

Guidelines for supplement publication

The BMJ Publishing Group journals are willing to consider publishing supplements to regular issues.

Supplement proposals may be made at the request of:

- The journal editor, an editorial board member or a learned society may wish to organise a meeting, sponsorship may be sought and the proceedings published as a supplement
- The journal editor, editorial board member or learned society may wish to commission a supplement on a particular theme or topic. Again, sponsorship may be sought
- The BMJ PG itself may have proposals for supplements where sponsorship may be necessary.
- A sponsoring organisation, often a pharmaceutical company or a charitable foundation, that wishes to arrange a meeting, the proceedings of which will be published as a supplement

In all cases, the criteria listed below must be fulfilled. It is vital that the journal's integrity, independence and academic reputation is not compromised in any way. If the criteria listed below are adhered to then the journal's reputation should be protected.

Editorial and peer review issues

1. All manuscripts submitted for a supplement will be subjected to the normal peer review processes of the journal. The editor has the right of veto on any manuscript he/she considers unsuitable for publication.
2. Supplements will only be considered for publication where their content is unbiased and of educational value or constitute a professional service to clinicians. Manuscripts should be original work or original reviews or commentaries of previous studies. If work is included that has previously been published elsewhere this must be made clear and the original publication must be acknowledged. The quality and independence of the content is paramount.
3. The potential profitability of the supplement must not influence the decision process. The editor will accept or reject a supplement purely on its academic merit.
4. Supplements that are clearly for promotional purposes will not be considered.
5. Editors should be alert to series of manuscripts advocating the use of one particular drug or formulation, particularly where the sponsor may have an interest. This type of promotional material will be rejected
6. The journal editor may elect to edit the supplement him/herself or may appoint a specialist guest editor who may be an editorial board member.
7. The supplement editor must declare any competing interests.
8. The supplement editor must be involved at an early stage in the planning of the supplement or meeting and the selection of authors and/or speakers.

Production

9. Any supplement published must be circulated to all regular journal subscribers.
10. Manuscripts must be prepared in accordance with the journal's instructions for contributors. The supplement should conform to the journal's style and format and should include details of the journal's affiliations and editorial board.
11. The sponsor will be entitled to see proofs but cannot make any alterations save with the consent of the editor.
12. A publication schedule should be agreed in advance and adhered to as far as possible.

13. A journal subscription order card may be bound in all additional copies supplied to the sponsor.
14. The supplement pagination should be distinct from that of regular issues (s1-s12).

Commercial issues

15. The journal's managing editor must be involved at an early stage. He/she will consult the editor, coordinate the reviewing process, oversee production and negotiate the financial arrangements with the sponsor.
16. The sponsor will be given a preliminary quotation. This will be based on the likely pagination, colour requirements, the number of additional copies required by the sponsor and the arrangements for online publication.
17. The editor should not become involved in any financial negotiations. All monies will be held by the publisher who will arrange payments as required.
18. The journal, not the sponsor, will be responsible for the editor's remuneration and expenses.
19. The publisher reserves the right to sell copies of the supplement to other organisations or individuals and to license the foreign language rights.
20. Usually the sponsor must agree to underwrite the costs of supplying the supplement to all regular subscribers.. There will be no upper or lower limit on the number of additional copies the sponsor may purchase.
21. The sponsor must underwrite the costs of posting the full text of the supplement on the journal's web site.
22. The sponsor may wish to allow open access to the supplement content on the web. An additional charge will be negotiated for this function.

Advertising

23. There will be no display advertising in commercially sponsored supplements. Supplements with either no or only partial non-commercial sponsorship may seek to offset costs by the sale of display advertising space.
24. Acknowledgement of sponsorship will be confined to a line on the title page or inside front cover "publication of this supplement is made possible by an education grant from....."
25. Commercial banner advertising on the web version of the supplement will not be permitted.

Abstract supplements

Supplements comprising programmes and abstracts submitted to a learned society's meeting may also be accepted provided that the editor or learned society has been closely involved in the selection of the programme, speakers and abstracts. These supplements may carry display advertising and have one or more sponsors.

Alex Williamson
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