



# Scientific Integrity and Publication Ethics in the Pandemic

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12th December 2020

Dr Cat Chatfield, Research Integrity Editor, The BMJ

# Competing interests

- I am an employee of The BMJ which publishes Open Access research and charges authors a fee for their submissions
- I am on the Editorial Board of BMJ Open Quality, another Open Access journal wholly owned by BMJ
- I am on the International Planning Committee of the International Forum of Quality and Safety in Healthcare and The Healthcare Improvement Science Institute's annual conference

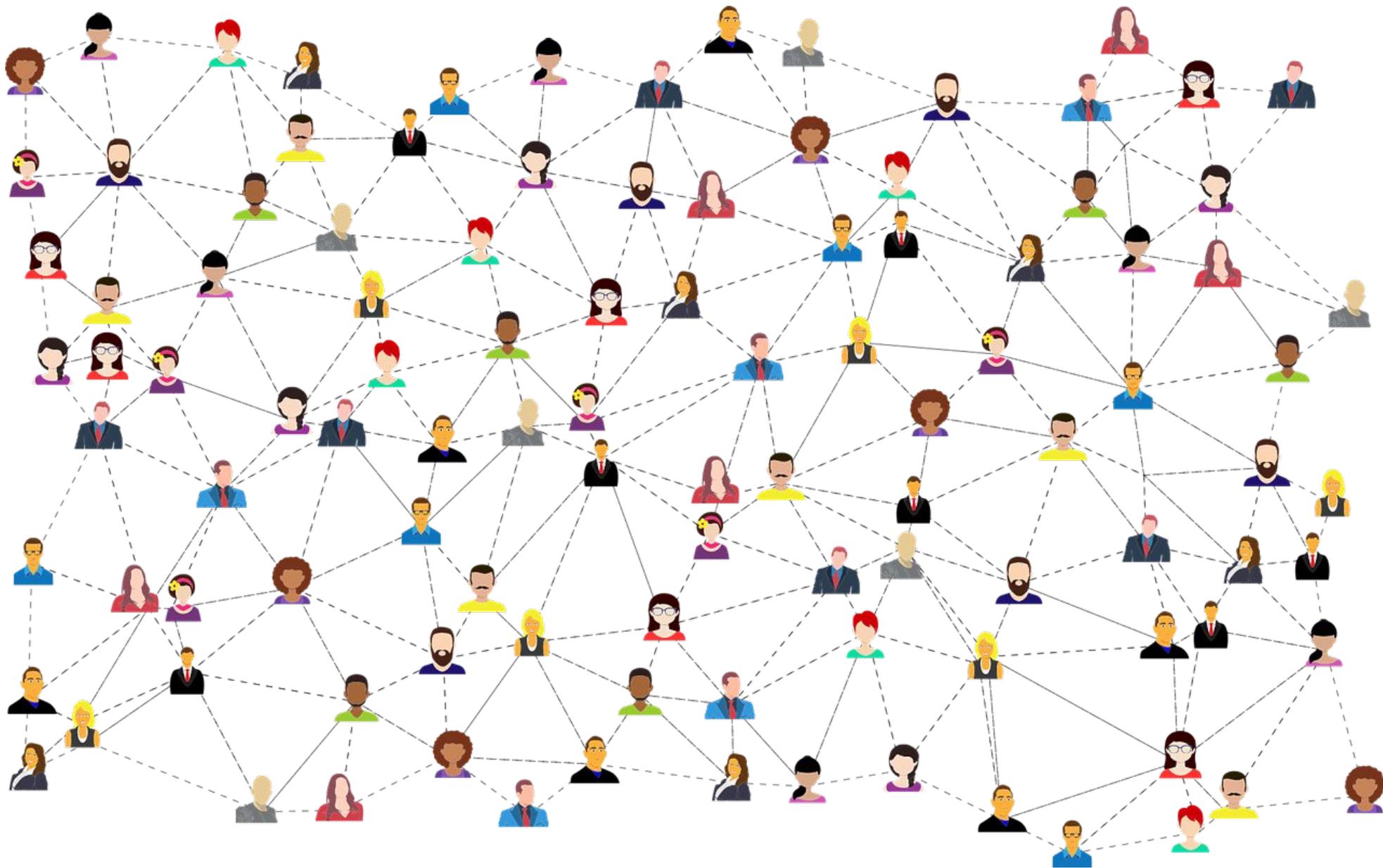
“Integrity in Research...  
this is what  
distinguishes  
Science from Fiction”

