



Third Joint Conference
of the
British HIV Association (BHIVA)
with the
British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH)

1–4 April 2014

Arena and Convention Centre · Liverpool

THIRD JOINT CONFERENCE
OF BHIVA AND BASHH 2014



Dr John White

Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London

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COMPETING INTEREST OF FINANCIAL VALUE \geq £1,000:	
Speaker Name	Statement
Dr John White	Editor in chief of Int J STD AIDS
Date	April 2014

Getting published and improving your publication potential

Dr John White

Department of Genitourinary medicine

Editor-in-Chief, International Journal of STDs & AIDS

Guy's and St Thomas'

NHS Foundation Trust



- Have an idea of what kind of papers you can get published as a new consultant
- How to approach writing and submitting a paper: what to do and what not to do
- The review process – how to get a paper through it and how to review papers yourself

Objectives

- **The Good:**
 - share important data with the scientific community
 - allow other colleagues to learn from or replicate your experiences/research
- **The Bad:**
 - raise your own profile
 - make your CV look good
 - your boss wants you to do it for them
 - for academic promotion
- **The Ugly:**
 - to make money from third parties e.g. drug companies
 - you did a crap study and need to justify having done it/show where grant money went

Why try to publish something?

- **Case reports** – need to be interesting!
 - learning point/s
 - good photos/imaging
 - original or new slant/unusual manifestation
 - new test/procedure/management
 - must have consent – written! Ideally patient should see the final draft before publication
 - narrative style – tell the story, engage the reader
 - choose a sensible title
 - be vigilant for suitable cases! Keep a camera in the clinic, consent forms.

What to publish?

- **Audit reports** – try to be interesting!
 - Must know the difference between **audit** and **research**
 - **Clinical audit:**
 - about quality
 - finding out if best practice is being practised.
 - tells us whether we are doing what we should be doing and how well we are doing it.
 - *If you are not comparing one thing to a referenced standard it is not really an audit*
 - Standalone audits are unlikely to get published
 - need to complete an audit cycle to demonstrate change, effect of an intervention

What to publish?

Measure baseline



Review
standards



Set
standards
and criteria



Collect data
to measure
practice



Compare
against
standards



Identify
possible
improve-
ments



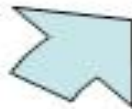
Suggest
change(s)



Implement
change(s)



Evaluate
changes by
re-audit



Audit
cycle

- **Audit reports**

- Audit – doesn't need Research & Ethics approval. Research does.
- Choose something interesting, topical, new
- try something different
- subvert the guidelines
- adopt a new trend or practice
- keep an eye on the journals, conference abstracts for hot topics
- get involved in national audits

What to publish?

- **Review articles**

- Detailed critical surveys of a particular topic.
- You don't have to be an expert...but you should do it with an expert supervising
- have an interest in the topic
- choose an area that hasn't had a review article published recently.
- write to an editor beforehand with a proposal
- get statistical assistance with a meta-analysis or other ambitious collation of data

What to publish?

• **Short correspondence/letters**

- Easy publications – have a go!
- Read a recent paper and think of a worthwhile criticism, comment, omission; present your own data in support of or to refute...
- Run it by your senior colleague/s
- Have an opinion on something?
 - Think it through; try a blog first
- Good for studies that shouldn't be padded out into a full paper. Short & sweet.
- Published papers – people don't usually count paper pages numbers when reading your CV!

What to publish?

• **Original research articles**

- What questions need to be answered?
- Look for aspects of clinical care where no good evidence exists to allow EBM to be practised
- Can be very simple to very complex (avoid!)
- Don't always need an RCT
- Form a hypothesis
- Research what is known on the topic
- Look for poor-quality, out of date studies or evidence that might not be relevant to your local population
- Be innovative! Prepare to have your ideas poo-pooed by seniors (they may be wrong!)

What to publish?

- **Original research articles**

How can you answer the question?

- Retrospective case note review
- Case-control study
- Observational study
- Interventional study
- Don't be afraid of RCTs – some can be simple
- Think of innovations, pathways, communication strategies, new ways of using tests & Rx
- Involve patients/public if possible
- Get statistical input from the start (e.g. power)
- Look for Trust assistance/guidance

What to publish?

Choosing a journal

What is the **best** audience for your work?

- **General**

- *New England Journal of Medicine*
- *British Medical Journal*
- *The Lancet*

- **Speciality**

- *STD, STI, IJSA, Sexual Health*
- *AIDS, JAIDS, HIV Medicine, AIDS Clin Care*
- *JID, CID, J Clin Micro*

- Don't preach to the converted! Try a general or different journal if you want to get a message out there e.g. testing for HIV, alerting clinicians to STIs – e.g. syphilis or LGV

Where to publish?

Choosing a journal

- Consider Impact Factor – aim high!
- *Be aware of rejection rates!*
- The Lancet = 95%
- BMJ = 93%
- Thorax = 90%
- STI = 79%
- IJSA = 65%

Where to publish?

Who should be an author?

Authors are individuals who have contributed **significantly** to ALL of:

- 1) study design
- 2) data analysis
- 3) data interpretation
- 4) writing of the paper
 - drafts
 - final version

1st author = person who has lead on study and did most of the writing of drafts

Last author = person coordinating/supervising/directing the work

How to publish?

Who should be an author?

