



EDITORS' NETWORK

Questionnaire on education issues in relation to national society cardiovascular journals

REPORT

Background and Purpose An extensive questionnaire on education and the role of journals in education was developed by the Editors' Network Task Force⁽¹⁾ in order to obtain hard data on education issues in the national society cardiovascular journals (NSCJ).

The questionnaire accompanied the presentation of the paper "The Role of Journals on Education", by Peter Mills (Series Editor of 'Education in Heart'), and commissioned by Adam Timmis (Editor-in-Chief of 'Heart'). This paper was presented in the start of the summer 2009 to all the National Societies (NS) and Affiliated Societies editors, encouraging them to make comments and suggestions (via the questionnaire) prior to a simultaneous publication as editorial in all the NSCJs before the end of 2009.

The replies were gathered before the ESC Congress 2009 in Barcelona (29 August – 2 September) in order for the results to be presented during the Editors' Network meeting attended by the NSCJ editors and taking place in Barcelona.

In addition to inviting comments to the editorial, the questionnaire contained questions about types of articles usually published in the NSCJ and education matters in general and related to the NSCJ.

Method

The questionnaire was distributed 17 June 2009 to the National Societies and Affiliated Societies NSCJ editors as an e-form sent as a link from an introductory e-mail to which was also attached the related article/editorial on Education written by Dr Peter Mills, Education editor of UK journal, Heart. The recipients (editors-in-chief's) were required to respond via the email form by 30 June 2009

Link to questionnaire: http://escardio.formbin.com/forms/editors_network_education_questionnaire

Response rate

75% for NS and 31% for Affiliated Societies by 29 August (beginning of ESC Congress 2009)
Where nothing is stated the question has been replied to by all 38 respondents

Results

1. **Educational Articles – Does your journal publish:**

Editorials?

Yes 84% (32)
No 16% (6)

If yes, number per year: average:13, max:72, min:1

Are they peer-reviewed?

Yes 63% (20)
No 37% (12)

Review articles?

Yes 92% (35)
No 8% (3)

If yes, number per year: average:13, max:30, min:1

Are they peer-reviewed?

Yes 83% (29)
No 17% (6)

State of the art papers?

Yes 61% (23)
No 39% (15)

If yes, number per year: **average:7**, max:25, min:1

Are they peer-reviewed?

Yes 70% (16)
No 30% (7)

Supplements?

Yes 82% (31)
No 18% (7)

If yes, number per year: **average:2**, max:8, min:1

Are they peer-reviewed? (23 replies)

Yes 61% (14)
No 39% (9)

Spot issues?

Yes 24% (9)
No 76% (29)

If yes, number per year: **average:2**, max:5, min:1

Are they peer-reviewed?

Yes 89% (8)
No 11% (1)

Clinical Practice Guidelines?

Yes 79% (30)
No 21% (8)

If yes, which type?

National guidelines? 67% (20)
ESC Guidelines? 73% (22)

If ESC Guidelines, in which language?

English (original) 36% (8)

Translated to national language 50% (11)

Both 14% (3)

Number of invited reviews per year

average:9, max:60, min:1

Number of non-invited reviews per year

average:7, max:45, min:2

2. Educational articles - more details

Percentage of review papers compared with original manuscripts

reviewed in %: average: 43%

original in %: average 72%

Percentage of reviews compared with original research papers EXCLUDING editorials

reviewed in %: average: 39%

original in %: average 49%

Do you publish series of inter-related review articles?

Yes 29% (11)

No 71% (27)

Do you publish any other educational material?

Yes 58% (22)
No 42% (16)

If yes, please define which:

Recurrent (more than one reply):

- Multiple choice questionnaires (on actual published guideline - sometimes CME accredited)
- Articles about history of cardiology
- Reports/highlights/lectures/main statements from major international congresses; congress calendar; abstracts from annual national meetings and international congresses
- Case Reports, discussed by specialists; clinical cases; angiogram; ECG examples; echo cases; EP cases; case reports focusing not only on extraordinary conditions or treatments, but also educational case reports; how to diagnose and treat difficult but typical patients; images in cardiology; Rhythm puzzles (test abilities to diagnose from a heart rhythm diagram and short description of patient)
- Controversies and point of views about conflicting issues
- Editorials, letters to the Editor
- Curriculum and rules issued by the Board of Health, describing how to be a specialist in cardiology; recommendations of public health institutions

Other:

- Results of questionnaire concerning the quality of clinical education at the different national hospitals.
- Articles about ethical / racial problems in treating different patient's categories.
- Comments on ESC guidelines
- Discussion of important literature
- Evidence Based Medicine and health promotion materials
- Details about national and international CME programmes
- Special sections for nurses + series on specific topic
- Each month, we publish the abstract of a large randomised trial recently published with two different perspectives (pro and contra) by two recognised experts. We publish also controversies in cardiovascular medicine.
- National Multicenter studies, papers from the Interuniversity Institute of Cardiology (NL)
- Compendium book and CD-ROM of State of the Art articles and related questionnaires.

