

Medical journal retracts nine more articles authored by former editor-in-chief

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The *British Journal of Sports Medicine* has retracted 9 further non-

research articles, authored by former editor in chief Dr. Paul McCrory, and an "expression of concern" will be placed on 38 others published in *BMJ* journals on which he is the only author.

These latest retractions follow the retraction earlier this year of an editorial in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, prompted by concerns that the article shared similarities with one written for *Physics World*.

McCrory, currently of the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, Melbourne, Australia, edited the journal between 2001 and 2008, during which time he published at least 164 articles in *BMJ* journals—most of them in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

The decision to retract these articles follows an internal investigation by *BMJ's* research integrity team and the current editor in chief of the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. This was prompted by allegations made by researcher Dr. Nick Brown about publication misconduct.

The 9 retractions all concern opinion pieces, commentaries, and editorials on which McCrory is the only author: They comprise 5 cases of plagiarism and 3 of redundant publication.

In the other retracted article, McCrory inaccurately quotes and misrepresents the position of Dr. Augustus Thorndike, as stated in an earlier 1952 publication.

The quote distorts Thorndike's recommendations for managing ongoing participation in contact sports after concussion, which McCrory used to support his stance in the article.

Given the pattern of publication misconduct on McCrory's part, revealed by both *BMJ's* investigations, the publisher has decided that an expression of concern should be placed on all content published in its

journals, including in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, where he is identified as the only author to alert readers to the conclusions of these investigations.

An editorial setting out the details of the latest investigation and published online in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* highlights McCrory's "most influential work": 5 iterations of the international consensus guidelines on concussion which were developed in 2001, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016, and published in the [journal](#).

After a review of the 2016 concussion consensus statement, the research integrity team concluded that it had "no concerns about plagiarism," and considered that "the question of the extent of McCrory's contribution to, and influence on, the five versions of the consensus statement is a matter within the purview of the scientific committee appointed by the Concussion in Sport Group (CISG)."

The editorial notes that after the [plagiarism](#) allegations first surfaced, McCrory resigned his leadership position in the CISG, an international association of clinicians and scientists with an interest in sports-related concussion, and stepped down from his role as a member of the Scientific Committee of the International Consensus Conference on Concussion in Sport.

BMJ has identified 40 [research articles](#) published in its journals on which McCrory was a co-author: 18 of these were published during his tenure as editor in chief of *The British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

"We have not received any specific allegation of [misconduct](#) relating to these papers," states the editorial, which concludes with a promise to investigate any further allegations about McCrory's publication record in *BMJ* journals.

"The scientific record relies on trust, and *BMJ*'s trust in McCrory's work—specifically the articles that he has published as a single author—is broken. We will investigate any new [allegations](#) that we receive about McCrory's work in *BMJ* journals. We ask other publishers and his institution to do the same."

More information: Update on the investigation of the publication record of former BJSM editor-in-chief Paul McCrory, *British Journal of Sports Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1136/bjsports-2022-106408](https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2022-106408)

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