

Clinical. Lactation

Ethics and Legal Standards for Articles Published in *Clinical Lactation*

At *Clinical Lactation*, we adhere to the [International Code for Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes](#) (the WHO Code), and follow the [NABA Guidelines regarding WHO-Code compliance](#). In addition, we adhere to the legal and ethical guidelines outlined in the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*. This manual describes not only a style of writing, but also the ethical and legal principles that are at the heart of scholarly activities. These ethical and legal guidelines are designed to achieve three goals:

- To ensure the accuracy of scientific knowledge;
- To protect the rights and welfare of research participants, and
- To protect intellectual property rights (APA, 2010, p. 11).

Ethical issues need to be considered early in the process, long before actually writing an article. Below is a summary of some ethical principles relevant to lactation consultants.

Confidentiality

Authors of any article published in *Clinical Lactation* must ensure the confidentiality of the clients described. Data from multiple clients should be presented in aggregate form, with all identifying information removed. With regards to case studies, the APA Publications Manual recommends two possible ways to write about confidential material. The first is to write up the material you want to present, give it to the client described, and get written permission to use it. The second is to disguise aspects of the case material so that neither the client nor her family members are identifiable.

Conflict of Interest

The backbone of scientific research is the presumption that the researchers are objective and unbiased in their presentation and interpretations of findings. A financial or commercial relationship with a product or service may color an author's objectivity. These types of relationships do not necessarily constitute a conflict of interest. However, an author must disclose any relationship that might be viewed as a conflict of interest, even if the author does not agree that one exists.

Copyright

Authors of articles for *Clinical Lactation* need to comply with U.S. copyright laws in their use of photos, assessment measures, unpublished data or materials (including PowerPoint slides), and published material. All published materials must be properly cited, and many publishers limit the amount of material that can be directly quoted without permission. Authors are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions for using items that belong to others. “Fair use” is a fairly vague legal construct, and the burden of proof is on you to demonstrate that items you use fall within its guidelines. When in doubt, the safest course is to get permission from the copyright holder. Citing someone else’s unpublished material is not considered “fair use,” even if it is cited; you must always have permission to use this type of material. [See also “Do I Need Permission to Cite That?”]

Adhering to these ethical guidelines protects our colleagues and the women we serve, and it ensures that the information we provide is of the highest possible quality. Ultimately, everyone benefits when authors comply with these standards.

Reference

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.