

RESEARCH ETHICS MONTHLY
JULY 2020

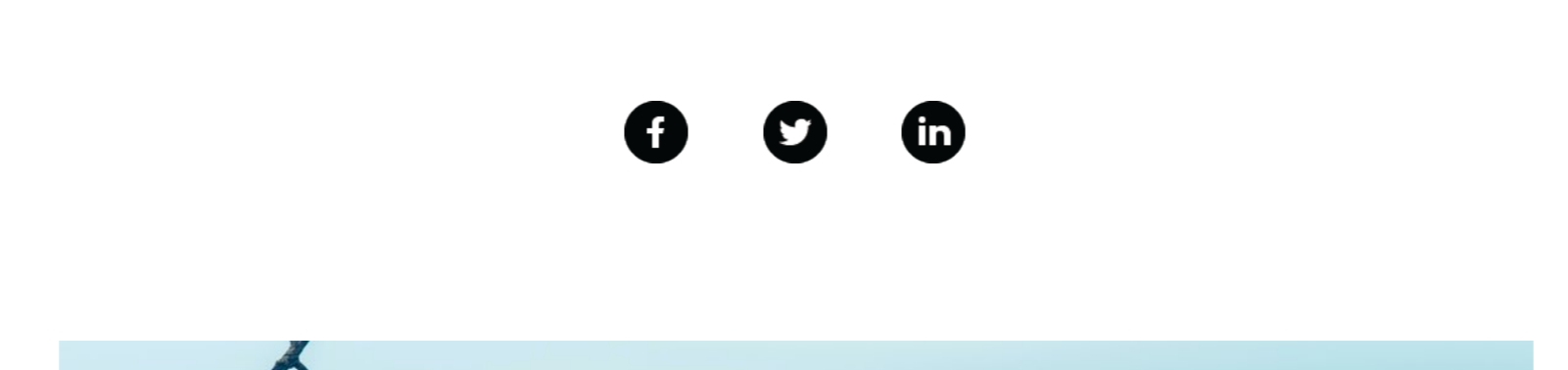
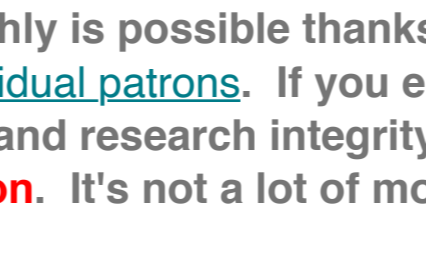
Dear <<First Name>>,

Welcome to the July 2020 edition of the Research Ethics Monthly.

If you aren't named above, please [subscribe](#) to the *Research Ethics Monthly*, because it is incredibly affirming, free and would be greatly appreciated. Subscribing is free, easy and keeps our in-house internet elf happy.

More information about the Research Ethics Monthly can be found on the [blog pages](#).

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Questionable publishing practice? Are you harmed?

Antony Ley (Information Policy Officer at Griffith University) & Gary Allen

When considering whether a journal publisher is legitimate, researchers have in the past often focused on whether the publisher is predatory. While this is important, there is a more important question: is the journal credible or is it junk?

Increasingly junk-type publishers clog up the academic ecosystem with journal papers of generally low to no value. These include publishers that produce credible articles alongside questionable work [1] Consequently, basing a decision on title and reputation isn't reliable. Supposedly quality publishers that churn out junk are driven by quantity rather than quality. The more journals they establish and the more articles they publish, the greater their profits via article processing charges (APCs). Screening such publishers for being predatory can prove difficult and can lead to debatable results, when the more pertinent issue that may be easier to determine is whether they are making a useful contribution to the body of academic knowledge.

Predatory publishers have used a range of deceptions to disguise themselves as credible publishers. For example, a hijacked journal creates a counterfeit website that pretends to be the website of a legitimate scholarly journal. This predatory publisher then solicits manuscript submissions from researchers for the hijacked version of the journal and pockets the money.

However, predatory and junk-type publishers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and researchers likewise need to become increasingly savvy to sift through the chaff.

[1] [The Rise of Junk Science](#)

[Read more](#)

Mandy Downing joins the AHRECS team

We're thrilled to share Mandy Downing has joined AHRECS as a consultant. In addition to being a very experienced research ethics officer, she is a Yindjibarndi woman who descends from the Lockyer family of the Pilbara region and is a member of Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Research Ethics Committee. Her addition to the team means that we offer 30min-in-meeting briefings on Indigenous-research ethics for \$900. Send an email to enquiry@ahrecs.com to set a session up for your HREC. A great way to tick the training box in your NHMRC report.

