EDITORIAL POLICY

The Journal of Clinical Ethics acknowledges the continuing evolution of editorial ethics. The editorial staff invites the discussion and development of the policies outlined below with its readers and the larger community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Authors should list contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship, such as a person who provided purely technical help or writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support, in an acknowledgment. Financial and material support should be acknowledged, as should groups who contributed materially.

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All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify should be listed. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. One or more authors should take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article. Those who have contributed only materially to the production of the manuscript should not be included as authors (see “Acknowledgments” above).

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The Journal of Clinical Ethics publishes letters to the editor that are in reference to articles previously published in the journal. Letters to the editor are published on a space-available basis at the sole discretion of the editors.

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The majority of articles published in The Journal of Clinical Ethics are subject to double-blinded peer review: that is, manuscripts are reviewed by experts who do so without remuneration. Some reviewers are Editorial Associates of the journal. Editorial Associates receive a complimentary print subscription to the journal and no other compensation.

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Some articles are invited by Editors, and, as a result, are not subject to the blinded peer-review process; instead, the manuscripts are reviewed by the Editors.

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- Accepted for publication as submitted.
- Accepted for publication pending minor revi-
The reviewers have recommended major revision of the manuscript before it is considered for publication; the revised manuscript will re-enter the review process after the major revision is completed; when possible, the original reviewers will review the revised manuscript.

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Patients and third parties. Patients and third parties have a right to privacy that must not be infringed without their informed consent. This right is in tension with the traditional and valuable use of the cases of actual patients. As always, the primary considerations are to promote the welfare of patients, respect patients as persons, and avoid causing harm — and also to further ethical discourse. JCE acknowledges that it is not always possible, or desirable, to obtain truly informed consent from patients or their families, and offers the following guidelines for authors.

- Information from an actual patient should be included only when it is essential to a case presentation; that is, when the use of a fictional case will not suffice. Authors may decide how and how much to alter information depending on its critical relevance to the case. Authors should omit non-essential identifying detail, but also respect the life narrative of the patient, and avoid altering or falsifying information (fictionalizing or masking) without good reason.

- Authors must be cautious in seeking patients’ consent, as some patients may feel used or manipulated at being the source of information in a case published by their careprovider.

- When it will not cause harm, authors should explain the use and function of actual cases with the patient (or parent, guardian, or surrogate) and obtain written informed consent from the patient (or representative) to publish details from the patient’s life. These discussions should include eliciting the patient’s preferences regarding how his or her personal information will be masked (if at all). A patient (or representative) who provides written consent should be allowed to review the case presentation before publication.

- Photographs must never be used without a patient’s (or representative’s) written informed consent.

- Authors who include a case presentation in a manuscript must include a statement, at the end of the article and before the end notes, that describes the extent to which the case has been masked or fictionalized, and whether written informed consent was obtained.

- Authors should include a copy of any written informed consent when their manuscripts are submitted for publication in the journal.

- The families of deceased patients have privacy rights. Authors should use the above points when fictionalizing, masking, or seeking permission to publish case information from a deceased patient’s family members.

The Journal of Clinical Ethics has prepared worksheets and consent forms for authors to use in obtaining informed consent from patients, patients’ representatives, and/or patients’ families, which may be obtained from the editorial office.
using the contact information listed at the top of these instructions for authors.

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