Reporting clinical trials: full access to all the data


Authors’ right to access to all data obtained in their study

Biomedical research is becoming more complex as a result of involvement by individual investors, universities, commercial research units, and industry. Financial conflicts of interest have been the subject of many editorials and most peer reviewed journals now require any conflicts to be identified and explained when authors submit manuscripts for publication. Clear statements of industry sponsored research and author participation in corporate activities are required for evaluation of a manuscript. Full disclosure of financial interests by authors is essential to retain public trust in biomedical research, the integrity of the research sponsors. Academic freedom includes the right of authors to have access to all of the data obtained in their study, to review it, obtain statistical analyses independently, and to publish their data based on their own decisions and not those of the financial sponsor. We will now require the principle author to declare in writing that he or she will take full responsibility for the data, the analyses and interpretation, and the conduct of the research: that he or she had full access to all of the data; and that he or she had the right to publish any and all data, separate and apart from the attitudes of the sponsor. Without these written assurances, we will not consider the paper for review. We believe that this new policy will ensure not only greater academic freedom, but also increased credibility for data in our journals that have been the product of academic and corporate alliances.

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