

AJTM CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (2022)

Overview

The American Journal of Translational Medicine (AJTM) is published by Hawaii Gangze Inc in Honolulu, Hawaii since 2017. It is a peer-reviewed academic journal. The purpose of the Journal is to help the medical profession and publish the recent advancements in field of research. To accomplish the objectives of AJTM, most recent studies, innovative medical research reports and clinically relevant researches, commentaries and summaries are selected by the editorial board members. In addition, AJTM Journal complements the research summaries with short feature articles, summaries of clinical guidelines, technical report, brief summaries of and commentary about medical news, and selected other special articles of clinical interest. The editorial board, Editors-in-chief, and other team members of AJTM systematically and proactively fulfils the need to address the conflict of address. The interest of all kinds, such as financial interests including the employments dependencies, honoraria, research grants and ownerships are the most potential sources of conflicts.

Furthermore, that potential exists when the financial interests are held, at a minimum, by the individual or his or her spouse, committed partner, or dependent children. Conflicts can also arise from nonfinancial sources such as competing editorial responsibilities, academic or professional competition and affiliations, and personal relationships.

Therefore, the Committee on Publications and the Editors-in-Chief of the AJTM Journal have developed the following Conflict of Interest Policy. The policy of AJTM provides a clear structured framework which works appropriately and systemically between Editors-in-Chief, team members and editorial board to address and judge the issues of conflict of interest. .

The policy is divided into the following sections:

- Definition, declaration and disclosure of reportable interests
- Managing authors' and editors' conflicts
- Managing the conflict of interest related to newsletter sponsorship
- Monitoring compliance during the editorial process
- Procedure for changing this policy
- Reporting the conflicts of interest clearly in original research

Definition, Declaration and Disclosure of Reportable Interests

1. Definition of reportable interests

The reportable interest defined and includes;

a. Any of the following financial relationships with entities that provide health care products or services and which exceed \$1000/per year:

a1. Stock holdings or equity

a2. Compensation for consulting, speaking engagements, or other services

a3. Royalties

a4. All forms of research support (including support from commercial entities, foundations, and government agencies)

All funds received and equity held within the last year must be declared, as well as any commitments for the next year.

b. Positions of influence in companies that provide health care products or services

c. Publication-level editorial obligation (i.e., primary decision-making roles) on research journals

d. Board memberships on publications that compete with AJTM Journal

e. Leadership positions in professional societies

f. Any of the above relationships on the part of an editor's spouse, committed partner, or dependent child which might pose a conflict.

g. For items 1.1.2–1.1.6, all positions held within the last year, as well as any commitments for the next year.

Declaration

a. Editors-in-Chief (EIC) and editorial board members

The Editor-in-Chief editorial board members are required to essentially declare all type of reportable interests in writing on a standardized structured form to the Hawaii Gangze publications committee. Furthermore, the Editorial board members must indicate the

relationships exceeding \$10,000 and must be providing all the required information/details upon request.

Every member of AJTM must declare/ Clearly address all kind of reportable interest to his/her Editors-in-Chief on behalf of his/her Committed partners, Spouse, Child which can later be better judged by the independent party to pose a conflict. The Editors-in-Chief shall notify and certify to the Hawaii Gangze Publication committee in writing that he/she has received such information form the board members

b. Outside Authors

The invited authors who are not the members of the editorial board e.g., the feature authors, contributing authors must provide a summary prior to writing of all the above-mentioned requirements and declare any form of conflict of interest in writing which can be seems to compromise their abilities to write fairly with respect to their objectives. However, if a conflict exists yet the individual has not recused himself/herself then the editor-in-Chief will decide as authority whether the author should proceed further, if so, then what should be declare or disclose (conflicts) from the published work. (Refer to sections 1.3.2.4 below)

Disclosure

a. Internal Disclosure

The disclosure forms will be kept in confidence by the publisher's office and will be made available under the strictest obligations to the Executive Editor, Editor-in-Chief and where relevantly required, along with deputy editors of each editorial board. The disclosure information for the Editors-inn Chief will be accessible in confidence to the appropriate members of the Hawaii Gangze publishing committee and the members of Editorial Advisory Board.

b, Public disclosure

b1. Publication of policy

This policy shall be published in its entirety on the www.shgangze.com website.

b2. General disclosure on the publication websites

The policy for conflict of interest and relevant information shall be readily available and on each Editor's profile page. All the mentioned relationships in the section 1.1.1 will be disclosed neither on the page nor on website (www.shgangze.com) except for the information regarding the financial amount or any financial relationships, the extended that the information about spouses, children or committed relationships.

b3. Note of Disclosure in Print

In every print issue, a statement will appear to redirect the readers/authors towards the web for the extended information in full text for this policy and disclosures information for all the members of editorial board.

b4. Article-Specific Disclosure

An Editor-in-Chief may choose the authors (either an outside author or a member of editorial board) to write an article, summary or any sort of publication material despite the existence of “potential conflict of interest” in such cases the specific information regarding the conflict of interest must be disclosed along with the article in print and online. (Refer to section 2.3 below)

2. Managing the Authors' and Editors' Conflicts

- a. For standard summaries of original research articles, a board member or outside author may not write or make final editorial decisions about an article if he or she is an author of the original paper being covered.
- b. For all other situations, the management of editors' and outside authors' potential conflicts within the day-to-day editorial operations of each editorial board is based on the principle of recusal. Whenever a board member or potential outside author has a potential conflict (e.g., a financial conflict based on the relationships outlined in Section 1 or any other personal or professional relationship such as being a member of the same department as an author of an original article being summarized or in any way standing to gain from the article), he/she must advise the Editor-in-Chief of the nature of the conflict(s) and offer to recuse him/herself from writing or making final editorial decisions about an article. In addition, the following specific cases require an offer to recuse:

b1. If any of the board member or an outside author has addressed/accompanied to editorial committee with an original research article in the journal of publication, he/she shall offer to recuse from writing or mentioning/making final editorial decisions/policies about the corresponding summary

b2. If any of the author or outside authors has participated/helped in making the policy or guidelines he/she must recuse him/herself from making/writing the final decisions of editorial committee about the corresponding summary.

b3. If any of the member of editorial board, outside author has participated/helped in the editorial reviews of any decisions to publish an original research article, he/she must recuse him/herself from making/writing the final decisions of editorial committee about the corresponding summary.

