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WC11 Abstract

In Session

Open Science and Transparency in Animal-Based Research

EDITORS' MORAL OBLIGATIONS – PROFIT, REGULATION AND VIRTUE

Dr Gavin E Jarvis, Deputy Editor, *Laboratory Animals*, Cambridge, U.K.

Ethics is the branch of knowledge or study dealing with moral principles. These principles guide actions and choices made by individuals. A moral obligation is a constraint on action and choice that may arise from legal or ethical considerations. Underlying principles that impose obligations on journal editors arise from considerations of profit, regulation and virtue.

To profit is to gain. Why might a journal exist? What do those responsible, e.g., learned societies and publishers, hope to gain from publishing a journal? What is their interest: financial reward, prestige, impact, social good?

Journals and editors function within regulatory frameworks that may be internally or externally imposed. Most journals have 'guidelines for authors', which may be extensive and detailed or relatively light-touch. External frameworks include the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), founded in 1997. There are many other guidelines of relevance to journal editors that address specific issues: ARRIVE, CASP, FAIR, PREPARE, PRISMA, TOP to name but a few. Where do these regulations come from? Why are there so many and do they make journals better?

Dr Ed Pellegrino argued that any professional (doctor, lawyer, scientist, editor) should be both competent and virtuous. Such an editor embodies habits and instincts that inform choices that promote fundamental goods, irrespective of regulations or interests. A competent and virtuous editor does not require regulations to know that published science should be conducted ethically and be of a good quality.

These three dimensions of moral obligation must function harmoniously and not in competition. Clarity as to whether 'Open Science' and 'Transparency' are interests, regulations or fundamental goods is essential and perhaps not so obvious. To act effectively and ethically, an editor must have clearly defined objectives and follow a transparent regulatory framework. However, these must be built on a secure foundation of personal and institutional virtue.