Excited by some milestones

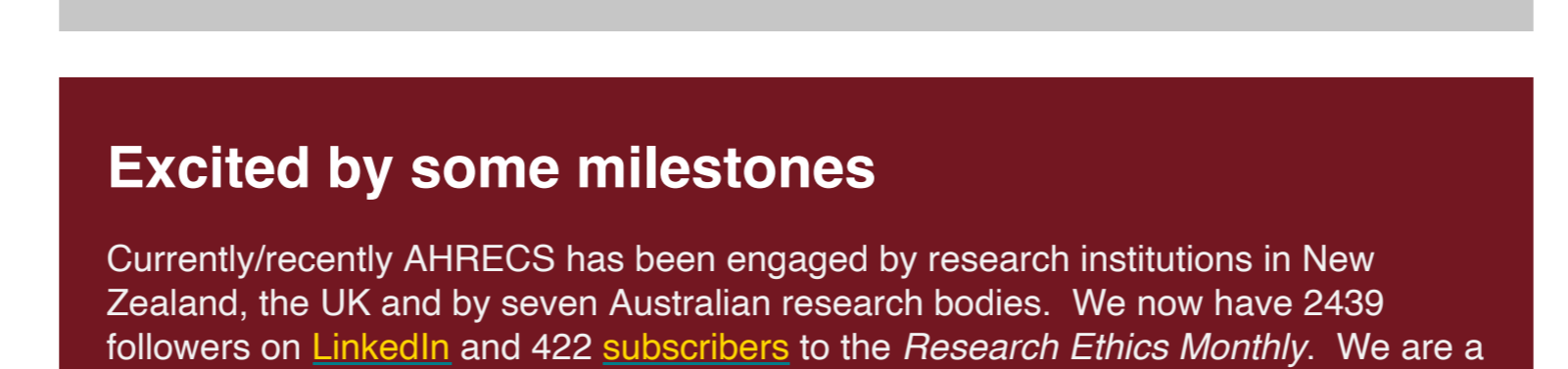
Currently/recently AHRECS has been engaged by research institutions in New Zealand, the UK and by seven Australian research bodies. We now have 2439 followers on LinkedIn and 422 subscribers to the *Research Ethics Monthly*. We are a small team, who are humbled by the support and interest we have received, and frankly energised to be doing work we love with some terrific people. It's amazing to think this journey sprang from an idle chat in 2003

Update on 'A checklist for HDR supervisors'

Thank you everyone who sent in their ideas and suggestions for the checklist. Just a reminder, this is a checklist to assist a supervisor who is checking whether a HDR candidate's ethics application is ready for review. We were thrilled to learn one UK institution has been using the first version of that document.

Research ethics and integrity - and HDR students

AHRECS were delighted to be involved recently in an online research intensive education event for HDR students and supervisors at COU. We contributed with an applied research integrity presentation outlining how research integrity issues might affect research students and their projects. If AHRECS can assist with providing support and training for your research students (including tailored presentations on research ethics and research integrity), please contact us (enquiry@ahrecs.com) to discuss your needs



What are questionable research practices as reported by ECRs in STEMM in Australia?

Katherine Christian, Carolyn Johnstone, Jo-ann Larkins, Wendy Wright and Michael Doran

Early-career researchers (ECRs) across the world have long reported significant difficulties caused by lack of funding and consequent job insecurity, gender inequity, work/life imbalance, and poor or insufficient professional development. The overall picture from our research project about ECRs in STEMM fields in Australia is of people who love science employed in unsatisfactory workplaces and overwhelmed by job insecurity and its consequences. We investigated the workplace experiences of ECRs working in the sciences in universities and independent research institutes across Australia, collecting data in a national survey (n=658), and through eight interviews of women who had recently left the academic workplace for alternate careers.

As we previously described ([Christian et al., 2020](#)), a concerning 38% ECRs reported questionable research practices from colleagues inside their institution and 32% from colleagues outside their institution. While "questionable research practices" were not defined within the survey, and there was no opportunity provided for respondents to expand in the context of this question, this term has been used to describe behaviours ranging from fraud to data exclusion and rounding of p-values ([John et al., 2012](#)). Qualitative data collected from other questions provided insights into practices which give cause for concern. These quotes, which speak for themselves, provide some indication of what our respondents identified as questionable research practices:

I have also encountered some antisocial behaviour among academics, such as senior staff who have attempted to "steal" work I am doing to present as their own. It's cutthroat. (ECR A)

[Read more](#)

While you are here...

