



## Corrections, Retractions, and Updates to Published Articles

Every article published by *Patient Safety* is considered the version of record (VoR): the final, definitive, and citable version in the academic literature (see NISO, 2008). The VoR includes:

- The paper in its final form, including the abstract; text; references; bibliography; and all accompanying tables, illustrations, and data.
- Any supplemental material.

Recognizing a published article as the VoR entrusts its consideration as accurate, complete, and citable. Wherever possible, *Patient Safety* maintains the integrity of the VoR in accordance with STM Association guidelines: Articles that have been published should remain extant, exact, and unaltered to the maximum extent possible ([STM Guidelines on Preservation of the Objective Record of Science](#)).

It may be necessary to make a change to the VoR after an article has been published. This will be done after careful consideration by the editorial team to ensure any necessary changes are made in accordance [with guidance from the Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE).

Any necessary changes will be accompanied with a post-publication notice which will be permanently linked to the original article to inform readers of any necessary changes. This may be as a correction notice, an expression of concern, a retraction, or a removal. These processes are to make changes which are permanent and transparent to ensure the integrity of the scholarly record.

### *What should I do if my article contains an error?*

Authors should notify the editorial team as soon as possible if they find errors in their published article, especially errors that could affect the interpretation of data or reliability of information presented. It is the responsibility of the corresponding author to ensure consensus has been reached between all listed co-authors prior to putting forward any requests for corrections or retractions to an article.

If you believe a correction or retraction is necessary for your article, contact the journal's managing editor by emailing [patientsafetyj@pa.gov](mailto:patientsafetyj@pa.gov).

## Post-Publication Notices to Ensure the Integrity of the Scholarly Record

### *Correction Notice*

A correction notice is issued to correct an error or omission which can impact the interpretation of the article, but where the scholarly integrity of the article remains intact (e.g., mislabeling of a figure or competing interests of the authors).

Patient Safety distinguishes between major and minor errors. For correction notices, major errors or omissions are any changes which impact the interpretation of the article but do not change scholarly integrity of the article.

Each major error is accompanied by a separate correction notice. The correction notice provides clear details of the error and the changes that have been made to the VoR. Under these circumstances Patient Safety will:

- Correct the online article.
- Add the correction notice to the next available masthead in both the online and print versions of the journal.
- Issue a separate correction notice electronically linked back to the corrected version.
- Add a footnote to the article displaying the electronic link to the correction notice.
- Paginate and make available the correction notice in the online issue of the journal.

Any minor errors will not be accompanied by a separate correction notice. Alternatively, a footnote will be added to the article detailing any changes to the article. Minor errors do not impact the reliability of, or the reader's understanding of, the scholarly content.

### *Retractions*

A retraction notice is issued when a major error invalidates the conclusions in the article or where research misconduct or publication misconduct has taken place (e.g., fabricated data, manipulated images, plagiarism, duplicate publication, etc.). Any article retraction will be made in accordance with COPE guidelines and will involve an investigation by the Patient Safety editorial team. Authors and institutions may request a retraction of their articles if their reasons meet the criteria for retraction.

The COPE retraction guidelines can be found on the [COPE website](#).

Retraction will be considered:

- If there is clear evidence that the findings are unreliable, either because of misconduct (e.g., data fabrication or image manipulation) or honest error (e.g., miscalculation or experimental error).
- If the findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper cross-referencing, permission, or justification (e.g., cases of redundant publication or duplicate publication).
- If the research constitutes plagiarism.
- Where there is evidence of fraudulent authorship.

- Where there is evidence of compromised peer review.
- If there is evidence of unethical research.

Where the decision has been taken to retract an article Patient Safety will:

- Add a “retracted” watermark to the published VoR of the article.
- Issue a separate retraction statement, titled “Retraction: [article title],” that will be linked to the retracted article on patientsafetyj.com.
- Paginate and make available the retraction statement in the online issue of the journal.

### *Expressions of Concern*

An expression of concern notice may be considered where concerns of a major nature have been raised (e.g., serious research or publication misconduct), but where the outcome of the investigation is inconclusive or where due to various complexities the investigation will not be complete for a considerable time.

Following an investigation, a retraction or correction notice may follow the expression of concern and be published with the original article. All are considered part of the permanent published record.

Publication of an expression of concern notice will be considered if:

- There is inconclusive evidence of research or publication misconduct by the authors, but the nature of the concerns warrant notifying the readers.
- There are well-founded concerns that the findings are unreliable or that misconduct may have occurred, but there is limited cooperation from the authors’ institution(s) in investigating the concerns raised.
- There is an investigation into alleged misconduct related to the publication that has not been, or would not be, fair and impartial or conclusive.
- An investigation is underway, but a judgement will not be available for a considerable time and the nature of the concerns warrant notifying the readers.
- The expression of concern will be linked back to the published article it relates to.

### *Article Removal*

An article may be removed in rare circumstances where the problems are serious in nature and cannot be addressed by a retraction or correction notice. Patient Safety will consider removing a published article only:

- If the article contains content that could pose a serious risk if followed or acted upon.
- If the article contains content which violates the rights to privacy of a study participant.
- If the article is defamatory or infringes other legal rights.
- If an article is subject to a court order.

If an article is removed from patientsafetyj.com, a removal notice will be issued in its place.

## Updates and Scholarly Discussion on Published Articles

### *Addenda*

An addendum is a notification of an addition of information to an article. Addenda may be published if they do not contradict the original publication and are not used to fix errors (for which a correction notice will be published) or if the author needs to update or add some key information. Addenda may be peer reviewed, and are subject to oversight by the editorial team.

All addenda are electronically linked to the published article to which they relate.

### *Comment (Including Response and Rejoinder Correspondence)*

Comments are short articles which outline an observation on a published article. Such comments on a published article may be subject to peer review. The comment will be shared with the authors of the published article, who will be invited to submit a response.

This author response also may be subject to peer review and will be shared with the commentator, who may be invited to submit a rejoinder. The rejoinder may be subject to peer review and shared with the authors of the published article. No further correspondence will be considered for publication. The editor-in-chief may decide to reject correspondence at any point during this process.

All published comments, responses, and rejoinders are linked to the published article to which they relate.