ACCURACY OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN SURGICAL JOURNALS

Tina Bharani[1], Claire Yuan[2], Karina Mahida[2], Suheila Mukhtar[2], Hudson Bosch[2], Mia Linson[2], Eric G. Sheu[3], Divyansh Agarwal[4]

[1]Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia PA; [2]Harvard College, Boston MA; [3]Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston MA; [4]Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston MA;

Introduction

- Accurate reporting of industry relationships and conflicts of interest (COIs) is crucial for unbiased and wholistic assessment of the conclusions of any study.
- Despite the enactment of laws, such as the Physician Payments Sunshine Act in 2010, prior work in surgical subspecialties have demonstrated that 10-35% of self-reported COIs are inaccurate.
- We sought to evaluate the accuracy of COI reported in seven prominent minimally invasive and general surgical journals for the year 2022.

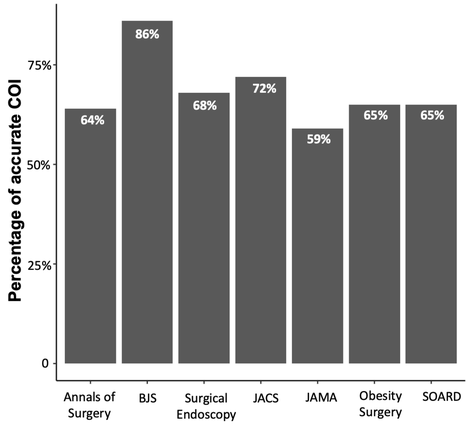
Methods

- We utilized three publicly available databases: Open Payments (USA), Disclosure UK and Disclosure Australia to assess the accuracy in COI disclosures among authors.
- We selected seven journals – *JAMA Surgery, Annals of Surgery, British Journal of Surgery (BJS), Journal of American College of Surgeons (JACS), Surgical Endoscopy, Obesity Surgery, and Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases (SOARD)* – and determined the inaccuracies in COI reporting for all articles published in 2022.

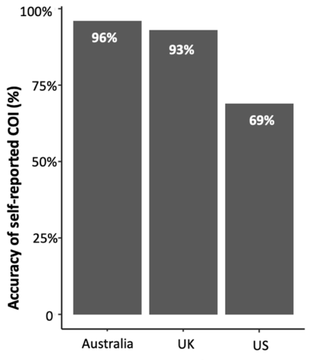
Results

- A total of 6206 authors were analyzed across 918 articles.
- Of those, 5675 entries were within the countries of interest: USA (4282), UK (718), and Australia (213).
- Overall, 4055 researchers (69.1%) reported COIs accurately, while 1816 authors had incorrect reporting.

Distribution of accurate COI by Journal



Distribution of accurate COI by country



Results

Payments in Excess of $50,000 are Rarely Reported

Payment amount ($)	COI reported accurately (N, %)
<100, N = 282	3 (1.1%)
100-499, N = 379	7 (1.8%)
500-999, N = 114	6 (5.3%)
1000-9999, N = 470	28 (6.0%)
10000-50000, N = 222	22 (9.9%)
>50000, N = 195	20 (10%)

Conclusion

- The accuracy of self-reported COIs in general surgical journals remains low at 69%.
- Our findings should encourage authors, who may be confused over guidelines or the relevance of their industry relationships, to overreport any possible COI because failure to report tends to raise questions over the credibility of their work.