Dr Thomas Kitching  
Professor of Astrophysics, UCL



# Conducting & producing research which is...

- Honest
- Rigorous
- Transparent and open
- Undertaken with care and respect

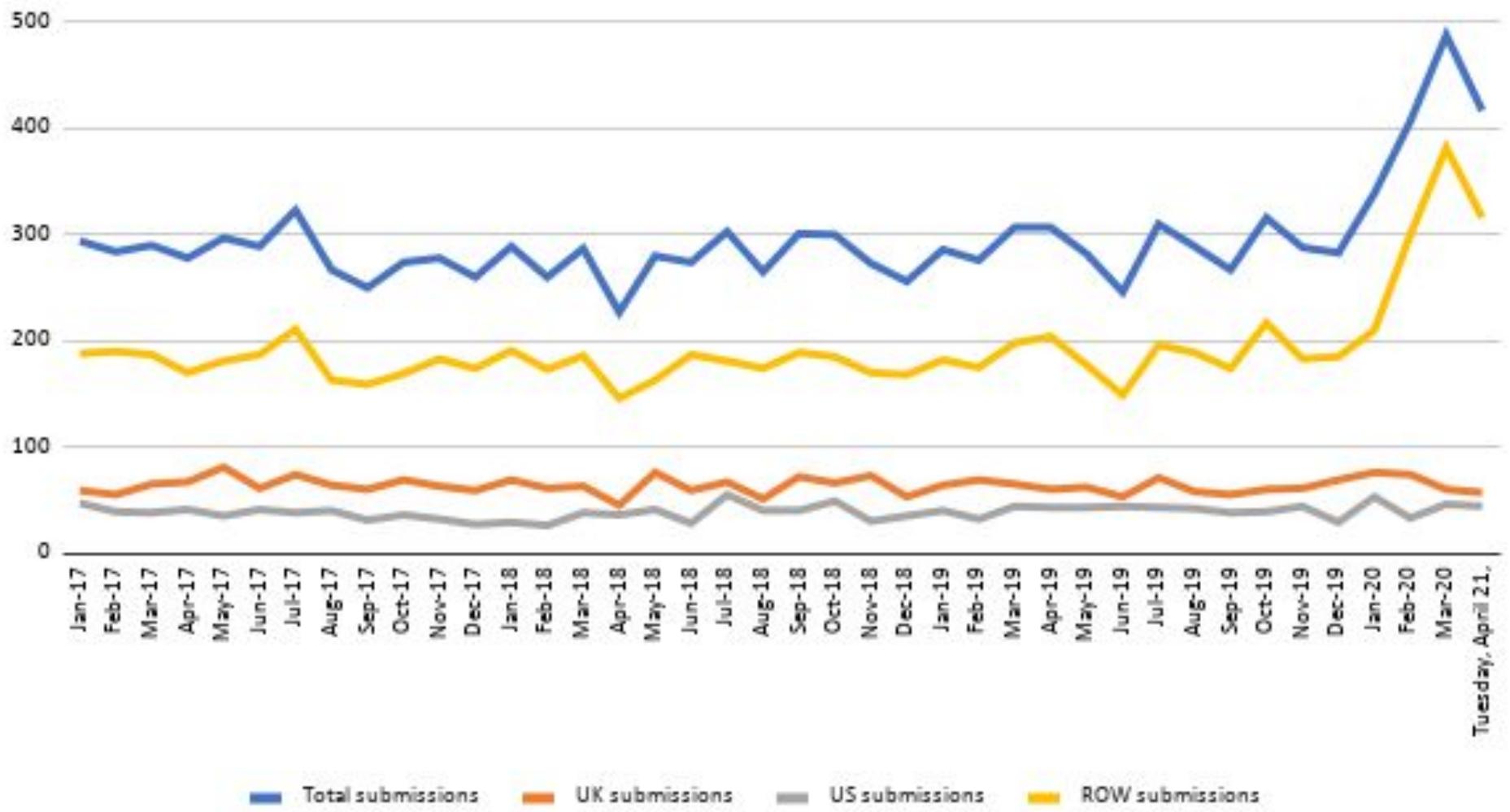


# Challenges for research integrity in the pandemic

# Challenges for research integrity in the pandemic

## 1. Volume

Number of Research submissions over time from Jan 2017 to 21st April 2020



Searching content for covid coronavirus (any words) in title or abstract and covid coronavirus (any words) in full text , from Jan 2020 to Dec 2020.

