

This Role Profile describes the details of your role. Unless otherwise defined herein, expressions used shall have the meaning set out in your *Letter of Appointment*. References to BMJ (**us, our, we**) shall, where appropriate, be deemed to include the Co-Owner referred to in your Letter of Appointment (if any) and BMJ's licensors.

### 1. **Overview**

- 1.1 During your appointment you shall ensure efficient, transparent and accurate peer-review and editorial assessment of all original research papers (**Manuscript(s)**) submitted to the Journal.
- 1.2 You shall be responsible for all scholarly and non-scholarly content (for example, any podcasts, blogs, social media) published in, or in connection with, the Journal including:
  - 1.2.1 the accuracy and veracity of the scientific and academic content of the Journal (insofar as is reasonable for a specialist in your field with your experience); and
  - 1.2.2 the scientific credibility of Manuscripts accepted for publication in the Journal (including ensuring that any such research has been conducted in accordance with industry standard methodology and practice, and has complied in full with all applicable guidelines and ethical standards).
- 1.3 You shall review and advise on any conflict(s) of interest declared by any author or member of the Editorial Board (as defined in clause 4 below and shall liaise with us as to any further action which may be required in respect of the same.
- 1.4 *Training and development:* You are required to attend (either in person or virtually): (a) our mandatory training for editors; and (b) at least one of our *Journal Editors' Seminars* in every two year period during your appointment. You are also invited (and strongly encouraged) to participate in relevant BMJ online communities groups and any other online discussion forums for editors of our journals.
- 1.5 *Media and third-party communications:* You undertake to promptly refer to your Head of Portfolio or Publisher any media enquiries and/or requests for third party use of the Journal (or its content) which you may receive.

### 2. **Ambassadorship**

- 2.1 You shall act as an ambassador to promote the best interests of the Journal and its outreach which may include:
  - 2.1.1 representing the Journal at meetings such as meetings of the Committee on Publication Ethics (**COPE**) and peer-review conferences;
  - 2.1.2 engaging with the media (in conjunction with our media relations team pursuant to clause 2.3 below) and acting as a commentator in your field of expertise;
  - 2.1.3 publicly defending the Journal's processes or content following criticism (should this be required) and working with our media relations team to provide a response to any media coverage which is consistent with our brand and media strategies; and
  - 2.1.4 promoting fair and balanced media coverage in accordance with clauses 2.2, 5.8 and/or 7 below.
- 2.2 You will lead by example and set a tone and manner for the Journal including any communication issued for or on its behalf (whether published online or other media formats) which is:
  - 2.2.1 respectful and polite;
  - 2.2.2 truthful, transparent and honest (for example, it should be clear who is making the statement and what their position is in relation to the Journal);
  - 2.2.3 accurate and substantial;
  - 2.2.4 appropriate – for example, the following will not be acceptable in any circumstances: (a) harassment or bullying; (b) obscenity; (c) anything which is discriminatory or which would otherwise contravene our policies on equality and diversity; (d) anything libellous (or which we reasonably believe could lead to legal action being taken against the Journal and/or us); and (e) anything which is in any way illegal (for example, inciting racial hatred, contempt of court, breach of intellectual property rights);
  - 2.2.5 sensitive of our stance concerning: (a) equality, diversity and inclusion; (b) editorial independence and the need to be completely transparent, particularly in relation to any commercial relationship between you and any third party (including advertising or sponsorship); (c) tobacco products (including products and services from tobacco companies, their foundations, or their wholly owned subsidiaries); (d) products making therapeutic claims which are not substantiated in a full length research paper published in a peer reviewed journals; and (e) breast milk substitutes.
- 2.3 You must promptly notify your Publisher if you become aware of any external media coverage (including any media coverage opportunity) in relation to either the Journal, any of its content, or any author published in the Journal. You undertake not to participate in any media coverage relating to either the Journal, any of its content, or any author published in the Journal without our prior written consent (to be determined by us in our absolute discretion). To the extent that we authorise or ask you to participate in any such media coverage, you agree to work with our in-house media relations team and to follow their directions.

### 3. **Strategy and budget**

- 3.1 We encourage you to discuss with your Publisher (as defined in your *Letter of Appointment*) any potential improvements and proposals for new types of content or variations to existing content.
- 3.2 Together with your Publisher (as defined in your *Letter of Appointment*) and our publication team you shall:

