**Ethical Principles and Publication Policy**

**Publication Ethics Principles**

Publication Ethics can be defined as a self-regulation mechanism that insists on honesty on behalf of authors, reviewers and publishers to establish higher standards of editorial handling. Ethical standards for publication exist to ensure high-quality scientific publications, public confidence in scientific findings, and respect for people’s opinions.

• Honest researchers do not plagiarize.

• They do not cite sources incorrectly.

• They do not hide objections that they cannot refute.

• They do not distort opposing views.

• They do not destroy or hide data.

Peer-reviewed studies are studies that support and implement scientific method. At this point, it is of great importance that all parties involved in the publication process (authors, readers and researchers, publisher, reviewers and editors) comply with ethical principles. Nigde Medical Journal adheres to national and international standards in research and publication ethics. It complies with Press Law, Intellectual and Artistic Works Law and Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive. Nigde Medical Journal adopts International Ethical Publishing Principles published by Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) and World Association of Medical Editors (WAME). It also undertakes to comply with the Decisions of the Türkiye Editors’ Workshop.

• Press Law (National Legislation)

• Law on Intellectual and Artistic Works (National Legislation)

• Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive (National Legislation)

• Transparency and Best Practice Principles in Academic Publishing (International Criteria)

• Türkiye Editors’ Workshop Decisions (National Criteria)

**Republishing**

Republishing is the publication of the same article or substantially similar articles in more than one journal. The editor returns this type of article without reviewing. After that, the editor may impose an embargo on the author attempting to republish for a certain period of time, explain this situation to the public in the journal in which the author has previously published (perhaps as a simultaneous announcement with the editor of the journal that published the previous article), or apply all of these measures together.

**Simultaneous submission of the same work to more than one journal**

Authors cannot submit the same article to more than one journal at the same time. The editor reserves the right to consult the other editor(s) upon learning possible simultaneous submission. In addition, the editor may return the article without reviewing or reject it without considering the reviews, or make this decision by discussing it with the other relevant editor(s) and may decide not to accept article submissions from the authors for a certain period of time. The editor can also write to the authors’ employers or implement all of these measures together.

**Plagiarism Prevention Control**

Plagiarism is to present others’ ideas, methods, data, practices, writings, figures or works as their own work, in whole or in part, without any citation in accordance with scientific rules.

Nigde Medical Journal scans all submitted articles to prevent plagiarism. The studies submitted for reviewing are checked for plagiarism using Turnitin & Ithenticate software. The similarity rate is expected to be less than 20%. The main measure of similarity is that the author complies with the citation and quotation rules. Even though the similarity rate is 1%, if the citation and quotation are not duly made, plagiarism may still be in question. In this respect, citation and quotation rules should be known and carefully applied by the author: APA 6 Citation Format.

Plagiarism, duplication, false authorship/denied authorship, research/data fabrication, salami slicing, publishing by salami slicing, copyright infringement and concealment of conflict of interest are considered unethical behaviours. All articles that do not comply with accepted ethical standards are removed from the publication. This includes articles with possible irregularities and inconsistencies identified after publication.

**Forgery**

Forgery is to produce data that is not based on research, to edit or change the presented or published work on the basis of unrealistic data, to report or publish them, to make a research that has not been done appear as if it had been done.

To falsify research records and obtained data, to present methods, devices and materials which have not been used in the research as if they were used, not to evaluate data that are not suitable for research hypothesis, to manipulate the data and/or results in order to fit the relevant theory or assumptions, to falsify or shape research results in line with the interests of the people and organizations that support the research.

**Protection of Participants’ Personal Data**

Nigde Medical Journal requires that all research involving personal or sensitive data or material relating to human participants that is not legally available to the public should be subject to formal ethical review.

**Handling Allegations of Research Abuse**

Nigde Medical Journal adheres to COPE's Ethics Toolkit for a Successful Editorial Office. Nigde Medical Journal editors will take action to prevent publication of articles in which plagiarism, citation manipulation, data alteration, data fabrication, and other research misconduct occur. Under no circumstances will the editors of Nigde Medical Journal wilfully allow such abuse to occur. If Nigde Medical Journal editors become aware of any allegations of research misconduct related to an article published in their journal, they will follow COPE’s guidelines regarding the claims.

