Authorship Policy for Written Outputs from BODE³
Dec 2012

1. We will follow the Vancouver criteria
   “Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the content. Authorship credit should be based on substantial contributions to:
   a) conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data; and to
   b) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and on
   c) final approval of the version to be published.

   Conditions a), b), and c) must all be met. Any part of an article critical to its main conclusions must be the responsibility of at least one author. Editors may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship.”

2. Wherever possible, we will explicitly state contributorship
   Authorship serves a dual role. First, it is a means of obtaining credit in the academic world - promotion, invitations to conferences, and funding all to some extent are measured by a person’s publications. Second, it is a means of assigning responsibility - the authors must be answerable and responsible for the results.

   To assign both credit and responsibility, many journals now require or encourage explicit statements of contributorship. We will follow this system wherever possible.

   One author, usually the first or last author, will take the overall responsibility of ‘guarantor’ of the written output. However, specific individual roles and responsibilities remain identifiable under contributorship. Occasionally, it may be appropriate for two authors to be co-guarantors (e.g. supervisor and student).

   There may be occasions where group authorship is simplest and appropriate. For example, “BODE³ team” denoted as sole or co-author. (However, this option should only be used where it is difficult to clearly identify named authors to appear in the by-line, and when all member of the group agree to this option.) Should this group authorship approach be used, then the contributor statements take on greater importance.

3. Authorship order will usually be on the basis of importance of contribution
   There is no universally agreed way to assign authorship order. Journals are not usually explicit in their advice to authors.

   We will attempt to follow the recommendation of Rennie et al (1997):

   “The colleagues .... having agreed on their respective contributions, should list their names systematically - in the [author] byline and in the contributorship list - according to the relative importance of their duties: in descending order, starting with the collaborator who made the most substantial contributions.”

   Note that this ordering requires first agreeing on contributorship.
A common practice in some disciplines – and increasingly so public health and health sciences - is that the research leader of the given study, or such senior researcher, is the last author. Senior researchers who obtained funding, or generated the general research study design and approach, might be last author. Directors of the BODE³ programme, in particular Blakely and Wilson, would often meet these criteria, and may elect to be last author when they have not fulfilled the criteria for first author based on contributorship.

Should the number of authors be very large, it may only be practical to order the first two or three authors by importance of contribution, and order remaining authors, say, alphabetically. If this were done, the contributorship section would be amended to state this.

4. Deciding who is and is not a co-author, and authorship order
If in any instance there is not a consensus among the team as to inclusion and ordering of authorship, then the lead author (if clearly identified), Programme Director (Blakely) and Programme co-Directors (Wilson and Sarfati) will make the final decisions collaboratively. In the unlikely evident that such a consensus cannot be reached, the programme Director alone will have the final decision.

Resources