

# The Challenge of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Journals

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These days, we are continually being bombarded with generative artificial intelligence (GAI), which now infiltrates all aspects of our lives. And quite often, we may even be unaware of its presence, given that opt-out strategies can be highly elusive. Likewise, GAI has also been inserting itself into the world of research and publishing, including in the pharmacy field. Given the rapid advances with GAI and its applications, authors, reviewers, and editorial boards may have uncertainties about how to proceed responsibly.

It is timely, then, that Mutin and Bussi eres<sup>1</sup> have published, in this issue of the *Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy (CJHP)*, a cross-sectional study evaluating GAI author guidelines that were in place in March 2025 for 3 medical journal associations, 22 pharmaceutical journals in North America and Europe (including *CJHP*), and 8 publishers. From the guidance they found in these sources, the authors synthesized 16 individual recommendations, which were categorized into 3 groups (reporting of GAI use, authors' responsibilities, and prohibitions). Mutin and Bussi eres found that only two-thirds (14 of 22) of the journals provided their own guidance on GAI to authors. Furthermore, among the 19 journals with their own guidance or reference to their publisher's guidance on GAI, 6% to 75% of the 16 possible recommendations were covered, a highly variable result that suggests a lack of consensus regarding GAI in the pharmacy publishing arena. They also found that many recommendations were outdated or not comprehensive enough to ensure academic integrity.

Areas where most journals agreed and made clear recommendations were that authors need to disclose whether GAI was used in the manuscript and that GAI cannot be included as an author. Our Journal was rated as providing guidance on 50% of the 16 recommendations. The *CJHP's* Editorial Board has been actively discussing this important issue since late 2023, and we published our updated author guidelines on artificial intelligence (AI)<sup>2</sup> in June 2024, including endorsement of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations<sup>3</sup> and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) position statement on AI.<sup>4</sup>

While GAI may be beneficial in helping an author refine their writing or grammar, or in other ways, we have all seen examples of retraction of articles that involved misuse of GAI.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, it is the authors' responsibility, regardless of whether GAI has been used in any way or not, to ensure that their manuscript is ethical, accurate, and readable. Journal readers also have a right regarding GAI. In some ways, the situation is analogous to food nutrition labels. Many people want to know what is contained in the food they are consuming and thus putting in their bodies; food labels give us this information and address this right. Similarly, many people want to know what has been created with GAI, even partially, versus a solely human creation, so we can be informed as to what we are about to read and hence consume in our minds.

For journals, transparency about GAI is essential to best serve our readers and the scientific community at large. While the authors of this current study suggest greater standardization among pharmaceutical journals,<sup>1</sup> such standardization may take some time. For now, a strong first step is for each journal to have clear, tailored policies to maintain rigorous standards and academic integrity in writing and publishing, thus playing a key role in safeguarding the quality of what readers consume. As we navigate the new Wild West in scholarship and publishing, this will remain a work in progress for all journals.

## References

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