**Ethical Violation Notices**

When readers notice an important error or inaccuracy in an article published in Nigde Medical Journal, or have any complaints about editorial content (plagiarism, duplicate articles, etc.), they can report it by sending an e-mail to nmj@ohu.edu.tr. We welcome applications as it will provide an opportunity for us to improve, and we respond quickly and constructively.

**Correction, Withdrawal, Expression of Concern**

Editors may consider issuing a correction if minor errors are discerned in the published article that do not affect the findings, comments, and conclusions. Editors should consider retracting the article in case of major errors/violations that invalidate the findings and conclusions. If there is a possibility of misuse of research or publication by the authors; if there is evidence that the findings are unreliable and that the authors’ institutions did not investigate the incident, or if the potential investigation seems unfair or inconclusive, editors should consider issuing a statement of concern. COPE and ICJME guidelines are taken into account with regard to correction, withdrawal or expression of concern.

**Publication of Studies Based on Survey and Interview**

Nigde Medical Journal adopts the principles of the “Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors” and “Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers” specified by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) in order to create ethical assurance in scientific periodicals. In this context, the following points should be followed in the studies submitted to the journal:

1) For research conducted in all branches of science that requires ethics committee approval, ethics committee approval should be obtained, this approval should be stated and documented in the article.

2) In research that requires ethics committee approval, information about the permission (name of the committee, date and number) should be included in the method section, and also on one of the first/last pages of the article; in case reports, information about signing the informed consent form should be included in the article.

**Special Issue Publishing Policy**

A special issue can be published in our journal once a year upon the request of the Editorial Board. Articles submitted for a special issue are first subjected to editorial review. Then they are examined in terms of compliance with the writing rules of the journal and to prevent plagiarism, similarity scan is conducted. After these stages, they are taken into the peer review process in which the double-blind model is used.

**Editorial Confidentiality Obligation**

The editors of Nigde Medical Journal treat all submitted manuscripts as confidential documents; this means that they will not disclose information about an article to anyone without the permission of the authors. During the article review process, the following people can access to the articles: Editors, Reviewers, and Editorial Board Members. The only situation in which details about a manuscript may be passed on to a third party without the consent of the authors happens if the editor suspects serious research misconduct.

**Scientific Misconduct Allegations-Suspects**

Scientific misconduct has different definitions. Nigde Medical Journal addresses these issues on a case-by-case basis, while following the guidance created by major publishing ethics institutions. If the editor suspects an ethical violation or if there is an alleged violation, they are obliged to take action. This task covers both published and unpublished articles. The editor should not simply reject articles that raise concerns about potential abuse. Ethically, the editor obliged to follow the alleged lawsuits. The editor should follow the COPE flowcharts where appropriate. Editors should first seek a response from anyone suspected of misconduct. If they are not satisfied with the answer, they should ask the relevant employers or institution to investigate. The editor should use all reasonable efforts to ensure that an appropriate investigation into the alleged misconduct is carried out; if this does not happen, the editor should make all reasonable attempts to persist in finding a solution to the problem. This is an arduous but important task.

Nigde Medical Journal adheres to COPE’s Ethics Toolkit for a Successful Editorial Office. Nigde Medical Journal editors will take action to prevent the publication of articles in which plagiarism, citation manipulation, data alteration, data fabrication, and other research misconduct occur. Under no circumstances will the editors of Nigde Medical Journal wilfully allow such abuse to occur. If Nigde Medical Journal editors become aware of any allegations of research misconduct related to an article published in their journal, they will follow COPE’s guidelines regarding the claims.

Reviewers should notify the editor when they suspect research or publication misconduct. The editor is responsible for carrying out the necessary actions by following the COPE recommendations.

Nigde Medical Journal undertakes to apply to COPE flowcharts when faced with allegations of misconduct in the following or similar matters.

• What to do when duplicate publication is suspected

• What to do when plagiarism is suspected

• What to do when fabricated data is suspected

• What to do in requests for change of authorship

• What to do when an undisclosed conflict of interest is suspected

• What to do when unfair or gift authorship is suspected

• What to do when an ethical problem is suspected in an article

• What to do when ethical violation suspect is notified directly via e-mail, etc.

