

Embedding a systematic and mandatory approach to reporting sex and gender in The Lancet

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We read the #LancetWomen theme issue on advancing women in science, medicine, and global health with great enthusiasm, and write in response to ‘*What is The Lancet doing about gender and diversity?*’. While this commentary sets clear parameters for improving equity in the academic publishing system across all *Lancet* journals, it is but a first step. A systematic and mandatory approach to reporting sex and gender, that covers all papers considered for publication, is required, unless justified otherwise.

Failure to recognise the importance of sex and gender in health and medical research is closely intertwined with the gendered nature of academic publishing.^{1,2} Women are underrepresented in cardiovascular disease (CVD) trials despite known sex differences across a broad range of risk, prevention, treatment and outcome parameters.^{3,4} For example, while the incidence of myocardial infarction (MI) in the UK Biobank is higher in men, important risk factors including systolic blood pressure and hypertension, smoking status and intensity, and diabetes are more strongly associated with MI in women when compared to men.⁵

Embedding the reporting of sex and gender specific data into the system could help to create further change. The George Institute for Global Health recently implemented a policy to ensure researchers consider sex and/or gender throughout the research pipeline, from conception through to publication, where appropriate. We have created a checklist to assist our staff and have simplified this checklist in Table 1. We encourage *The Lancet* to consider embedding this checklist on the article submission page for all prospective authors.

Table 1: Simple checklist for sex and gender-sensitive research		
Was the consideration of sex and/or gender relevant for your research?	Y	N
Did the study design enable sex and gender differences to be investigated?	Y	N
Were the groups involved in the study sex and/or gender balanced?	Y	N
Was the primary outcome analysed according to the sex/gender variable?	Y	N
Have you discussed the implications of your research for women and men?	Y	N

References:

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