

The Lancet & CUGH Series Episode 1 | Speak to the Editors: Getting Published and Other Insights into the World of Global Health

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- Introduction to *The Lancet* family
- Article types
- Inner workings
- Decision making processes
- What makes a good global/planetary health study?

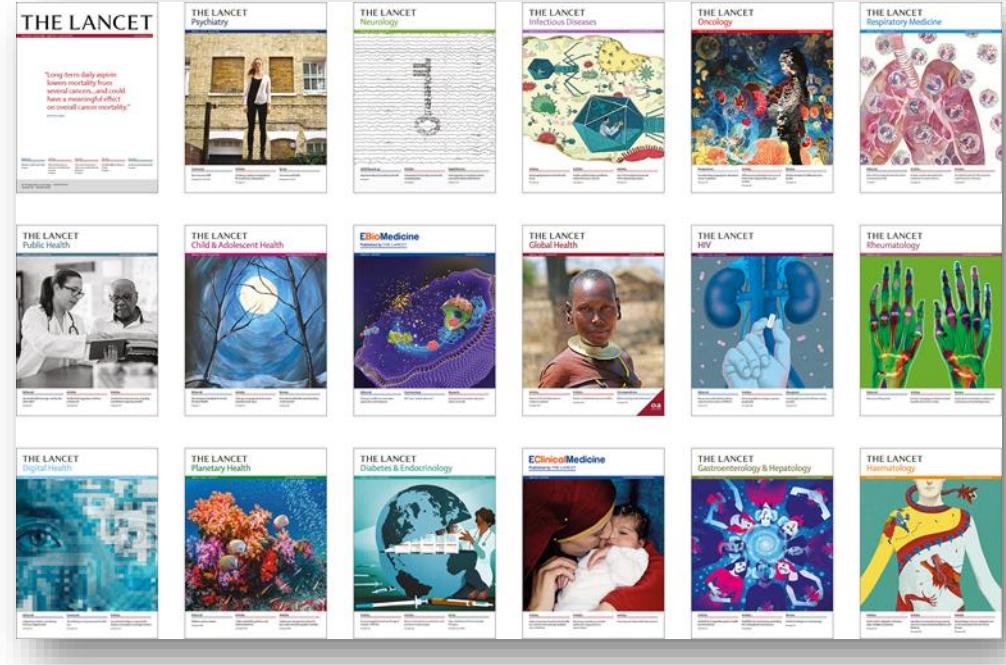
What is *The Lancet*?



The Lancet family

- 18 journals
- 3 offices – London, New York, Beijing
- 150 full-time staff

“The best science for better lives”



The Lancet Global Health



- Launched in 2013
- Online-only
- Open access
- 1700 submissions/year
- Publishing 12 research articles per month
- Impact factor 15
- 47K Twitter followers

The Lancet Planetary Health



- Launched in 2017 to address the often neglected intersection of health and environment
- Covers all the SDGs
- Online-only
- Open access

Article types

- Primary research
 - includes synthesis e.g. meta-analysis
- Correspondence
- Comments (linked and unlinked)
- Reviews
- Personal views
- News features (commissioned)
- Research digest
- Health policy
- Commissions

Inner workings

How does *The Lancet* work?



What do *Lancet* editors do?

