

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **ICMJE suggested a common form for declaring conflict of interest**

Zagreb – International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) suggested a common form for declaring conflict of interest and invited all medical journals to introduce the form in their regular editorial work.

In the last couple of years, failures to disclose conflicts of interest have attracted attention of world media and caused a major embarrassment to publishers, editors and professional societies. The most recent case is related to the publishing company Elsevier, which published a couple of issues of Australasian Journal of Bone & Joint Medicine, a periodical funded by pharmaceutical company Merck.

Many medical journals already ask their authors to disclose potential conflicts of interest, no members of the ICMJE recognized the need to make this disclosure more uniform. In the new form, authors are asked to disclose four types of information. First, their associations with commercial entities that provided support for the work reported in the submitted manuscript. Second, their associations with commercial entities that could be viewed as having an interest in the general area of the submitted manuscripts. Third, any similar financial associations

involving their spouse or their children under 18 years of age. Fourth, nonfinancial associations that may be relevant to the submitted articles.

The goal of the new initiative by ICMJE is to make a full disclosure of competing interests easier for authors and less confusing for readers. An indication of the importance of this problem is that another professional association, the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE), have produced a common standards for conflict of interest disclosure in addiction journals almost at the same time as ICMJE members have published their new form. The article describing the ISAJE's initiative, together with the accompanying commentaries, can be found in the November issue of Addiction journal.