3. In your opinion and experience

Educational material should be distinct and mainly focused on your country

Yes 29% (11)
No 71% (27)

Joint ESC NSJ publication of 'educative papers' broadens the scope for your readers

Yes 92% (35)
No 8% (3)

Occasional publication of educative material directly organised by the ESC is of interest

Yes 92% (35)
No 8% (3)

Should educative material be syndicated? (bear in mind copyright issues etc.)

Yes 39% (15)
No 61% (23)

Should journals have a role in undergraduate as well as in postgraduate education?

Yes 82% (31)
No 18% (7)

Do you ask for the sponsor role disclosure in your review articles?

Yes 61% (23)
No 39% (15)

Do you ask for the sponsor role disclosure in your supplements?

Yes 58% (22)
No 42% (16)

What are your main criteria for publishing a paper with educative purposes? (please describe) – 29 replies

Recurrent (more than one reply):

- Importance and relevance to the readers (9 replies)
- Clear and well written (8 replies)
- Up-to-date data (7 replies)
- Well-known author (7 replies)
- State-of-the-art and modernity (4 replies)
- Accuracy and evidence-based (4 replies)
- Guidelines related (4 replies)
- Quality of contents (3 replies)
- Originality (3 replies)
- CME relevant (2 replies)
- Broad and general audience (2 replies)
- Well structured (2 replies)
- National language (2 replies)

Other:

- Influence for decision makers in health care sector, increasing of quality of care, and reducing of costs of providing health protection, for consumers of drugs, etc.
- Quality Adaptable to national situation
- Controversies on some treatment, difficult diagnosis, new diseases, new developments
- addressing issues that are not usually covered by original papers
- Unbiased
- good ethical standard
- illustrated

4. Continuing Education and CME Accreditation

(In order to recognise the educational role of your journal..)

Do you have a continuous education programme?

Yes 42% (16)
No 58% (22)

Do you provide CME credits?

Yes 32% (12)
No 68% (26)

If yes, are the CME credits officially granted through a national validated system?

Yes 100% (12)
No

Would you be interested in obtaining ESC CME credits for your readers?

Yes 76% (29)
No 24% (9)

5. Ongoing and future work

Other educational projects that you are in the process of implementing (or would like to implement)? – 21 replies

Recurrent (more than one reply):

- Comments to and dissemination of ESC Guidelines (4 replies)
- None, nothing at the moment (4 replies)

- Series of review articles (3 replies)
- CME accreditation and courses (3 replies)
- Internet based education (2 replies)

Other:

- Better multiple choice questionnaires
- Case stories (especially on difficult cases)
- Book and supplements series
- Publication of Hot Lines and Clinical Trial Update sessions
- National project: prevention for school children (journal and web portal)
- Workshops and other events with ESC and other NS

6. The article "The roles of Journals in Education" by Peter Mills, FESC

Having read this article (in attachment in your email) please let us know your comments and suggestions – 23 replies

Recurrent (more than one reply):

- Excellent, (very) interesting, "I agree", well written, good, .. (11 positive replies)
- Not relevant for our journal, though interesting (4 replies)
- Experiences from other countries should be included, too much emphasis on one journal (2 replies)
- Has not read it yet (2 replies)

Other:

- Too short
- General
- a little wordy
- Rather to be published in EHJ

Would you be interested in publishing this article in your national cardiovascular journal?

Yes 71% (27)
No 13% (5)
Don't know yet 16% (6)

7. Thank you very much for your time - Please let us know who you are

I am the editor-in-chief of this journal

Yes 92% (35)
No 8% (3)

If no, please state your role:

Managing Editor
 Responsible secretary
 Representative of Educational Activities of the NS

Conclusion:

The comments and positive replies to question section 6 have resulted in a simultaneous publication of the paper "The Roles of Journals in Education by Peter Mills in 28 National Society Cardiovascular Journals (including 5 in Affiliated Societies) during November 2009 – January 2010.

(1) Editors' Network Task Force:

- Adam Timmis MD, Editor-in-Chief, Heart (UK)
- Hugo Ector MD, Editor-in-Chief, Acta Cardiologica (BE)
- Panos Vardas MD, Editor-in-Chief, Hellenic Journal of Cardiology (GR)
- Giuseppe Ambrosio MD, Former Editor-in-Chief, Gionale Italiano di Cardiologia (IT)
- Piotr Kułakowski MD, Editor-in-Chief, Kardiologia Polska (PL)
- Fausto J. Pinto MD, Editor-in-Chief, Revista Portuguesa de Cardiologia (PT)
- Fernando Alfonso MD, Editor-in-Chief, Revista Española de Cardiología (ES) and chairperson of the Editors' Network