- 3.2.1 establish a 3-5 year editorial strategy and development plan for the Journal (**Strategic Plan**) covering editorial direction, focus and content and including annual objectives for: (a) the the time taken to complete manuscript screening and peer-review processes; and (b) diversity and inclusion pursuant to clause 4.3;
- 3.2.2 annually report to us on the Journal's performance against the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan;
- 3.2.3 take appropriate remedial action if any of the objectives set in the Strategic Plan are not achieved; and
- 3.2.4 advise on promotional opportunities.
- 3.3 Your Publisher will propose and administer the Journal's budget together with our inhouse team. Any deviation, alteration or other variation to the editorial honorarium, reviewer or author fees or editorial board meetings budget which you wish to propose must be approved by the Head of Portfolio.
- 4. Editorial Board**
- 4.1 The function of the Journal's editorial board (**Editorial Board**) is to assist, support and advise on the Journal's editorial content and strategy, both proactively and by reviewing published content. Subject to the provisions of this clause 4, you are entitled to structure the Editorial Board as you think appropriate and may appoint to the Editorial Board as many associate or deputy editors as you reasonably determine to be necessary in order to meet the needs of the Journal. Thereafter, you shall lead and communicate with those members of the Editorial Board and any meetings of it.
- 4.2 Before making any appointment to the Editorial Board you shall:
  - 4.2.1 evaluate the balance of skills, experience, independence, knowledge, and diversity on the Editorial Board taking account of the Journal's and BMJ's strategic priorities and implement any changes that are necessary;
  - 4.2.2 consider candidates on merit, against objective criteria and with due regard for promoting the benefits of diversity on the Editorial Board, including (without limitation) of gender, age, social and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity, nationality, and cognitive and personal strengths, taking care that appointees have enough time available to devote to the position; and
  - 4.2.3 notify us in writing confirming the details of the proposed appointment and providing any other information which we may reasonably request in order for us to issue an appointment letter (in electronic format) to the relevant candidate where appropriate.
- 4.3 Together with your Publisher, you will set measurable objectives and targets for diversity and inclusion in relation to the Editorial Board. You shall be responsible for ensuring that these objectives and targets are met and for overseeing the development of a diverse pipeline for succession, having regard to diversity of gender, age, social and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identity, nationality, and cognitive and personal strengths.
- 4.4 Any appointment you make must be for a fixed term not exceeding three (3) years and must be concurrent with your own appointment.
- 4.5 We shall have the right to remove any individual from the Editorial Board (or, where relevant, withdraw any offer to a proposed Editorial Board member) where we believe that their appointment may cause harm to the goodwill of the Journal or to BMJ. Where we exercise this right, you shall provide your full assistance to us.
- 5. Editorial duties and responsibilities**
- 5.1 Manuscript screening: Each Manuscript shall be submitted to the Journal for consideration via our online submission and peer review system (**e-System**). Full training and support on the e-System will be provided to you and members of the Editorial Board. You will be responsible for the screening and progression of each Manuscript submitted to the Journal in accordance with BMJ's and the Journal's policies and procedures. You shall be responsible for overseeing the screening and assessment of Manuscripts against the Journal's aims and scopes for suitability for peer-review (including the rejection of unsuitable Manuscripts).
- 5.2 *Review and Peer-review:*
  - 5.2.1 You shall be responsible for overseeing the securing of appropriate experts in the field (**Reviewer(s)**) to review and evaluate the Manuscripts (**peer-review**) and subsequent editorial decisions on whether to reject or progress publish for publication those Manuscripts which have been successfully peer-reviewed). Manuscripts should be reviewed by a minimum of two (2) external appropriate experts in the field and in accordance with BMJ's [editorial policies](#). Reviewers should be selected on the basis of their expertise, impartiality and independence. We encourage you to include patients and professional statisticians as Reviewers, where appropriate. BMJ can support the provision of patient-Reviewers through our patient partnership initiative.
  - 5.2.2 All other Journal content (excluding Manuscripts) must, prior to publication, be reviewed and approved internally by the Publisher and either: (a) Head of Portfolio; or (b) another member of the Editorial Board.
- 5.3 *Turnaround:* Together with the Journal's publishing team, you shall be responsible for ensuring that the Journal's processes run as efficiently as possible. You will use your best endeavours to ensure that each Manuscript is screened and peer-reviewed within the target turnaround times set in the Strategic Plan. If a decision is taken to reject a Manuscript, you shall use your best endeavours to ensure that the relevant author(s) are contacted no later than one week from the date of that decision, and that they are provided with a fair and reasonable justification for the rejection.
- 5.4 *Copy editing, layout and production:* Once a Manuscript has passed peer-review and been accepted for publication, that Manuscript will be progressed to our production team for copy editing, typesetting and preparation for publication in the Journal. The assigned production editor will have responsibility for collating author corrections and delivering the final proofs of the Manuscript. Although the assigned production editor will largely liaise directly with the author concerning any minor queries, you may occasionally be asked to assist with any major queries requiring clarification. These queries may include, for example, issues pertaining to the scientific or academic meaning and/or perceived inaccuracies. You may

also be required to sign-off the final proof of a Manuscript for publication in lieu of an author (where the author in question has not provided the necessary sign-off within a reasonable timeframe of being asked to do so). We shall be responsible for publishing the Journal in accordance with all reasonable industry standards.

