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Retrospective Study

Variability in conflict of interest disclosures by physicians presenting trauma research

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1 What did this study explore?

This study explores the financial disclosures by authors presenting orthopaedic trauma research to determine if trauma researchers are accurately reporting disclosures.

2 How did the authors perform all experiments?

Self-reported authorship disclosure information published for the 2012 American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and Orthopaedic Trauma Association (OTA) meetings was compiled from meeting programs. Both the AAOS and OTA required global disclosures for participants. For each conference, the total number of presenters, total number of presenters with financial disclosures, total number of disclosures per author, total number of companies supporting each author and specific type of disclosure were recorded.

3 How did the authors process all experimental data?

Disclosures made by authors presenting at more than one meeting were then compared for discrepancies.

4 How did the authors deal with the pre-study hypothesis?

Previous studies in sports medicine, spine surgery, and arthroplasty have shown that researchers presenting at separate national meetings within the same academic year have discrepancies in the financial disclosures they make. Based on these previous findings, our pre-study hypothesis was that researchers presenting trauma research would also demonstrate variability in the financial disclosures they reveal.

5 What are the novel findings of this study?

This is the first study to our knowledge that has investigated (1) the prevalence and characteristics of financial relationships and (2) quantified discrepancies in conflict of interest disclosures by researchers presenting orthopaedic trauma research. The results of our study

demonstrate that many authors reported financial disclosures at AAOS and OTA, with a relatively high number of discrepancies.