR Policy on Publications”**

**DHR Policy on Publications**

Scientific journals play an important role in knowledge dissemination. Publishing a study result in a relevant, international, open access, academic journal provides a much wider visibility to the work done. Publishing an article therefore, has a significant bearing on the responsibilities of the authors. This policy document is prepared to guide the authors regarding the rules and regulations of Department of Health Research (DHR) and its affiliated centres and institutes regarding publication.

**Scope of this policy:** This policy applies to all DHR/ICMR (its institutes) scientific and technical staff including both regular and contractual. It is also a guideline for all Project Investigators of DHR/ICMR funded projects. This policy includes supportive and systematic steps from inception to publication.

## **A. Essential Principles**

### **1. Ethics:**

- i. Authors shall ensure highest professional and ethical standards for biomedical and health research at all stages since inception.
- ii. They are expected to follow the National ethical guidelines for biomedical and health research involving human participants, ICMR, New Delhi.
- iii. The expectations include honesty in the conduct of research, obtaining relevant approvals, efficiency, judicious use of resources, ensuring accountability, transparency, declaration and management of conflict of Interest, justice, reliable data collection, and integrity in analysis, reporting and publication

**2. Approval Process:** Authors shall ensure obtaining necessary approvals like Technical Committees, HMSC clearance etc as applicable .They shall then obtain approval of the Competent Authorities of DHR/ICMR as applicable prior to publication.

**3. General Guidelines and Reporting Standards:** Authors shall follow the guidelines and reporting standards of reputed journals provided as “instruction to authors” for preparing their manuscripts, e.g. following Instructions to the Authors as described by Indian Journal of Medical Research when submitting to the IJMR.

**4. International guidelines:** Authors shall follow guidelines on editorial independence produced by [the World Association of Medical Editors](#)<sup>1</sup> and the code on good publication practice formulated by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#)<sup>2</sup>, the recommendations of the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#)<sup>3</sup>, and checklists and advice for good research reporting of [the EQUATOR network](#)<sup>4</sup>. Authors should strictly follow guidelines of International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) on publication ethics, research integrity and authorship and ensure substantial intellectual role of all authors in publication or presentation. The articles should not be submitted to any predatory journal for publication. The articles should be published in peer reviewed Journal.

## **B. Guidelines for Publication**

### **a. Responsibility and Duties of authors:**

- i Authors shall follow National Ethical Guidelines.
- ii Authors shall ensure that all due approvals like HMSC, CDSCO etc are obtained prior to undertaking research.
- iii There should be due considerations for data collection and ownership, plan for publication, translation of outcomes and preservation of data for at least 5 years after study completion as it may be needed to confirm research findings, establish priority or be reanalysed by other researchers or for monitoring by sponsors or regulators.
- iv For collaborative research there can be requirement for memorandums of understanding (MoU) and material transfer agreements (MTA) with the collaborators.
- v Ghost authorship /gifted authorship are not allowed and contributions of all authors be clearly identified, collaborations if any, should be declared at the time of project initiation, with the name and details of all collaborators stated.
- vi Article should clearly indicate the source of funding/project no./grant number wherever applicable.
- vii Article should duly acknowledge if study has been funded/ sponsored/ commissioned/ conducted by Department of Health Research or ICMR falling which the paper should not be communicated.

**b. Authorship of the Paper:** Authorship shall be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, development, execution, or interpretation of the reported study(IJCME Guidelines). All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they shall be acknowledged or listed as contributors or co-authors. The corresponding author shall ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the paper, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

- c. Approval of the Competent Authority-** An approval shall be sought from the competent authority of DHR/ICMR (Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Director in charge of institute/Head of Divisions as applicable) prior to the submission of article to the journal for all original research projects. The Publications from mission mode national projects shall be approved by the Secretary DHR and DG ICMR. The Other Intramural projects after approval by the Technical Committee or SAC will be approved by DHR/ICMR -Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Director in charge of institute/Head of Divisions as applicable. The Publications accepted in High Impact Journal shall be considered for availing the Article processing charges. For DHR/ICMR funded projects the approval of the competent authority of the host Institute has to be sought. All the publication shall be shared with DHR /ICMR two weeks prior to the publication.
- d. Reporting standards:** Authors of reports of original research shall present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. A paper shall contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable. Authors are advised to go through the international standards given in [www.nature.com/nature-portfolio](http://www.nature.com/nature-portfolio).
- e. Data Access and Retention:** Authors may be asked to provide the raw data in connection with a paper for editorial review and shall be prepared to provide public access to such data, if practicable, and should in any event be prepared to retain such data for a reasonable time after publication.
- f. Originality and Plagiarism:** The authors shall ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted. The issue of plagiarism shall be regulated as per the RIPE policy ICMR 2019.
- g. Multiple, Redundant or Concurrent Publication:** An author shall not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable.

