Editorial

It is now a matter of history that in January 1978 a group of editors from major medical journals met in Vancouver, British Columbia, and agreed on uniform technical requirements for manuscripts to be submitted to their journals. The major guidelines were initially concerned with details of the construction of papers, the most obvious feature being the format of bibliographic references. The Vancouver group has since become the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and their subsequent deliberations have led to the provision of guidelines on far more than the visibly apparent technical side of the structure of papers. In particular the Committee has considered the difficult area of multiple publication and the responsibilities of putative authors. The details of these subsequent guidelines have been published (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, 1984, 1985) and are to be incorporated into the Uniform Requirements for the Submission of Manuscripts to Biomedical Journals (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, 1982) when it is next revised.

References

- INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITORS. (1982). Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. *British Medical Journal*, **284**, 1725.
- INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITORS. (1984). Multiple publication. *British Medical Journal*, **288**, 52.

The eagle eyed reader looking at the list of journals published in the 1982 paper would have been led into believing that the *Postgraduate Medical Journal* was at that time participating in the Uniform Requirements agreement. As is so often the case, the *British Medical Journal* was ahead of its time; we had not in fact agreed to participate and have continued in our long established or perhaps old fashioned ways until the present.

However, whilst a uniform format for bibliographic references which had some cons as well as certain pros, did not sway us, the widening concern of the International Committee with major aspects of the publication of papers has now persuaded us to participate.

As from January 1st 1987, the Journal will adopt the 'Vancouver' style and as from July 1st 1986, manuscripts should be submitted to us according to the Uniform Requirements guideline. We particularly wish to draw the attention of all who intend to submit papers to us of the further guidelines published in 1984 and 1985 on multiple publication and the responsibilities that go with authorship.

B.I. Hoffbrand
Editor

- INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITORS. (1985). Guidelines on authorship. *British Medical Journal*, **291**, 722.