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Wilhelm EE, Oster E, Shoulson I. Approaches and costs for sharing clinical research data. JAMA. 2014 Mar 26;311(12):1201-2. doi: 10.1001/jama.2014.850.

FINALLY...more attention is being paid to PRACTICAL issues about data sharing! Well done to Wilhelm, Oster, and Shoulson for reminding us that it takes resources (financial and nonfinancial) to share data. **We should also remember that it takes resources (financial and nonfinancial) to publish data.** This issue seems to have been lost in the hand-wringing taking place over low and slow publication rates. A robust systematic review, presented at the 2013 Peer Review Congress (organised by JAMA and the BMJ) identified "lack of time" as the main reason why researchers don't write up manuscripts.^1 Clearly, many researchers need writing support (ie, from legitimate, ethical, highly trained and qualified professional medical writers; NOT ghostwriters). Similar to Wilhelm et al., we outlined the need to consider the cost issue if we want to enhance publication speed and quality.^2 We think our paper struck a chord - it was among the **top 5 most downloaded papers** from Current Medical Research & Opinion that year.

Professional medical writers are trained to help make complex data understandable to different target audiences (eg, researchers, regulators, patients) and could, therefore, help address another critical point made by Wilhelm et al., "Standardization costs for data-sharing models include the additional effort required to share, beyond what is required of any high-quality clinical research, because it takes considerably more effort to organize and make data understandable to others." Wilhelm et al. conclude that "Understanding and planning for the costs [for data sharing] at the outset of research can help realize the full potential of data sharing." The same sentence could apply to publications ie, understanding and planning for the costs of manuscript writing at the outset of research can help realise the full potential of peer-reviewed publications.

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****Disclosures****

All authors declare that: (1) all authors have or do provide ethical medical writing services to academic, biotechnology, or pharmaceutical clients; (2) KW's husband is also an employee of ProScribe – Envision Pharma Group; all other authors' spouses, partners, or children have no financial relationships that may be relevant to the submitted work; and (3) all authors are active in national and international not-for-profit associations that encourage ethical medical writing practices. No external sponsors were involved in this study and no external funding was used.

****References****

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- [2] Woolley KL, Gertel A, Hamilton C, Jacobs A, Snyder G (GAPP). Poor compliance with reporting research results – we know it's a problem...how do we fix it? *Curr Med Res Opin* 2012;28:1857-1860.