The Editor-in-Chief will evaluate the significance of the conflict and either accept the offer to recuse and reassign the article or direct the author to proceed. In the latter case, the Editor-in-Chief will also determine if article-specific disclosure of the conflict is required.

Information about each board member's clinical and research interests, and current disclosure statements, are available on the editor profile pages of the AJTM Journal website. Author disclosures at the time of publication of each article shall be made publicly available, beginning in June 2017, with the online version of the article.

3. Reporting the Conflicts of Interest in Original Research

Appropriate acknowledgment of conflicts of interest in the original source material is essential to the reader's full understanding and evaluation of the studies covered in AJTM Journal. However, the journals surveyed differ in the amount of disclosure information they require and publish. Furthermore, as a secondary source, AJTM Journal Watch is not responsible — and does not have resources — for going beyond the disclosure policies of the primary journals covered. Recognizing these constraints, the following guidelines are applied in deciding whether and how to report conflicts revealed in the original source material.

a. Definition of reportable conflicts

Whenever significant industry support is reported in the original article, the fact of a potential conflict should be reported in a succinct manner. In particular, conflict must be acknowledged in the following circumstances:

- a1. Total or substantial support of the research has been provided by a concern with a vested interest in the results (e.g., the manufacturer of a study drug or device)
- a2. Author(s) is employed by the pharmaceutical or device manufacturer whose product is under study
- a3. Author(s) has some other potential conflict that is relevant to the findings (e.g., holding a patent, compensation for promoting a drug, equity interest in a company, paid as consultants or authors for the study by a company)

More limited degrees of support (e.g., donation of a drug, equipment, diagnostic tests, reagents, etc.) should also be acknowledged if the donated material is evaluated in the study and the outcome favors the manufacturer.

The decision whether to report other forms of potential conflict (e.g., public or foundation funding) is left to the editorial judgment of the author and the Editor-in-Chief.

b. Terminologies for Reporting conflicts

As we know, how a conflict is reported varies widely depending on the nature and scope of the particular conflict(s). As long as there is clear indication of the presence of a potential conflict, it is not necessary to provide details about the conflict or to list multiple conflicts (though the author may choose to do so). Examples of appropriate wording include:

"In this controlled, double-blind, manufacturer-sponsored investigation ..."

"In the present study by researchers from the manufacturer ... "

"In the present study by researchers including the holder of the patent on ... "

"Partially manufacturer-supported"

"Supported (partly) by the maker of [name of drug or device]" (especially suitable when reporting a comparison of therapies supported by the manufacturer of one)

"Government-sponsored", "publicly supported", or "supported by [name of government agency or academic/industry consortium]"

Care should be taken that the wording does not cast an unfairly pejorative light on the research.

c. Guidelines on placement of conflict-of-interest information

For summaries in the standard AJTM Journal format (i.e., background / results / commentary), conflicts that are judged to be significant and noteworthy should be reported factually in the background section of the review. If the author believes that the conflict casts doubt on the study's validity or conclusion(s), in addition, the conflict should also be noted in the commentary. For feature articles and other article formats, the consult should be done between the authors and editors on how and where the conflict should be reported in the text.

4. Managing The Conflict of Interest Related to Newsletter Sponsorship

The AJTM journal publishes both online and print-out. AJTM Journal is an editorially independent publication; however, distribution of some print issues and some access to our

content online is sponsored by the commercial entities. In our publication policy, the sponsor's name appears at the top of the first page, and the sponsor is allowed to insert an advertisement into the center of each sponsored copy. The printed newsletters typically have multiple sponsors in many countries; however, any given/Specific copy has only one sponsor.

The potential for conflict raised by such sponsorship is managed in the following manner:

Sponsorship contracts stipulate that the sponsor shall have **No Control** over the selection of editorial board members and **No Control** over which original articles are reviewed or what is said within any summary or other article that appears in AJTM Journal.

Editorial boards do not consider sponsorship in making editorial decisions and writing reviews.

A list of all commercial entities that sponsors the distribution of any of the AJTM Journal newsletters is maintained on publisher's website www.shgangze.com and/or journal website: <https://ajtm.journals.publicknowledgeproject.org>

5. Additional Policies

The AJTM may implement additional policies pertaining to the conflict of interest, as long as;

- Those policies are consistent with the policies set forth in this document.
- Those policies are published on the web page containing the editorial board's disclosure statements.

6. Monitoring Compliance During the Editorial Process

In review process, each submission to the AJTM Journal is reviewed by at least one member of the Editorial Board. The submitted manuscript is also reviewed by an Ad hoc reviewer, who is familiar with this policy; and the board members' published disclosure information. All reviewing editors will actively look for any evidence of bias when reviewing or editing each manuscript.

7. Procedure for Changing this Policy

The AJTM is published by Hawaii Gangze Inc in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Hawaii Gangze Publication Committee on Publications administers changes to this policy. The editors of AJTM Journal and staff are responsible for communicating all substantive changes to the readership via notice published in print and online.