Showing results 1 to 10 of 1,789 for covid coronavirus (any words) in title or abstract and covid coronavirus (any words) in full text , from Jan 2020 to Dec 2020.

1789

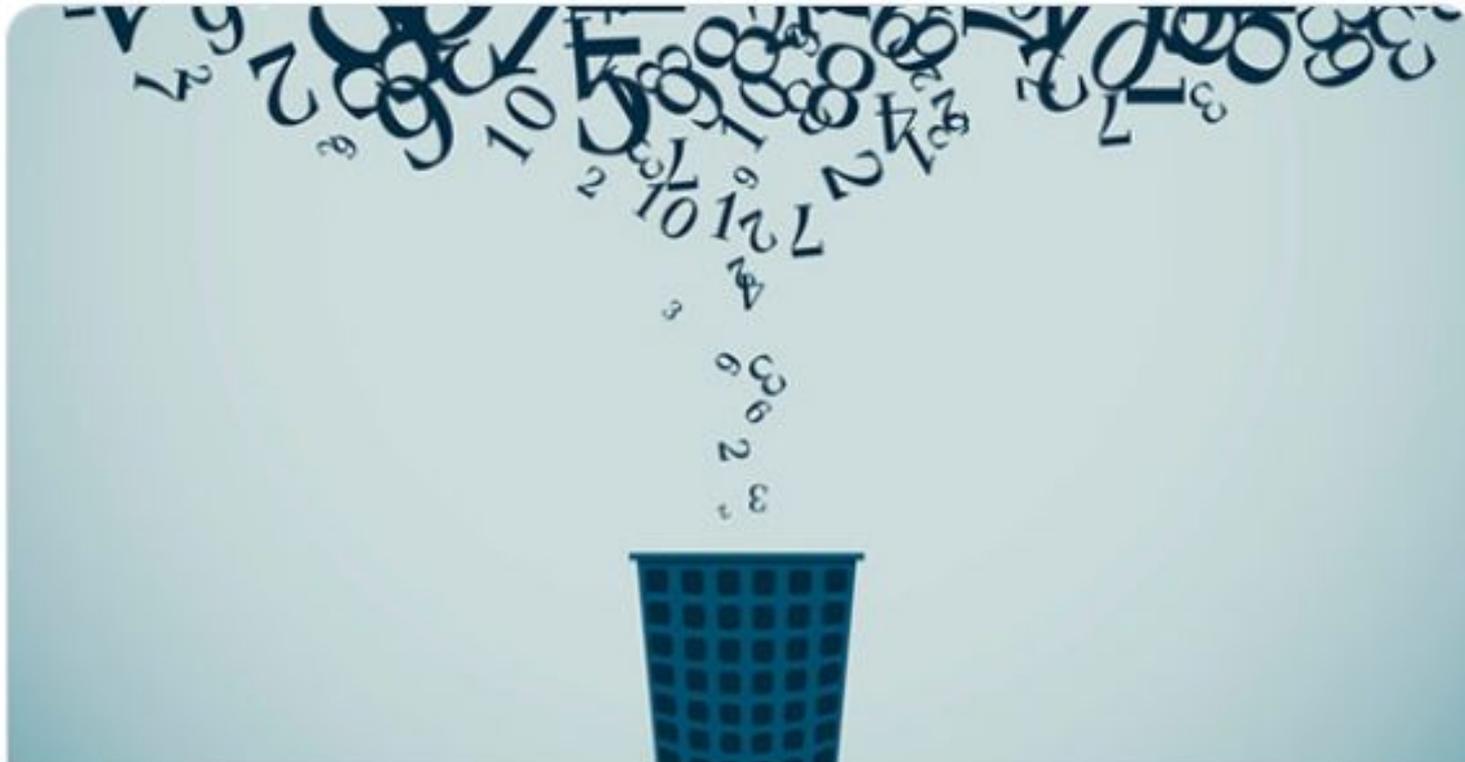


HELP

# Challenges for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Volume
2. Quality of research

Waste in covid-19 research: how do we make the outpouring of research more effective?