- 5.5 *Issue compilation:* You will assist the assigned production editor (and copy editor where applicable) regarding the compilation of Manuscripts and any running order thereof which may be required to prepare and finalise an issue of the Journal ready for publication.
- 5.6 *Online-format version of the Journal:* Unless publication has been delayed for a specific reason, once a Manuscript has completed the Journal's production processes, the full text HTML and PDF versions of that Manuscript will be published online on the Journal's website.
- 5.7 *Journal website and online presence:* You will oversee contributions to the Journal's website, blog and social media accounts. You will be responsible for all editorially determined content on the Journal's website (but for the avoidance of any doubt you will not be responsible for the appearance of the website or the information pages) provided that we shall have the absolute right to remove any editorial content without notice where we determine it to be necessary (acting in our full discretion) for legal reasons. You shall be responsible for screening responses from readers of the Journal (both in online and print format) including verifying the accuracy of the same and, where necessary, raising queries with the relevant author(s) and/or our legal department. You may assign this task to one or more members of the Editorial Board.
- 5.8 *Media promotion:* If you think that a Manuscript or other item of academic or scientific content accepted for publication in the Journal warrants media promotion, then you should indicate this in the e-system at the point where the Manuscript is accepted, ensuring you provide reasons. The final decision on whether to engage in any publicity (including the decision as to whether or not to issue a press release) shall rest with BMJ's in-house media relations team (to be determined at their absolute discretion).
- 5.9 *Article transfer service:* If you determine that a Manuscript is not suitable for publication in the Journal but you find it to be methodologically sound, you shall recommend to the author(s) that they transfer the Manuscript to the most appropriate BMJ speciality journal for the Manuscript liaising with the [Article Transfer Service Manager](#). You shall use the 'Reject with Transfer' decision in the e-System to facilitate the transfer of the Manuscript and the 'Reject' decision for Manuscripts that are methodologically flawed. You will provide all reasonable assistance to the Article Transfer Service Manager.
- 5.10 *Cooperation:* Where applicable, you shall provide your cooperation and reasonable assistance to the Editor-in-Chief of any other BMJ publication.

## **6. Publication team**

- 6.1 *Editorial Director:* The Editor-in-Chief of *The BMJ* acts as Editorial Director for all publications produced by us and is ultimately responsible for all editorial matters affecting any of our products and services (including the Journal). *The BMJ* and their editorial team are available to provide training, guidance and support on editorial matters.
- 6.2 *Head of Portfolio:* The Head of Portfolio named in your *Letter of Appointment* has been appointed by BMJ and is responsible for the business of publishing the Journal. They are also available to provide guidance and support to you on publishing matters.
- 6.3 *Publisher:* The Publisher named in your *Letter of Appointment* has been appointed by us to assist the Head of Portfolio and will be your first point of contact. Your Publisher will liaise on your behalf with our staff (including without limitation, those from sales, marketing, finance, customer service, production, technology, legal and research ethics) and any third parties (including without limitation, negotiating quotations for the provision of services and activities such as sponsored supplements, website development or other online features, sponsorship etc).
- 6.4 *Editorial Production Assistant (EPA):* The EPA is appointed on our behalf and will support you to administer the peer review of Manuscripts. They will correspond with you, members of the Editorial Board, authors and Reviewers, via email and through the e-System. The EPA will check whether Manuscripts conform to our requirements and the Journal's instructions to authors.

## **7. Complaints and concerns**

- 7.1 Subject to the provisions of this clause 7:
- 7.1.1 you shall be responsible for overseeing the handling of any pre-publication or post-publication concern which may arise in connection with the Journal; and
- 7.1.2 you shall consult with BMJ's Research Integrity team to decide any matter referred to you including, without limitation: the rejection of Manuscripts; and, appeals or complaints received from authors of a Manuscript or readers of the Journal etc.
- 7.2 Any decision to retract a published Manuscript will be subject to the prior approval in writing by the Editor in Chief of *The BMJ*.
- 7.3 You must promptly notify your Publisher:
- 7.3.1 if you become aware of any existing or potential legal or ethical issues (including, without limitation, those related to publication practice or suspected publication or research misconduct), and you must follow any directions given to you by our legal advisers, your Head of Portfolio, your Publisher, our Ethics Committee or COPE.
- 7.3.2 if a Manuscript is on a subject matter, or contains third party materials, which you reasonably consider could be controversial or could result in legal action being taken against us on publication of that Manuscript. Your Publisher will then procure that the relevant Manuscript undergoes a legal review and that reasonable checks are

carried out in order to verify the factual accuracy of the content of the Manuscript in question before it is progressed further. While we do not shy away from controversy, in the spirit of openness and transparency (and to encourage scientific debate) we recommend that before being published, any controversial Manuscript be accompanied by a press release including a full and balanced package of material for journalists so as to encourage responsible reporting.

Similarly, we will ensure that you are informed of (and kept up-to-date with) any legal or ethical issues which may arise in connection with the Journal.

- 7.4 BMJ reserves the right to withdraw or alter from the Journal, any item or part of an item, for any reason including where BMJ no longer retains the right to publish, or where BMJ has reasonable grounds to believe the content is unlawful, infringing, false, harmful or defamatory. Unless BMJ believes that immediate action is justified (in which case BMJ will notify you as soon as possible), BMJ will consult you before exercising its rights in this clause 7.4.
- 7.5 In the event of any disagreement between you and BMJ (including any of BMJ's team), the decision of the Editor in Chief of *The BMJ* shall be final and binding.