

Editorial

Harm Reduction Journal

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Statement of purpose

Harm Reduction Journal (HRJ) is an Open Access, peer-reviewed international journal of original research and scholarship on drug use and its consequences for individuals, communities, and larger populations. Its focus is on reducing the adverse health, social, and political harms associated with these substances and on the public policies and strategies in place to control them. We are especially interested in studies of the evolving patterns of drug use around the world; the effects of drugs on public health and the spread of infectious diseases; and accurate descriptions and rigorous evaluations of innovative policies and practices for harm reduction in diverse societies.

Audience

In addition to professional practitioners, researchers, and policy makers working in the drugs field around the world, *Harm Reduction Journal (HRJ)* seeks to reach a wider audience of readers, including university students and their faculties, journalists, and families seeking accurate and authoritative information about drugs. The free online access and links to translated versions of published peer-reviewed research and other scholarly resources, such as organizational and government reports, provide the opportunity to create a new and more accessible international standard of publication for research and contemporary thinking about drugs.

Editorial group

The Editorial group can be viewed at <http://www.harmreductionjournal.com/edboard> and includes the Editor-in-Chief, who will serve as North American Regional Editor to start, and three Regional Editors.

Content overview

Harm Reduction Journal (HRJ) considers the following types of articles:

- Research: reports of data from original research and scholarship.
- Book reviews: 1000–1500 words on recent and classic works in the field.
- Brief reports: short reports of data from original research, usually about 1500 words.
- Case reports: reports of clinical cases that can be educational, describe a diagnostic or therapeutic dilemma, suggest an association, or present an important adverse reaction.
- Commentaries: short, focused and opinionated articles on any subject within the journal's scope. These articles are usually related to a contemporary issue, such as recent research findings or other *HRJ* publications. They focus on specific issues and are about 1500 words.
- Methodology articles: present a new experimental method, test or procedure. The method described may either be completely new, or may offer a better version of an existing method. The article must describe a demonstrable advance on what is currently available.
- Reviews: comprehensive, authoritative, descriptions of important subjects within the journal's scope. *HRJ* will regularly solicit these and is open to proposals for additional topics. These have an educational aim and are

2000–5000 words – with more extensive and wider ranging references.

All articles will be published online immediately upon acceptance (after peer review) and subsequently listed in PubMed.

Publishing model

Harm Reduction Journal (HRJ) is published by [BioMed Central](#), an independent publisher committed to ensuring peer-reviewed biomedical research is Open Access [1]. That means it is freely and universally accessible online, it is archived in at least one internationally recognised free access repository, and its authors retain copyright, allowing anyone to reproduce or disseminate articles, according to the [BioMed Central copyright and licence agreement](#)[2]. *HRJ* however, has taken this further by making *all* its content Open Access.

HRJ's articles are archived in [PubMed Central](#)[3], the US National Library of Medicine's full-text repository of life science literature, and also in repositories at the University of [Potsdam](#)[4] in Germany, at [INIST](#)[5] in France and in [e-Depot](#)[6], the National Library of the Netherlands' digital archive of all electronic publications.

An article-processing charge must be paid (by the authors, their institutions, or sponsors) for each published article to cover the cost of publication and to enable Open Access. The charge will be waived for the first 6 months of the journal and, thereafter, for up to 35% of all articles accepted in order to accommodate work by students and authors from developing countries. Authors can circumvent the charge by getting their institution to become a 'member' of BioMed Central, whereby the annual membership fee covers the APCs for all authors at that institution for that year. Current members include NHS England, the World Health Organization, the US National Institutes of Health, Harvard, Princeton and Yale universities, and all UK universities [7]. No charge is made for articles that are rejected after peer review. Many funding agencies have also realized the importance of Open Access publishing and have specified that their grants may be used directly to pay APCs [8].

Publication languages

Harm Reduction Journal (HRJ) is published in English. If papers are submitted in other languages and accepted for publication, a full English translation will be published in *HRJ*, accompanied by the original language article (as a PDF), and by detailed abstracts in other languages as appropriate. These translations will be linked to the original *HRJ* publication and archived separately, along with a collection of public access research and documentation of harm reduction policies and programs, creating a multi-

lingual text of contemporary international scientific evidence on drug use and harm reduction. This is soon to be available online at <http://www.HarmReductionJournal.org>. This archive will be freely available to drug researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and students worldwide. *HRJ* is a recipient of grants to support this effort from the Open Society Institute <http://www.sorosny.org> and the Baron Edmond de Rothschild Chemical Dependency Institute of Beth Israel Medical Center <http://opiateaddictionrx.info/index.asp>

Peer review policies

- Submitted articles will generally be reviewed by two external experts. Peer reviewers are asked to indicate which articles they consider to be especially interesting or significant. These articles will be given greater prominence within *HRJ* and greater external publicity.

- Peer reviewers will have four possible options, for each article: 1) accept without revision; 2) accept after revision without expecting to check those revisions; 3) neither accept nor reject until author(s) make revisions and resubmit; 4) reject because scientifically unsound

- Does the article better serve the scientific community? In the absence of compelling reasons to reject, *HRJ* advises that reviewers recommend acceptance, as ultimately the scientific community will judge the quality of an article after its publication. Research must be well conceived, rigorously executed, and properly interpreted. Results and conclusions of all articles must be scientifically justified and not misleading.

- Peer reviewers are asked to indicate if the article is not clearly written for publication. In such cases authors are asked to revise the article, seeking, if necessary, the assistance of colleagues or a commercial editing service. *HRJ* normally allows authors a maximum of two article revisions. Revisions are typically either for authors tightening their arguments based on existing data, or identifying areas where more data are needed.

- We aim to publish research as quickly as possible. Our electronic submission process is designed to facilitate rapid publication.

Conclusion

Harm Reduction journal (HRJ) provides an Open Access forum, serving the community and aiding scientific research. We hope you will support this by submitting your next article to *HRJ* at <http://www.harmreductionjournal.com/manuscript>.

References

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