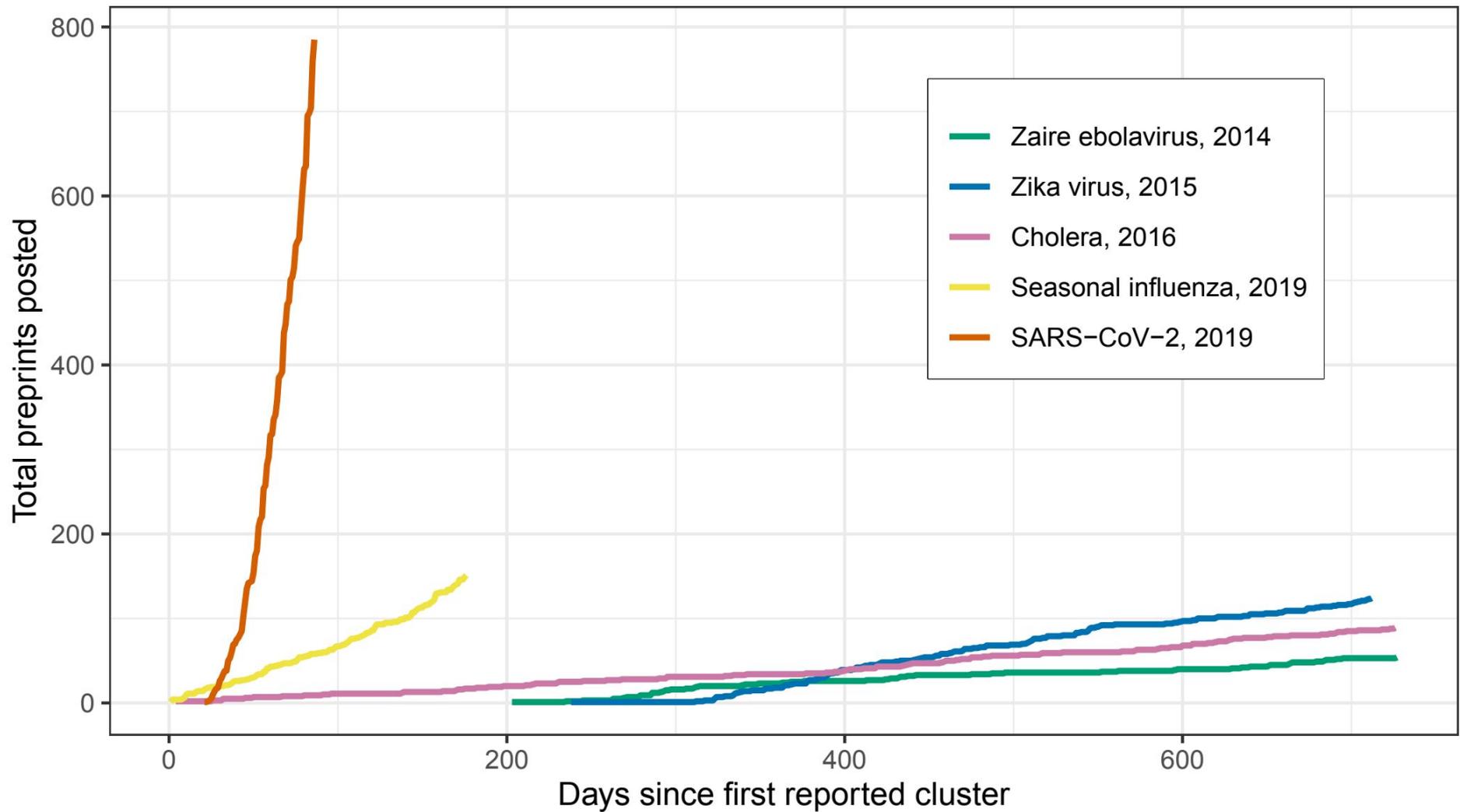
#### Waste in covid-19 research

A deluge of poor quality research is sabotaging an effective evidence based response The medical research world is responding to the covid-19 pandemic...

