POST-PUBLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND CORRECTIONS

CONCURRENT SUBMISSION OF A MANUSCRIPT TO MULTIPLE JOURNALS

**Notes**
- The instructions to authors should state the journal's policy on concurrent submissions, including that authors should verify that their manuscript is original and has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere, and that manuscripts may be compared across journals to prevent redundant publication.
- For cross journal investigations, refer to COPE guidance ‘Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct’ https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.7

**Overview**

1. **Follow COPE Guidelines on ‘Systematic Manipulation of the Publication Process’**
   - If systematic (e.g., possible use of paper mill)
   - Contact corresponding author and copy in all co-authors with a copy of their signed statement that the submitted work has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere, AND documentary evidence of concurrent submission

2. **Minor overlap with some element of redundancy or legitimate overlap (e.g., methods) or re-analysis (e.g., subgroup analysis/extended follow-up/discussion aimed at different audience)**
   - Contact corresponding author and copy in all co-authors with a copy of their signed statement that the submitted work has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere, AND documentary evidence of concurrent submission

3. **No significant overlap**
   - Conduct online search for current affiliations/emails and contact authors again
   - Author responds
     - Unsatisfactory explanation/admits guilt
     - Satisfactory explanation (honest error/journal instructions unclear/legitimate dual publication)

4. **Write to all authors rejecting manuscript from all affected journals, explaining position and expected future behaviour**
   - Consider contacting author's institution, informing their superior and/or person responsible for research governance

5. **Inform reviewer/editor of decision and proceed with review**

6. **Inform author(s) of your action**

**Box Out**

- Concurrent submissions to multiple journals may be detected by text matching software
- This information may come from a reviewer, an editor of another journal, or a submission platform

**Flowchart Description**

- **Editor is informed about concurrent submissions**
  - Thank reviewer/editor. Suspend review if under way. Consult with other journal(s) and appoint lead editor to conduct investigation
  - Compare manuscripts. Consider treating earliest submission as original. Check extent and nature of content overlap/redundancy and compare author lists
  - If systematic (e.g., possible use of paper mill)
    - Contact corresponding author and copy in all co-authors with a copy of their signed statement that the submitted work has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere, AND documentary evidence of concurrent submission
  - Minor overlap with some element of redundancy or legitimate overlap (e.g., methods) or re-analysis (e.g., subgroup analysis/extended follow-up/discussion aimed at different audience)
    - Contact corresponding author and copy in all co-authors with a copy of their signed statement that the submitted work has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere, AND documentary evidence of concurrent submission
  - No significant overlap
    - Conduct online search for current affiliations/emails and contact authors again
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