• What to do when a suspected ethical violation is announced via social media.

**Complaint Procedure**

This procedure applies to complaints about content, procedures or policies that are the responsibility of Nigde Medical Journal or our editorial staff. Complaints can provide an opportunity and incentive for improvement, and we aim to respond quickly, courteously and constructively.

The complaint must relate to the content, procedures or policies that are the responsibility of Nigde Medical Journal or our editorial team. Complaints should be emailed directly to nmj@ohu.edu.tr and will be treated confidentially. The editor immediately responds to complaints. The editor follows the procedure outlined in the COPE flowchart regarding complaints.

Complaints are reviewed by the relevant member of the editorial team and if they cannot be resolved, the following processes are followed:

• If this initial response is deemed inadequate, the complainant may request that their complaint be forwarded to a more senior member of the journal.

• If the complainant is not satisfied, complaints can be forwarded to the editor-in-chief.

• A full response will be given within two weeks if possible.

COPE publishes a code of practice for editors of scientific journals. This will facilitate the resolution of disputes with editors, journals and publishers, but only after the journal’s own complaints procedures are exhausted, applications can be made there.

**Appeal Process**

We welcome serious objections to reviews by editors and reviewers. If you think we have rejected your article because we have misunderstood the scientific content, please send an objection message to our editorial team at nmj@ohu.edu.tr. Do not try to submit a revised version of your article at this stage. After reading your objection letter, if we understand that your objection is justified, we may invite you to submit a revised version of your article. Thus, your work is sent back to the external reviewer process. Please include as much detail as possible in the appeal letter. We can only consider one objection per article, so please take the time and effort to write the letter in detail to make your objection clear - you stand a chance, so use it well. We have found that prolonged negotiation over rejected articles is often unsatisfactory for both authors and editors, so we do not process multiple appeals for the same work.

**Conflicts of Interest**

A conflict of interest arises when professional judgment regarding a primary interest may be affected by a secondary interest (such as financial gain or personal competition). We believe that in order to make the best decision on how to handle an article, we need to know the competing interests of the authors and that if we publish the article, the readers should know them too.

It is any financial or other interest that may lead to conflict with one’s work, significantly impair objectivity, or provide an unfair advantage to any person or entity. All financial support resources during the conduct of the research and the preparation of the article and the role of sponsors in the study should be explained. If there is no source of funding, this should also be stated. Examples of potential conflicts of interest that need to be disclosed include consultations, hiring, and grants. Potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed at the earliest possible stage.

Nigde Medical Journal has a set process for handling submissions from editors, staff or editorial board members to ensure unbiased review. Such submissions are primarily directed to other journals. If this is not possible, the submissions’ owners will be suspended from the journal. These submissions are reviewed through a double-blind review process.

The editor should not be involved in decisions about articles written by her/him or her/his family members. In addition, such work should be subject to all the usual procedures of the journal. The editor should follow the ICMJE guidelines regarding disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by authors and reviewers.

**Principles of Research Ethics**

Nigde Medical Journal cares the highest standards in research ethics and adopts the international research ethics principles defined below. The compliance of the articles with the ethical rules is the responsibility of the authors.

• Principles of integrity, quality and transparency should be ensured in designing the research, reviewing the design and conducting the research.

• The research team and participants should be fully informed about the purpose of the research, its methods and possible uses; the necessities and risks, if any, of participating in the research.

• Confidentiality of information provided by research participants and confidentiality of respondents should be ensured. Research should be designed in a way that preserves the autonomy and dignity of the participants.

• Research participants should take part in the research voluntarily and should not be under any coercion.

• Damage to the participants should be avoided. The research should be planned in such a way that it does not put the participants at risk.

• Be clear about research independence; if there is a conflict of interest, it should be stated.

• In experimental studies with human subjects, written informed consent must be obtained from participants who decide to participate in the research. The consent of the legal guardian of children and custodians or those with a confirmed mental illness must be obtained.

• If the study will be carried out in any institution or organization, approval must be obtained from that institution or organization.

• In studies with human subjects, it should be stated in the “methods” section that “informed consent” was obtained from the participants and ethics committee approval was obtained from the institution where the study was conducted.