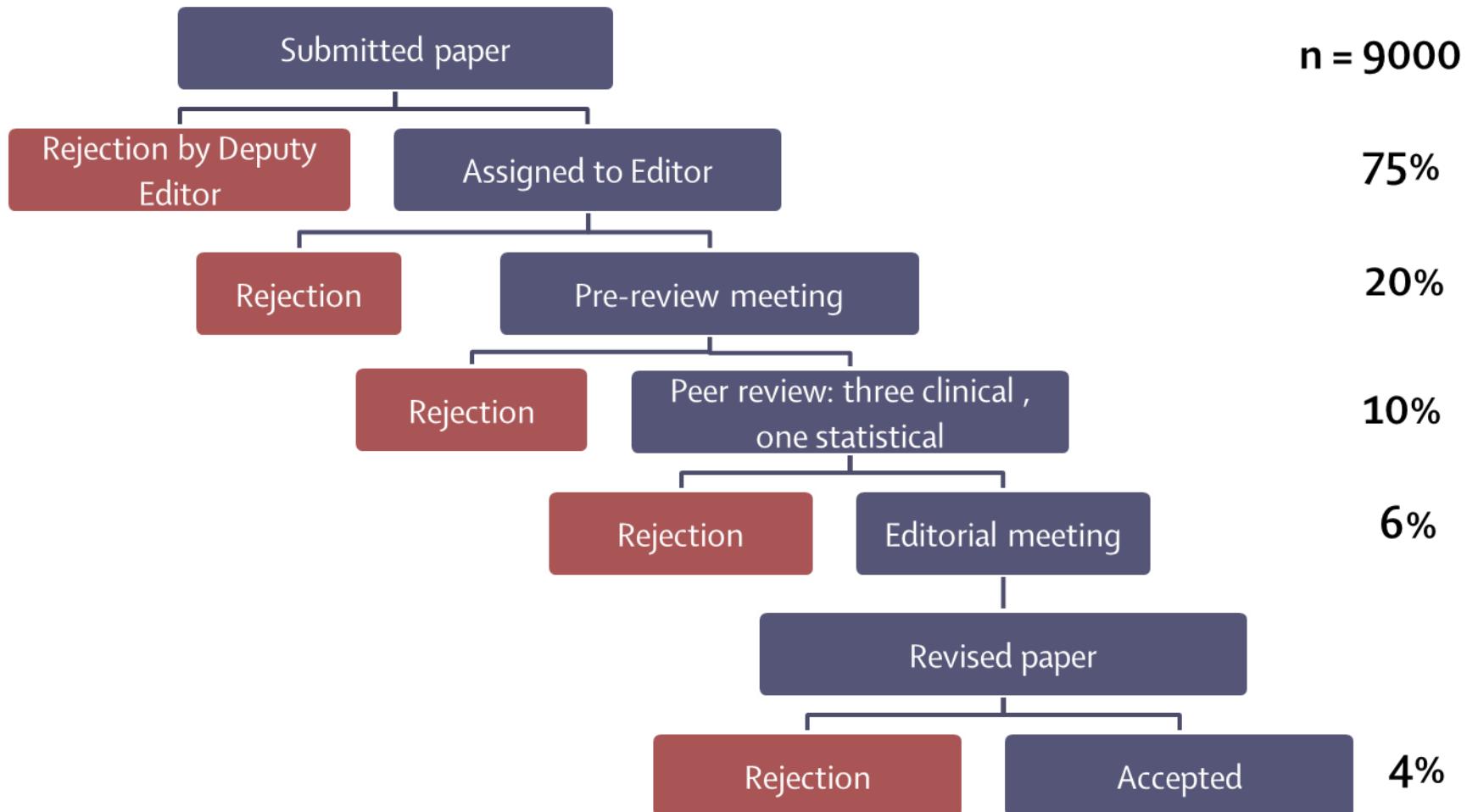
Core tasks:

- Selection of manuscripts for review process
- Reviewer selection and overseeing the review process
- Final decision on manuscripts
- Various article quality and journal policy checks

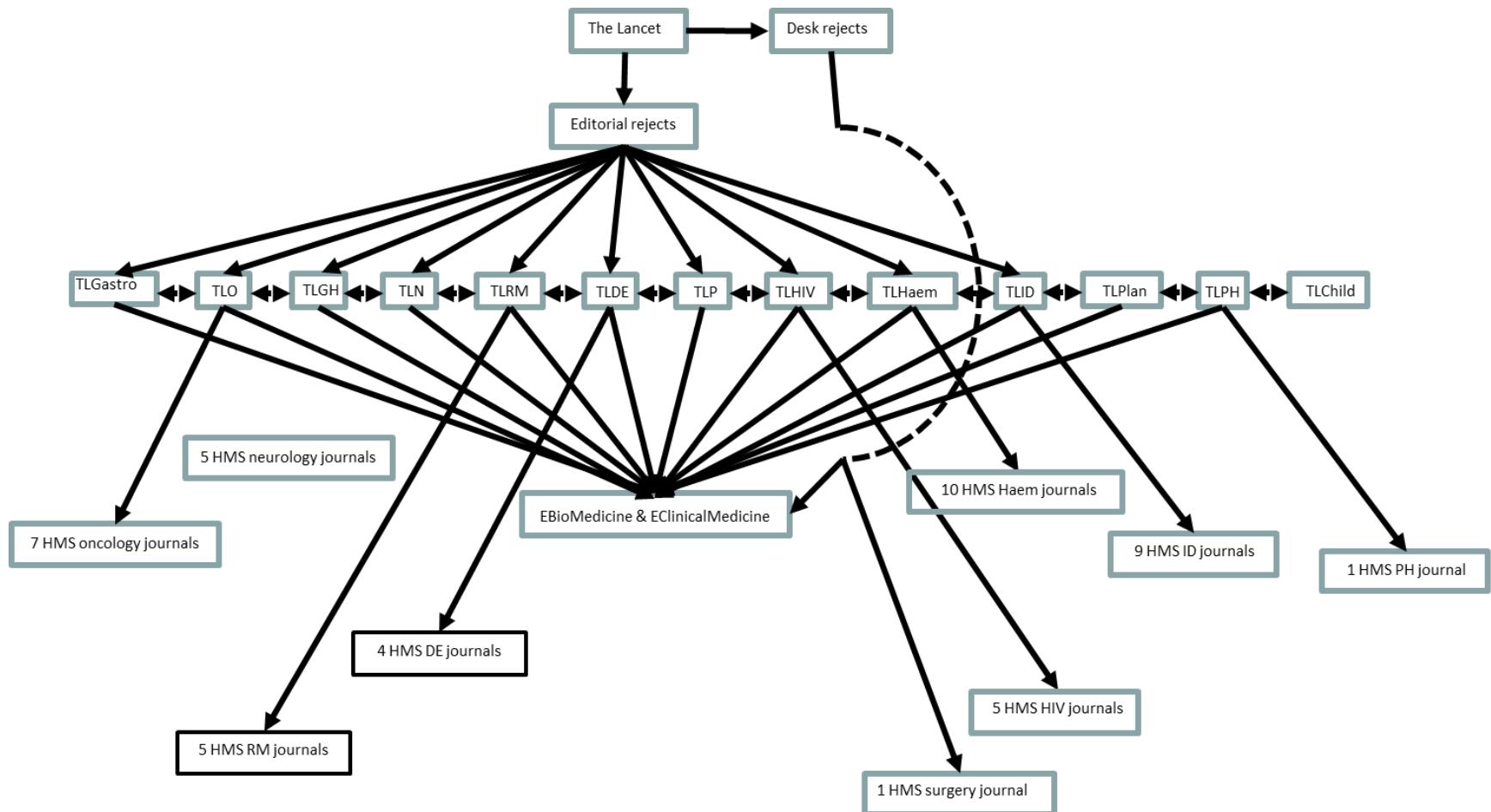
In addition:

- Commission and edit linked Comments
- Write content e.g. Research Digest or News Features
- Commission and edit Reviews
- Write editorials
- Help with the preparation of press releases
- Interact with the research, policy, and private sector communities at conferences and institute visits

Manuscript flow



Journal transfers



Decision-making processes

Editorial threshold: hurdle 1

1. **Conceptual novelty** and importance of a result in its own field
2. **General interest**, importance e.g. for policy

Also:

- Strong logical support for conclusions
- Mechanistic insight
- Work that will inspire further research

Decisions are made by the editor(s), and can be made at all stages of the review process (at submission, or after each round of review).

Technical threshold: hurdle 2

- Minimum 4 referees, single blind (anonymous referees)
 - Experts in their field
 - Selected to cover all aspects of the paper
 - Find unbiased, balanced, objective referees
-
- Respect authors' request for exclusion (within reason)
 - Avoid recent co-authors, PhD supervisors, close colleagues
 - Strive for diversity: e.g. gender and geography
 - Explore viewpoints at conferences

Relevance to the readership

NB. aims and scope and information for authors

“The Lancet Global Health features original research, commentary, and correspondence. Our focus is on disadvantaged populations, be they whole economic regions or marginalised groups within otherwise prosperous nations...”

The Lancet Planetary Health particularly favours “...work that contributes to our understanding of, and transition into, a safe and just space for humanity respecting planetary boundaries and the social and economic foundations of a healthy life”

Novelty

- What does this add to existing knowledge?
- Not necessarily a previously untested drug or intervention
- Could be a different population (children vs adults? HIC vs LMIC? Urban vs rural?)
- Could be an update on a previous review in a fast-moving field
- Could be a new method
- Could be a new prediction about the future (modelling)

**“These findings
confirm the work
of...”**



Sound conclusions on which to base recommendations

- Sample size (statistical power)
- Study design (controls? validation? assumptions?)



The bottom line

- How will my findings enable policy, practice, or principles to move forward?
- How does my work contribute a missing piece in the puzzle?
- What is the *point*?

NB. Not necessarily a positive finding (relevant negatives change research direction or stop clinicians doing something)

**“More research is
needed...”**



Research in context

First find your incomplete jigsaw!

Evidence before this study

This section should include a description of all the evidence that the authors considered before undertaking this study. Authors should state: the sources (databases, journal or book reference lists, etc) searched; the criteria used to include or exclude studies (including the exact start and end dates of the search), which should not be limited to English language publications; the search terms used; the quality (risk of bias) of that evidence; and the pooled estimate derived from meta-analysis of the evidence, if appropriate.

Added value of this study

Authors should describe here how their findings add value to the existing evidence (including an updated meta-analysis, if appropriate).

Implications of all the available evidence

Authors should state the implications for practice or policy and future research of their study combined with existing evidence.

What makes a good global/planetary health study?

What makes a good global health study?

- Identifies and attempts to fill a gap in knowledge
- Puts the issue into the wider (global?) context
- Feasibility/sustainability
- Makes use of in-country expertise (and gives due credit)
- Can be replicated elsewhere

What makes a good planetary health study?

Additionally:

- Thematic, addresses **intersecting issues** e.g. climate change and food security
- **Priority issues**
- **Multidisciplinary**
- **Practically focused**, issue framing and science communication, practical implementation

If you think you have a potential *Lancet* journal paper...

- Ask a friendly, **but brutally honest**, friend/colleague from another discipline if they find the conclusions interesting
- Ask yourself if you would accept the paper as a referee

If the answer is yes to both...

- Write it up as briefly as possible
- Explain in a cover letter why it's of general interest
- Submit through our website

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/TLPLANETARYHEALTH/>

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/LANGLH/>

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Q&A



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