[bmj.com](https://www.bmj.com)

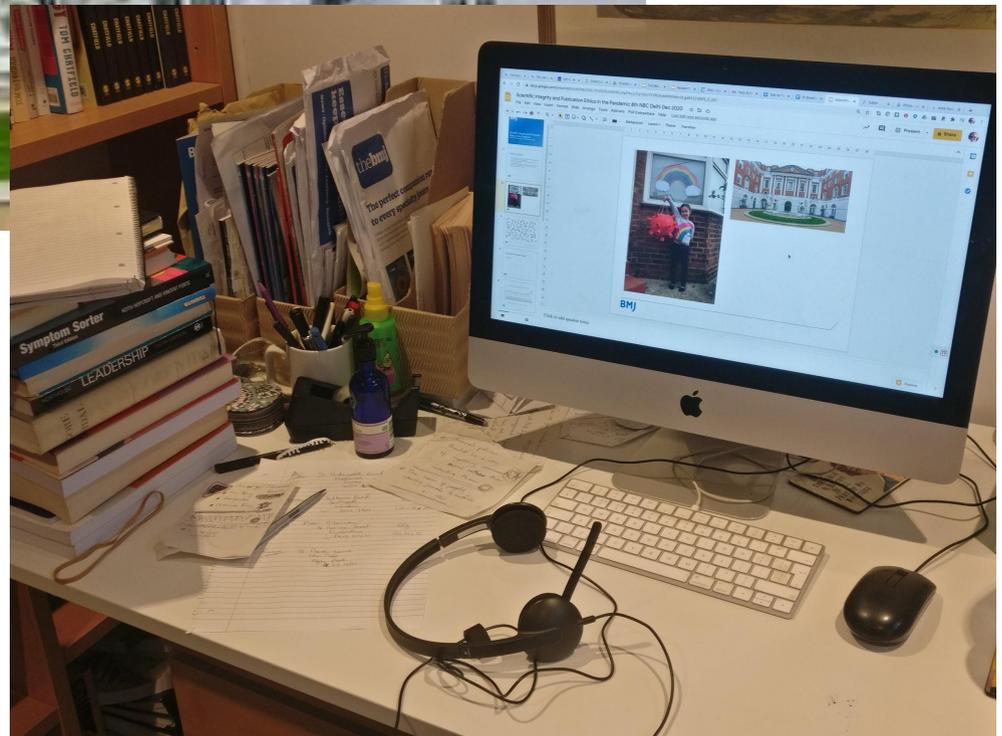
# Challenges for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Volume / resources
2. Quality of research
3. Speed / Timeliness



# Challenges for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Volume / resources
2. Quality of research
3. Speed / Timeliness
4. Non-work pressures and priorities



# Opportunities for research integrity in the pandemic

# Opportunities for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Build strong, resilient systems

## Analysis

### Face masks for the public during the covid-19 crisis

BMJ 2020 ; 369 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m1435> (Published 09 April 2020)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2020;369:m1435

Read our latest coverage of the coronavirus pandemic

Article

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Trisha Greenhalgh, professor<sup>1</sup>, Manuel B Schmid, consultant<sup>2 3</sup>, Thomas Czypionka, chief health economist<sup>4 5</sup>, Dirk Bassler, professor<sup>2 3</sup>, Laurence Guer, professor<sup>6 7</sup>

Author affiliations 

Correspondence to: T Greenhalgh [trish.greenhalgh@phc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:trish.greenhalgh@phc.ox.ac.uk)

**Trisha Greenhalgh and colleagues** argue that it is time to apply the precautionary principle



## A living WHO guideline on drugs for covid-19

BMJ 2020 ; 370 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m3379> (Published 04 September 2020)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2020;370:m3379

### Visual summary of recommendation

#### Population

This recommendation applies only to people with these characteristics:



#### Disease severity

Non-severe	Severe	Critical
Absence of signs of severe or critical disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SpO<sub>2</sub>&lt;90% on room air</li> <li>Respiratory rate &gt;30 in adults</li> <li>Raised respiratory rate in children <sup>i</sup></li> <li>Signs of severe respiratory distress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires life sustaining treatment</li> <li>Acute respiratory distress syndrome</li> <li>Sepsis</li> <li>Septic shock</li> </ul>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Recommendation against (weak)</p> </div>		
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Recommendation against (weak)</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Recommendation in favour (strong)</p> </div>	

#### Interventions

**Remdesivir**

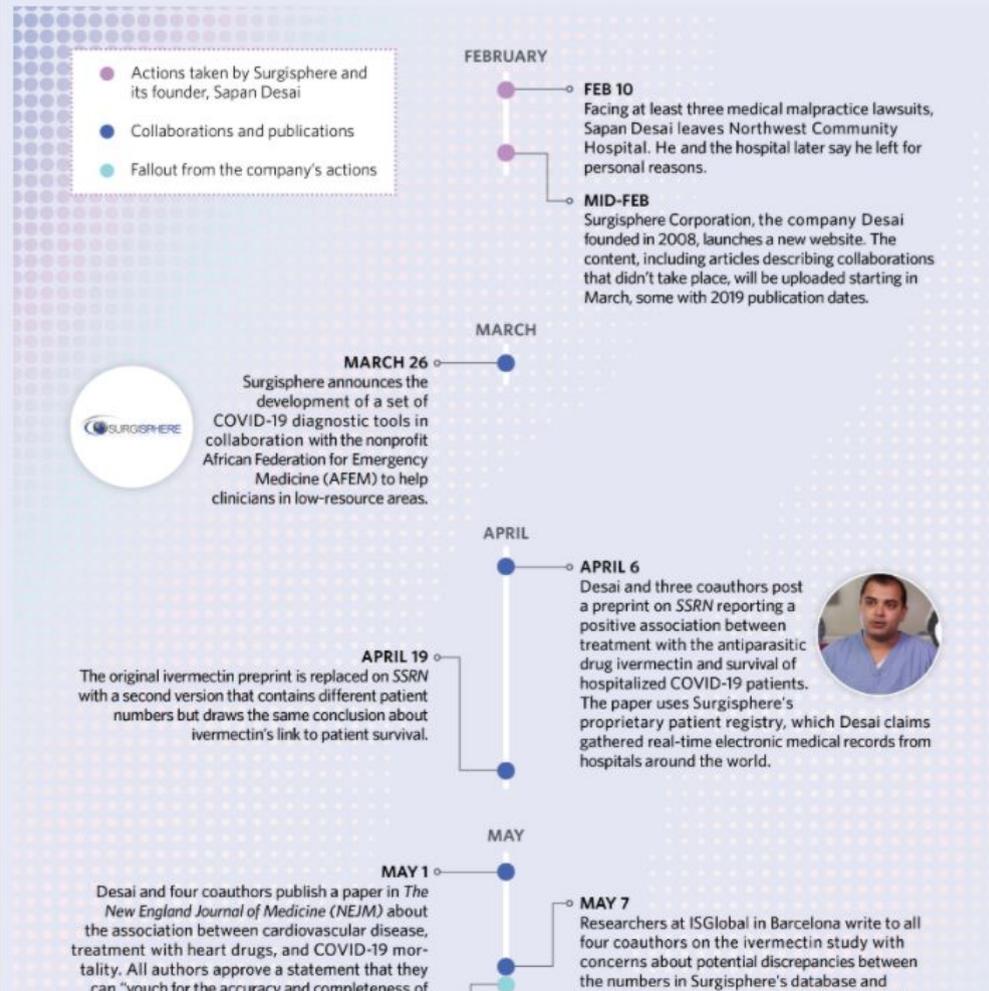
**Corticosteroids**

# Opportunities for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Build strong, resilient systems
2. Evidence value of peer review, data sharing and other processes which strengthen research integrity