Can be tricky! Egos, freeloaders, p*sstakers...

Advice = get it sorted out **before** you start to write up your paper. Decide in outline who should/should not be an author

Discuss it with your:

- 1) project director/educational supervisor
- 2) colleagues who may/may not feel they should be involved
- 3) Head of Dept

Be prepared to *negotiate* - but not be bullied!!

How to publish?

Writing:

- Look on journal websites for '*instructions for authors*': length of papers, no. of references etc.
- Please follow them!!!!
- Don't get journals mixed up!
- Don't forget to change all relevant aspects of paper previously formatted for another journal
- Get your written English optimised. Don't assume you are good at it! Find someone to edit your work, give advice
- Keep it simple. It can always be more succinct

How to publish?

Writing: Editors

- 1) Are human...
- 2) Publish *interesting* papers
- 3) Don't always go for the best science

Make them think you went to their journal FIRST!
Make them think you read & value their journal.
Don't be obsequious.

How to publish?

Writing:

The cover letter

This may be the only chance you have to 'catch the eye' of the Editor and avoid automatic rejection

Tell me (the Editor):

- 1) why I should bother to read your paper
- 2) why I should publish it
- 3) how my journal will benefit
- 4) why the readers will read your paper
- 5) why other authors will **cite** your paper

Be **honest** about:

- The content of the paper
- Its word count
- The authorship

How to publish?

Writing:

What you write in your paper must be

- 1) honest
- 2) readable
- 3) reproducible by others
- 4) timely

Format: IMRAD

- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- And
- Discussion

How to publish?



**Begin each paragraph with
the most important fact(s)**

**Give your
explanation with
evidence**

**Add any
interpretation
from other
papers**

Refs

How to publish?

Choosing a title

Don't try to be too sexy/funny/verbose unless in the style of the journal or case report (to hold back the money shot??)

E.g.

"A challenging case of a runny nose"

"An unusual cause of vaginal discharge"

"Lumpy penis syndrome: risk factors, clinical manifestations, diagnostic criteria and histopathological features"

Ask yourself – what are the *key points* of my paper?

- List them out
- Join them up

How to publish?

Writing an Abstract

- Do it at the end!
- Stick to the word count
- Use IMRAD format to start with
- Make sure it contains the important findings and draws them together between the Intro and Conclusion
- Need to include some statistical indication that findings were significant

How to publish?

Conflict of Interest

ANYTHING that could prove embarrassing later...

E.g.

- Study **funded** or **analysed** by a drug company
- Author is a **paid advisor** to company that makes drug/test or might benefit personally/professionally from the study results
- You (or any member of your research group) have **ever** received a trip/money for speaking from **anybody** (drug company/manufacture) who might benefit from the paper...etc

How to publish?

Tips & Pitfalls

- Spell correctly - e.g. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
- Cite papers in same journal you submit to
- Cite papers by likely reviewers of your paper
- Look at the editorial board/associate editor list – potential reviewers of your paper
- Don't suggest reviewers from hell
- Get your word count right

How to publish?

Tips & Pitfalls

- Don't include all the same data in tables and text
- Avoid huge Tables; submit as supplementary material or "online only"
- Respond (politely) to **ALL** of the reviewer(s) comments – include *Tracked Changes* copy
- Give an explanation about why/how you have responded – even if you **don't agree** with the reviewer

How to publish?

Reviewing Papers

To write a paper well it helps to have reviewed papers yourself

For all articles

- Is the article important? Does it “fit” the journal?
- Will it help readers to make better decisions and, if so, how?
- Will the article add enough to existing knowledge?
- Does the article read well and make sense?
- Does it have a clear message?

How to review a paper?

Reviewing Papers

- Be courteous and constructive
- Remember you are advising the editors: they'll decide what to do
- The main aim of peer review is to improve what they may publish or help to reject if needed
- Maintain confidentiality
- Declare competing interests (and send back your best friend's paper)
- Be timely (if you can't do it on time, say so)
- "Do as you would be done unto"

How to review a paper?

Validity

- But don't let the best be the enemy of the good - is this the best that is possible?
- Were the data collected adequately? Was the sampling appropriate?
- Are the methods described adequately?
- Are the analyses right? Should they be redone?
- Remember - try to be constructive

How to review a paper?

Ethical Issues

- Do you have any ethical concerns?
- Many studies make no mention of ethical issues, not even whether the research was considered by an ethics committee
 - it is **essential** – easiest way to reject a research paper is when the authors omit this
- Do still think about the ethical aspects of the research, even if there is a mention of approval by an ethics committee/IRB

How to review a paper?

Volunteer to be a reviewer

- Once you think you know a topic well enough
- preferably once you have published something on it yourself
- put your details into the Online systems and choose the topics you are “expert” in
- drop editors/associate editors an email asking to send you a couple of papers to review
- ask a senior colleague to review with you
- put it on your CV!

How to review a paper?

Further reading:

- Wager E, Godlee F, Jefferson T. *How to survive peer review*. London: BMJ Books, 2002.
- Becker L, Denicolo P. *Publishing Journal Articles*. SAGE Publications Ltd, 2012
- <http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-reviewers/training-materials>
- <http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-readers/publications/how-read-paper>
- <http://www.senseaboutscience.org/resources.php>

How to review a paper?



Any
questions?



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