

RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

Ethical or institutional review board approval. Experimentation involving human subjects will be published only if such research has been conducted in full accordance with ethical principles, including the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki and any additional requirements of the country in which the research was conducted. Manuscripts must include a statement that the experiments were undertaken with the understanding and written consent of each subject and according to the abovementioned principles. A statement regarding the fact that the study has been independently reviewed and approved by an ethical board should also be included. All expressions of concern, correction, or retraction should be directed to the Managing Editor (Ms Elizabeth Ducker, ducker@quintessence-publishing.com). Accepted Manuscripts are part of the permanent scholarly record. They can be withdrawn or retracted as per the version of record only. Retracted articles remain online with a retraction notice to ensure transparency. Copyright continues to apply to retracted articles.

Editor. Any works where an associate editor is a contributor will be handled and decided upon by an alternative associate editor and editor-in-chief. reserve the right to reject papers if there is doubt as to whether appropriate procedures have been used.

Study protocol. Clinical trials must be registered in an acceptable clinical trials registry (clinicaltrials.gov, etc). Please provide the registration number (required for interventional studies). The study's registration number should appear in the manuscript following the abstract. We encourage the registration of observational study protocols.

Reporting guidelines and checklists. These are listed below and can be found at the Equator Network (www.equator-network.org/). Please note that completed applicable checklists and appropriate documentation (flow diagram, etc) should be uploaded with your submission.

CONSORT — For clinical trials (www.consort-statement.org/)

PRISMA — For systematic reviews and meta-analyses (<http://prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/Checklist.aspx>).

SQUIRE — For formal, planned studies designed to assess the nature and effectiveness of interventions to improve the quality and safety of care (www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/squire/)

STROBE — For observational studies in epidemiology (<http://strobe-statement.org/>).

ARRIVE — For in vivo animal research (www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines)

CARE — For case reports (www.care-statement.org/resources/checklist)

MOOSE — For meta-analyses of observational studies (www.elsevier.com/_data/promis_misc/ISSM_MOOSE_Checklist.pdf)

STARD — For diagnostic accuracy studies (www.elsevier.com/_data/promis_misc/ISSM_STARD_Checklist.pdf)

STREGA — For gene-disease association studies (www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/strobe-strega/)

SPQR — For qualitative research (www.mmcri.org/deptPages/core/downloads/QRIG/Standards_for_Reporting_Qualitative_Research_A_990451.pdf)

COREQ — For qualitative research (www.mmcri.org/deptPages/core/downloads/QRIG/Standards_for_Reporting_Qualitative_Research_A_990451.pdf) (cdn.elsevier.com/promis_misc/ISSM_COREQ_Checklist.pdf).