High BMI in pregnancy can shorten children’s lives
Agenda

1. About me
2. Springer Nature / BMC
3. Types of journals and peer review, copyrights
4. BMC Medicine
5. Discussion
About me

Degree in Biochemistry from University College London (2012)

Joined BMC Medicine as Editorial Assistant in May 2013

Assistant editor in 2015
Senior Editor since Jan 2019
BMC, part of Springer Nature

- Since 2015, part of the Springer Nature company, which includes the following brands:
About the BMC group of journals

First Open Access publisher – launched in 1999, now part of Springer Nature
- 300 open access journals: the BMC Series (65 subject-specific journals; one in-house editor) and Academic Journals (edited by academics), BMC Flagships (BMC Medicine, BMC Biology, Genome Medicine, Genome Biology)
- ~70,000 articles published per year

Quality and Innovation
- Thorough peer review
- Work with international experts

Visibility
- Articles are freely and rapidly available to all
- Indexed, for example, in PubMed and MEDLINE
Publishing in a journal – what types?

There are a number of journal types and peer-review systems in publishing

- Article processing charges are either funded by the authors (open access) or readers (subscription), sometimes by both (hybrid)

- Different levels of open access mechanisms exist (commonly: gold, green, bronze)
  - Gold: immediately available to all
  - Green: author allowed to self-archive (e.g. repository outside of publisher)
  - Bronze: article initially published as subscription-only

- Various levels of copyright are also available, very important for sharing/reproducing

- Check if they allow submissions already on preprint (eg. medRxiv or bioRxiv)
Publication systems

- Open Access: articles are available to all readers perpetually, and can be shared with varying degrees of freedom

- Subscription: it is generally not possible to access these articles without subscribing to the journal or purchasing a specific article

- Both options have strengths and weaknesses, up to the author or funder which one to choose
Payment systems

- Open Access journals are funded via a publication fee (e.g. Article Processing Charge) payed by the authors
  - APCs vary according to journals
  - May be income-based
  - May be covered by institute or agreements with the publisher

- Subscription journals are funded by the reader
  - The author normally bears no cost
  - Readers may pay by purchasing single article or subscription
  - Possible discounts/agreements between institute and publisher also possible
About copyright

Before selecting a possible journal, familiarise yourself with their copyright policies

- If journal retains all copyright, then sharing is regulated and written permissions are likely required

- OA journals tend to have more open sharing policies (creative commons), in some cases reproduction is allowed freely, as long as correct attribution given

- Also look at journal’s data sharing policies, and how identifiers are treated (direct, indirect)

- Incorrectly sharing copyrighted material may lead to monetary fines and legal issues
Peer review systems

Like copyright, ensure you agree with the peer-review system used by the journal (especially if you are a reviewer)

- Double blind (names of authors and reviewers are not public)

- Single blind (Authors’ names are generally visible to reviewers)

- Transparent (Reports are published upon publication, names generally withheld)

- Open (Names known throughout process, reports published upon publication)
Peer review systems

All systems have pros and cons

Debate ongoing regarding strengths and weaknesses

Researchers, publishers and editors are constantly looking to improve systems
BMC Medicine - who we are

- Flagship medical journal of the BMC group and part of Springer Nature
- Publishing outstanding research and reviews in all areas of medicine
- Launched in 2003—we have been publishing continuously for 16 years
- Open access and open peer reviewed journal
- Committed to author service and innovation in publishing
- Team of 3 in-house professional editors
- Large and distinguished editorial board
- https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/
Impact Factor evolution in the past decade

BMC Medicine’s IF evolution
Impact factor (is not everything!)

- Its definition indicates ‘the yearly average number of citations that recent articles published in a given journal received.’

- Still a very popular metric when selecting a journal

- Incomplete, other metrics need to be taken into account

- In extreme cases, it can be manipulated

- Does not provide full picture of journal performance and prestige
Impact factor (is not everything!)

- Nature Research, BMC and Springer Open signed the DORA declaration

- Numerous other publishers also support DORA, which aims to improve the evaluation of scientific output

- Other metrics are considered by the journal(s), on the same level as the Impact Factor, for instance:
  - Article accesses
  - Altmetrics
  - Promote accessibility
  - Encourage responsible authorship practice

- Declaration available here: https://sfdora.org/read/
BMC Medicine - how we make decisions

- Submission of manuscript
- Each editor is assigned manuscripts each day (followed until publication)
- Team meeting to discuss each manuscript
- If in doubt, we will ask Editorial Board Members for advice
- We consider around 15-20% of submitted manuscripts for peer review - they must reach the threshold for impact, novelty and timeliness.
Transfers - normally to the BMC Series but can also go to the Academic Journals

BMC Medicine

- BMC Public Health
- BMC Family Practice
- BMC Cancer
- BMC Health Services Research
- BMC Neurology
- Malaria Journal
- Trials
We aim for excellent author service during and post-peer review

- Challenging first half of year, but we now have stable fast turnaround times (average time to first decision currently 49 days)
- Responsive to authors
Aim to have high visibility upon publication

- Working closely with our Communications team
- Using our own social media account (@BMCMedicine)
- Commissioning linked commentaries and blogs to some Research articles

Adjusting to a new life after forced migration: how are young refugees faring in Australia?

Published today in *BMC Medicine*, a new research article presents the first robust look at the experiences of young refugees settling in Australia. The study finds that despite young refugees experiencing more peer problems than Australian norms, there was an overall positive adjustment. Here to talk about the findings, how the study was conducted, and what this means for improving the settlement of refugees is lead author of the article, Winnie Lau.

