

From: Flory Ferns-James [mailto:jagseditorial@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, 7 December 2012 4:09 AM
To: Adam Jacobs
Cc: Gertel, Arthur; Cindy Hamilton; Karen Woolley; Gene P Snyder
Subject: Re: JAGS instructions for authors

Dr. Jacobs:

Thank you very kindly on your comments on "Ghost Writing" stated in the instructions for authors. We appreciate your suggestions. Our editor in chief will review your email and respond to you shortly.

Flory

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On Thu, Dec 6, 2012 at 4:43 AM, Adam Jacobs <ajacobs@dianthus.co.uk> wrote:
Dear JAGS

I am contacting you on behalf of the Global Alliance of Publication Professionals (www.gappteam.org), an organisation concerned with the ethics of the role of professional medical writers in biomedical publications.

We have been reading your instructions for authors and the advice they contain about authorship. We are pleased to see that your guidelines include detailed instructions about authorship that is very much in line with current best practice. However, we fear that some of the good work may be undone by one unfortunate choice of phrasing.

Within your authorship section, you write:

For example, a professional or medical writer who prepares a manuscript on behalf of another author ("ghost writer") should not be listed as an author but his/her specific role should be stated in this section

It's clear to us that this recommendation is made with the best of intentions and seeks to avoid ghostwriting. We deplore ghostwriting, and it is pleasing to see that you are making efforts to ensure that it does not reach your journal. Nonetheless, the use of the phrase "ghost writer" in this context may cause confusion, as it suggests that a professional medical writer is the same thing as a ghostwriter, whereas there is an important distinction. We are concerned that this may, despite your obvious good intentions, not be the best way of eliminating

ghostwriting.

We have recently written a letter to the American Journal of Medicine which expands on this issue, and which you might find it helpful to read:

[http://amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343\(12\)00435-4/fulltext](http://amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343(12)00435-4/fulltext)

We would therefore be grateful if you would consider amending your instructions to authors to avoid this potential source of confusion. While the precise wording is of course up to you, we would suggest simply deleting the parenthetical "ghost writer" from the sentence quoted above. It might help to further reinforce the distinction to add some more wording along the lines of:

This journal does not allow ghostwriting, where un-named contributors have played a role in manuscript preparation.

You may also wish to refer to guidelines from the European Medical Writers Association, which seek to ensure that medical writers assist with publications in an ethical manner. You can find the guidelines at <http://www.emwa.org/mum/emwaguidelines.pdf>

I hope you will be able to consider these points when you are next revising your instructions for authors.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Adam Jacobs

(on behalf of fellow GAPP members Art Gertel, Cindy Hamilton, Gene Snyder, and Karen Woolley)