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A few profiled items from the subscribers' area:

1. [Duped](#) - A Research Integrity commentary
2. [Who's looking over your sh...](#) - A Human Research Ethics talk by Kim Gifkins
3. [A summary consent sheet](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
4. [eConsent](#) - A Human Research Ethics talk by Nik Zeps
5. [Lost data](#) - A Research Integrity discussion activity
6. [Disaster recovery plan](#) - A Research Integrity discussion activity
7. [Diversity in consent strategies](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
8. [Urgent rather than late](#) - A Human Research Ethics commentary
9. [Right to withdrawal](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
10. [Authorship](#) - A Research Integrity talk by Prof. Mark Israel

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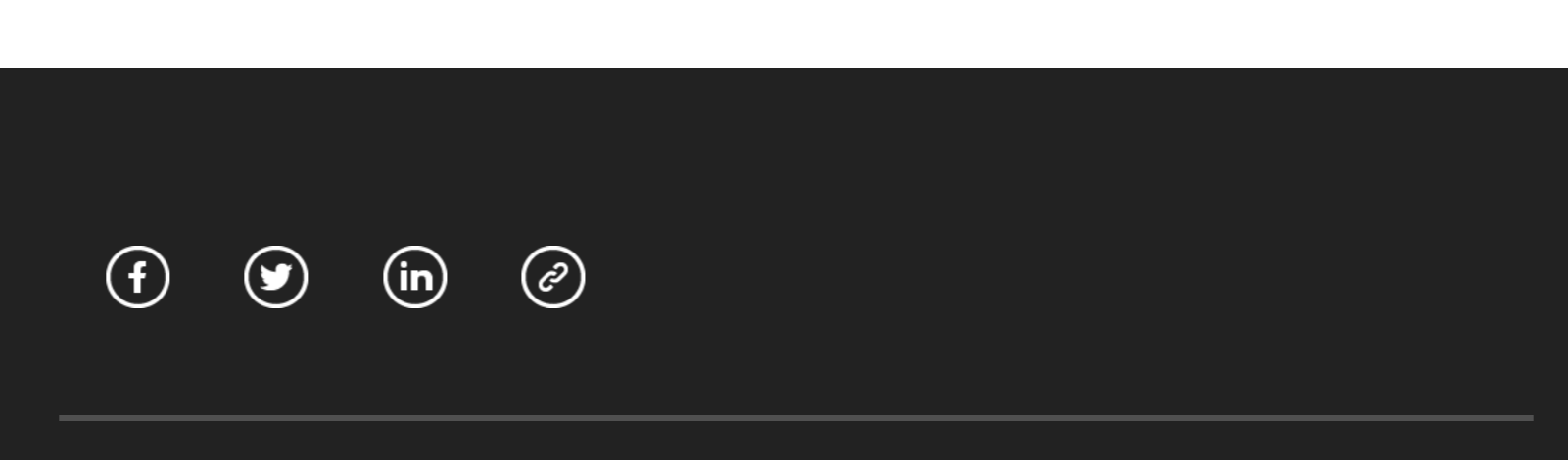
Our Resource Library

01. [Too Many HF Trial Results Underreported or Never Published](#) - TCTMD
 02. [Queensland unis marked "satisfactory" for handling research fraud](#) - Campus Morning Mail
 03. [Covid-19 studies based on flawed Surgisphere data force medical journals to review processes](#) - The Guardian
 04. [Research ethics in practice: challenges of using digital technology to embed the voices of children and young people within programs for fathers who use domestic violence](#) - Paper
 05. [COVID-19 research: pandemic versus "paperdemic", integrity, values and risks of the "speed science"](#) - Paper
 06. [Data show panic and disorganization dominate the study of Covid-19 drugs](#) - STAT
 07. [Science by press release: When the story gets ahead of the science](#) - CNN
 08. [China is tightening its grip on coronavirus research](#) - Nature
 09. [Fake Science: XMRV, COVID-19, and the Toxic Legacy of Dr. Judy Mikovits](#) - Papers
 10. (US) [Senators ask government watchdog to investigate for-profit study review boards](#)
 11. [Warning over coronavirus and predatory journals](#) - Nature Index
 12. [COPE Forum 2 June 2020: What does peer review mean in the arts, humanities and social sciences?](#) - COPE
 13. [Research ethics courses as a vaccination against a toxic research environment or culture](#) - Paper
 14. [Toward global standardization of conducting fair investigations of allegations of research misconduct](#) - Paper
 15. [Is Research Ethics Committee review of most clinical trials fundamentally broken?](#) - BMJ Blog
- There were more than 42 more great items in the last 50 days. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)

Our Blog

1. [Embedding clinical research as part of routine healthcare: Managing the potential for competing interests.](#)
2. [Worried your researchers might not be treating human research ethics as a core component of good research practice? Concerned they are not seeing it as their responsibility?](#)
3. [The ethical petri-dish: recommendations for the design of university.](#)
4. [When Research is the treatment: why the research/clinical care divide doesn't always work.](#)
5. [How we interpret the words 'proportional review'.](#)
6. [A checklist to assist a supervisor to check a candidate's research ethics.](#)
7. [Why autism research needs more input from autistic people](#)
8. [AHRECS and COVID-19](#)
9. [COVID-19 human research and human research ethics review](#)
10. [Towards a code of conduct for ethical post-disaster research](#)

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