

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Publication of Findings from Clinical Trials

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2015
Approved by the Assembly, May 2015

"Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . ." – *APA Operations Manual*

This document states the position of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) on the publication rights of researchers participating in clinical trials and on the broader issue of participation in a national, comprehensive, clinical trials registry as a condition for publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

The APA encourages researchers, whenever possible, to critically evaluate the design of an established trial when they consider participation, and to publish all findings from the trials in which they participate regardless of outcome. APA discourages investigators and their institutions participating in clinical trials research from entering into agreements with trial sponsors that place restrictions of any kind on the right to publish.

The APA urges Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and journal editors to require researcher assurances of unfettered access to methodology, findings and results as a condition of approval and of publication, respectively. Public accessibility to all methods and findings related to clinical trials has direct implications for improved patient care and treatment, while the suppression of negative findings has the potential of exposing patients to ineffective and potentially harmful treatments.

With regard to the overarching issue of research integrity in the conduct of clinical trials, APA endorses participation in, and values the function of, clinicaltrials.gov and believes a public registry of all clinical trials initiated in the United States, whether publicly—or privately funded, promotes transparency of information relevant to efficacy and safety of treatments for children and for adults diagnosed with mental disorders.