Reviewer’s report

Title: A guide to applying the Good Publication Practice 3 Guidelines in the Asia-Pacific Region

Version: 1 Date: 05 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Yvonne Yarker

Reviewer's report:

I appreciate that you have made significant changes to the manuscript to try to address the reviewers' comments and your efforts have certainly improved the manuscript. The appendix with links to other organizations and guidance’s is a useful addition, as are the new Tables 1 and 2. However, in my opinion, the manuscript still does not provide "a practical guide" as stated in the manuscript title. You also state "we provide practical guidance for applying these guidelines in the context of situations that are relevant to authors in the Asia-Pacific region" but the cases and interpretations in the text do not meet this goal as currently written. This is unfortunate, as a publication that provides practical guidance on the application of GPP3, ICMJE, and other biomedical publication guidelines in the Asia-Pacific region would be a valuable contribution to the literature for those of us who work in this field.

As noted previously, your own experiences and practical examples would be very useful throughout the manuscript. I understand that every situation is unique but as a reader I would value hearing about specific situations you have encountered in the AP region, and how you addressed/resolved them. These experiences would be so valuable to the reader.

I have also noted some specific points below as examples of where I think more work needs to be done, although this is not a comprehensive list.

In the Introduction, you state: "This manuscript aims to provide a practical guide for authors and publications professionals in the Asia-Pacific region on applying the GPP3 and ICMJE guidelines when developing medical publications." However, you still do not explicitly state that your paper is specific to pharma industry-sponsored research, which is evident from their use of pharma/agency language and the cases presented. I think it is essential to clarify for readers the scope/limitations of this paper from the very beginning for the readers - who is it for and what does it cover.

There are specific statements throughout that need clarification. For example, you state: "These include... the Good Publication Practice 3 (GPP3) guidelines on industry-sponsored research." GPP3 provides guidance on COMMUNICATING industry-sponsored medical research - an important clarification, in my view.

Regarding "steps necessary to achieve authorship" in the text and in Table 3, I suggest rewording to say "steps necessary to meet ICMJE authorship criteria".
I found that your responses to comments did not always explain what had been done in the manuscript to address the comment. For example, in response to my query about whether these guidelines are readily accessible, you stated as a response that you confirmed with your Chinese co-author that "these guidelines are freely accessible via the internet in China", however, this response does not reflect the actual changes made to the text of the manuscript, which made reviewing the responses and text revisions quite time-consuming.

Similarly, some of the revised text/statements that you list as responses were not in the tracked changes manuscript pdf. For example, for comments #2.8, you state that you revised the manuscript to say "As a result, awareness of the Good Publication Practice 3 (GPP3) recommendations on the transparent and ethical publication of industry-sponsored research and other relevant guidelines in lower income countries...". However, I could not find this revised language in the manuscript. The closest text in the document that I reviewed states "However, awareness of the GPP3 recommendations in lower income countries..." This was an issue with other responses to comments - the revised text in the manuscript was not the same as the revised text you stated in the response letter.

Table 2 should provide a better explanation of gift, guest, or honorary authorship - there are plenty of publications that provide examples. Also add 'regional publication plans', 'evidence gaps', 'knowledge gaps', and 'authorship agreements' to this table.

As commented previously, I don't think the case studies as written provide much practical help to the reader. In my experience of developing cases, the goal is to present the case (ie, the situation) and then what was done and the outcome, ie, how the situation was addressed/resolved. For example, case 1 sets out the situation but does not state how it was resolved. In this case, the reviewer asked for the STARD checklist to be submitted. Were the authors able to do this? If not, what happened to the manuscript - was it submitted elsewhere as is, or revised to follow the STARD checklist? By presenting what happened, you can provide practical advice to the reader - if developing a manuscript of a certain type (eg, observational study, systematic review, diagnostic study), check EQUATOR for relevant guidelines and follow them. For case 2, you could rewrite to present the situation as the new publication professional joined and found that there were <5 publications from the region. He/she developed a publication plan for their local situation that was aligned with the global plan, facilitating increased resource allocation from the global sponsor and increasing the publications output considerably. If this format was applied to the other cases too, I think this would provide more practical guidance for the reader, which is the intent of the paper.

The link provided to the NIH pictorial decision guide for authorship did not work for me - it took me to a "Page moved" message, so this needs to be updated.
re: "a tick-box list of commonly disclosed conflicts", this would be better worded as "a tick-box list of common disclosures of potential conflicts of interest". A disclosure as such does not mean a conflict. A reference and link to the ICMJE COI form would also be helpful here.

**Level of interest**

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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I am an author of the Good Publication Practice Guidelines (GPP3), the application and interpretation of which is discussed at length in this manuscript.

I am past Chair of the Board of Trustees of ISMPP, a non-profit professional organization mentioned in this manuscript.

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