Winnie Lau 4 Sep 2018
Immediate impact can be tracked: Altmetrics

This research output has an **Altmetric Attention Score** of **768**. This is our high-level measure of the quality and quantity of online attention that it has received. This Attention Score, as well as the ranking and number of research outputs shown below, was calculated when the research output was last mentioned on **25 November 2018**.

Altmetric has tracked 12,236,619 research outputs across all sources so far. Compared to these this one has done particularly well and is in the 99th percentile: it's **in the top 5% of all research outputs ever tracked** by Altmetric.
Article collections

- Focus on a particular area of importance
- Uses Guest Editor guidance and networks, working closely with the in-house team
- Aim to be important and relevant

2019

Article collection

Collection on: Stigma Research and Global Health

Guest editors: Dr. Gretchen Birbeck, Dr. Virginia Bond, Dr. Valerie Earnshaw, Mr. Musah Lumumba El-Nasoor
Article collections

Understanding Complexity in Health Systems: International Perspectives

Guest Editors: Prof Trish Greenhalgh and Dr Chrysanthis Papoutsi

In this collection, BMC Medicine presents a series of papers that extend the theoretical and empirical knowledge base on the topic of complexity science and its application to health care systems.

Health systems around the world are struggling with the unprecedented interacting challenges of – among others – increased life expectancy (and the concomitant increase in chronic illness, multimorbidity and frailty), technological progress (both real and imagined), the convergence of ‘health’ and ‘care’ needs (along with increasingly messy disputes over who should pay for them), fragmentation of services, mismatches between workforce supply and system demand, a mushrooming of regulations and protocols, diminishing public trust in health professionals, and shrinking budgets.
Spatial epidemiology and infectious diseases

- Currently includes 16 articles
- https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/spatialepidemiology

Guest Editor: Prof Gerardo Chowell

Improvements in our understanding of the spatial-temporal variation in the spread of infectious diseases could lead to development of innovative strategies, which would ameliorate their impact on morbidity and mortality worldwide. Quantitative approaches that rely on mathematical models and methodology from the field of spatial epidemiology* are being increasingly used to address questions relating to the geographic distribution of infectious diseases and the design of control strategies.
This research output has an Altmetric Attention Score of **418**. This is our high-level measure of the quality and quantity of online attention that it has received. This Attention Score, as well as the ranking and number of research outputs shown below, was calculated when the research output was last mentioned on **27 November 2018**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALL RESEARCH OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTPUTS FROM BMC MEDICINE</th>
<th>OUTPUTS OF SIMILAR AGE</th>
<th>OUTPUTS OF SIMILAR AGE FROM BMC MEDICINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#19,498</td>
<td>#24</td>
<td>#1,061</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of 12,211,877 outputs</td>
<td>of 1,953 outputs</td>
<td>of 253,606 outputs</td>
<td>of 45 outputs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We're also able to compare this research output to 45 others from the same source and published within six weeks on either side of this one. This one has done particularly well, scoring **higher than 97% of its contemporaries**.
Current call for papers

• Actively inviting authors to submit their research, we also directly commission articles for each series.
Other initiatives: Registered reports

- Method and any pilot data is peer-reviewed before the research is carried out in full – publication guaranteed if they then follow the protocol method.
- Eliminates dead-ends, due to wrong methodology or insufficient replicates, and the bias due to negative results.
- [https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/about/registered-reports](https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/about/registered-reports)
Other initiatives: engaging younger researchers

- Very often, the more established researchers attain the most visibility
- Aiming to have more input and insight from early career researchers
- Ideas: commissioning short articles/Q&As/blogs on specific recent research

Malaria and malnutrition – putting the spotlight on small children

More than 200 million people are treated for malaria each year, small children are the worst affected across sub-Saharan Africa. Malnutrition is also highly prevalent in some malaria endemic regions. Yet we have very little evidence available to understand the link between malnutrition in small children and the risk of contracting malaria.

Debashish Das 21 Nov 2018

Debashish Das is a malaria researcher at the Worldwide Antimalarial Resistance Network. Debashish is a medical doctor who grew up and trained in Bangladesh. He has worked in various settings in Asia and Africa and is now based at the University of Oxford. Debashish completed a diploma in tropical medicine at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, an MPH in Paris and is mid-way through his PhD. His research interests are antimalarial drug resistance and public health epidemiology.
Other initiatives: podcasts

• ‘Backstory’

From the editors at BMC Medicine, get behind the scenes with stories from authors, experts, patients, and policymakers on important research in clinical science and global health. Give us a few minutes...we'll give you the backstory.

Backstory podcast on the UK's Mental Health Act review with Sir Simon Wessely

In this episode of 'Backstory' we talk with Sir Simon Wessely, Regius Professor of Psychiatry at King's College London, about the review of the UK's Mental Health Act. In 2017, Simon was asked by Prime Minister Theresa May to lead the review of the Mental Health Act, and he shares with us some insights into the challenges in creating a more compassionate mental healthcare system in the UK and the process of reviewing the Mental Health Act.
International outreach for PhD students/early career researchers

- Recently gave a talk to students at the University of Barcelona

http://blogs.biomedcentral.com/on-medicine/about/
The story behind the image

High BMI in pregnancy can shorten children's lives

Researchers in Belgium have discovered a strong link between high Body Mass Index during pregnancy and a shortening of telomeres, (the protective cap at the end of chromosomes) in the baby. The shorter the telomere, the older the cell is biologically – meaning that the children of obese women are 12-17 years older biologically than babies of mothers with a normal BMI, placing them at much higher risk of illness and early death. With around 30% of mothers in affluent countries overweight this research has major implications for pre natal advice and public health.

BMC Medicine