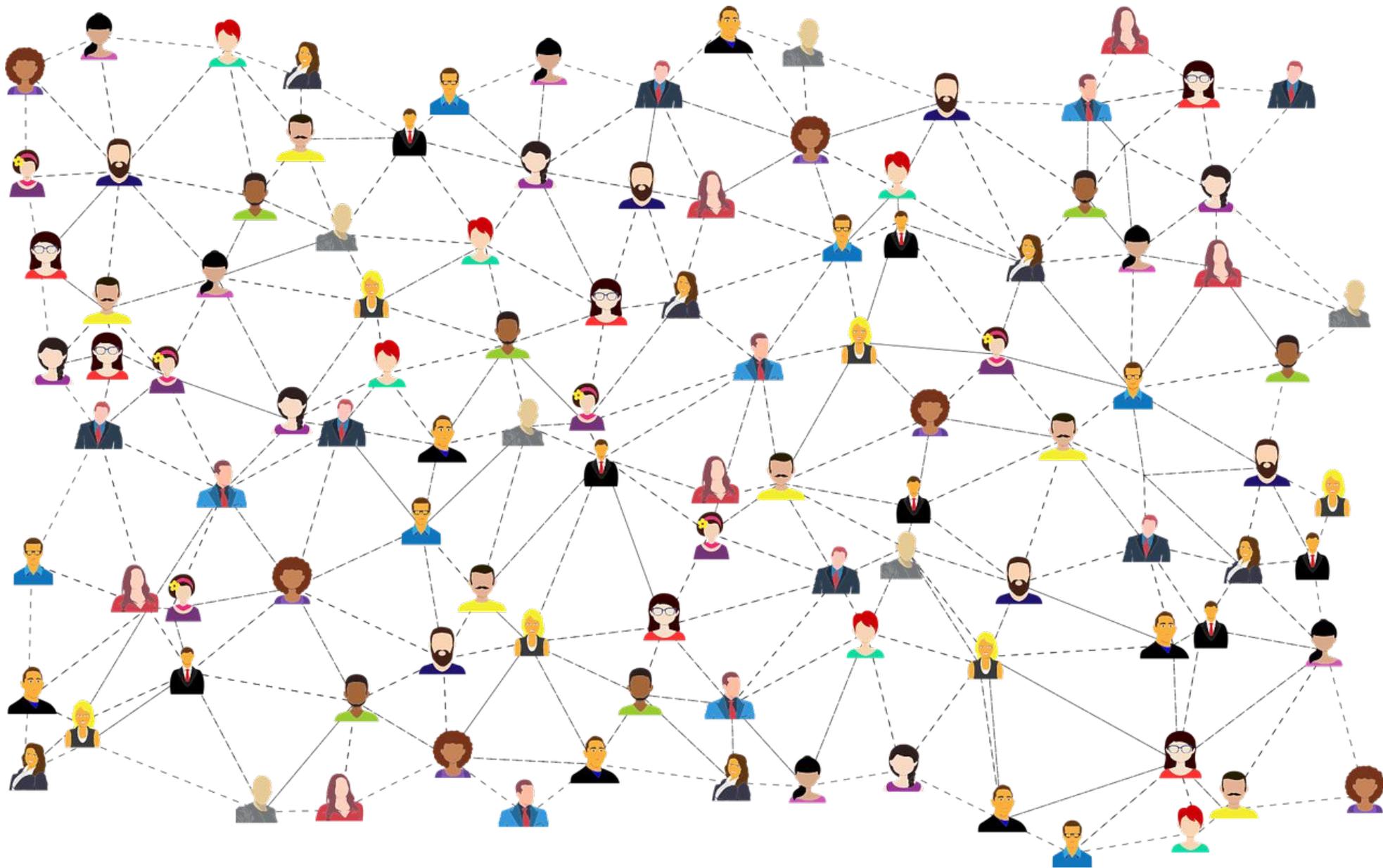
## The Timeline of a Scandal

Surgisphere Corporation had a busy few months in 2020, overseeing the launch of a new website, the publication of high-impact papers on treatments and outcomes in COVID-19 patients, and eventually a collapse of its reputation.



# Opportunities for research integrity in the pandemic

1. Build strong, resilient systems
2. Evidence value of peer review, data sharing and other processes which strengthen research integrity
3. Receptive environment for innovation such as post-publication peer review



# Thank you



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