- h. Acknowledgement of Sources:** Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors shall cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.
  - i. Authorship Changes:** Authors are advised to ensure the correct author group, the Corresponding Author, and the order of authors at submission. Changes of authorship by adding or deleting authors, and/or changes in Corresponding Author, and/or changes in the sequence of authors shall not be accepted after acceptance of a manuscript.
  - j. Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest:** All authors shall disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project shall be disclosed.
  - k. Fundamental errors in published works:** When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper.
  - l. Peer Reviewed Journals articles publication Policies-**Authors are encouraged to publish their articles in peer reviewed journals. Peer review is the system used to assess the quality of a manuscript before it is published. Independent researchers in the relevant research area assess submitted manuscripts for originality, validity and significance to help editors to determine whether the manuscript should be published in their journal. Research shall undergo a peer review in a time bound manner following fairness, honesty and confidentiality by competent reviewers.
  - m. Sharing of Data-**Completed research irrespective of results shall be published and shared on public databases/DHR/ICMR website.
- C. Conference Paper Policies** An approval shall be sought from the competent authority of DHR/ICMR (Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Director in charge of institute/Head of Divisions as applicable) prior to the submission of abstract to any notified conference. It should present new knowledge or experience that has not been published previously. It should not be commercial in nature and will not promote specific companies, products or services. A proper review of abstract requires that it contain adequate information on which a judgement can be made. It should be (word limit and Aim & Scope)

according to the instruction to the authors by the Conference organising committee. It shall contain following factual highlights:

- Objectives/Scope
- Methods, Procedures, Process
- Results, Observations,
- Conclusions & Novel/Additive Information

#### **D. AI-generated Content in Publications**

The proliferation and increasing sophistication of AI-assisted language tools (such as ChatGPT) have opened new avenues for research; but the ethics and the best practices for their use are still evolving. These tools may generate useful information and content but are also prone to errors and inconsistencies. AI-generated content can be used for publications under the following conditions:

- AI language tools may not be listed as an author. The AI tool cannot sign publishing agreements or transfers of copyright.
- Any AI-generated content that is used within a manuscript should be thoroughly vetted, fact checked and disclosed.
- If AI language tools are used within a manuscript, their use should be clearly explained within the methodology or acknowledgement section of the paper. The authors of the manuscript will be held responsible for any errors, inconsistencies, incorrect references, plagiarism or misleading content included from the AI tool.

E. **Article-processing charges:** Most of the journals providing open access for publishing involves costs as article processing charges.

- The article-processing charges include a publication charge for each article accepted for publication plus VAT or local taxes where applicable. The expenditure on article processing charges can be met from the publication head available or from Contingency in the budget of DHR/ICMR, only for articles fulfilling all criteria as given below:
  - i. The article should have been accepted in high impact international/national, peer reviewed, PubMed indexed journal in the area relevant to the article.

- ii. An approval should have been sought from the competent authority of DHR/ICMR (Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Director in charge of institute/Head of Divisions as applicable) for payment towards article processing charges, once the article is accepted for publication in the journal.

**After Publication:** All articles published by DHR/ICMR regular/contractual scientific and technical staff shall be uploaded on the DHR/ICMR website with a link to the article and shall also be included in the annual report of DHR/ICMR for wider publicity and transparency.

**Copyright-**Copyright may be transferred to Journal for all publications, including conference proceedings. This allows journal to distribute publications throughout the world by print and electronic means, to create translations and reuse them in reprint collections.

**Policy Review-** This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in the face of changing technologies and emerging concerns. Changes to the policy will be communicated in a timely and transparent manner.

**Dissemination Through Media** including social media-

- 1.All authors shall abide by DHR/ICMR publication policy.
- 2.The note for media briefing for all DHR/ ICMR funded projects, shall be shared with DHR/ ICMR at least 48 hours prior to the release , by DHR/ ICMR scientists and PI s of research projects funded by DHR/ ICMR , so that the reasoning of DHR/ICMR, if any can be added.

#### **References:**

1. <http://www.wame.org/about/policy-statements>
2. <https://publicationethics.org/>
3. <http://icmje.org/recommendations/browse/>
4. <http://www.equator-network.org/>
5. <http://www.ijmr.org.in/contributors.asp>

6. National ethical guidelines for biomedical and health research involving human participants, ICMR, New Delhi.
7. <https://www.elsevier.com/authors/policies-and-guidelines>
8. ICMR policy on research integrity and publication ethics 2019

**Disclaimer:**

This document is the first version of “DHR Policy on Publications” prepared on June 2023. The document might be updated in future, as and when the rules and regulation of the organization changes.

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