Research misconduct and data fraud in clinical trials

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Dear Editor,

The recent report on “research misconduct and data fraud in clinical trials” is very interesting [1]. George noted that “cases of the most serious types of misconduct, fabrication and falsification (i.e., data fraud), are relatively rare but that other types of questionable research practices are quite common” [1]. In fact, scientific misconduct is common and can be seen around the world [2]. The statement that “the fabrication and falsification is less common than other problems” should be subject to discussion. Indeed, the problem is sometimes difficult to detect, and this might lead to the low rate that has been reported [3]. Sometimes it is very difficult to find out whether research contains falsification or fabrication. The strength of journal peer review and the editorial team is very important in discovering the problem [4]. Of interest, an internationally indexed journal sometimes still will publish two articles in which there is overt falsification or fabrication [see as examples J Med Assoc Thai 2002; 85 (suppl 1): S180–185, and J Med Assoc Thai 2004; 87 (Suppl 2): S185–189, which can

be considered duplications with fabrication and falsification]. How to increase the quality of scientific journals is an issue requiring further thought in order to support the fight against “research misconduct and data fraud in clinical trials”.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The author declares that the author has no conflict of interest.

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