



# Promoting dissemination and impact

Joni Coleman, KCL  
ISPG Members Meet-up



# Thanks!

- PGC Outreach team, Prof Cindy Bulik
- Dr Karmel Choi, Dr Niamh Mullins
- Hundreds of authors across multiple papers
- Dr Veera Rajagopal  
([@doctorveera.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/doctorveera.bsky.social))



# The Word



# Before paper acceptance: Conferences

- Sweat equity
  - Diverse people with deep knowledge
  - Multi-level (local, national, international)
  - Multi-audience (genetics, psychiatry, biology, clinical, lay, ...)



# The paper is accepted!

- Hooray! But now the dissemination work begins!
- Use the lag between AIP and publication to launch dissemination strategy
- Talk to institutions, talk to publisher, talk to funders



# The Single Overriding Communication Objective

- What is the one thing you want everyone to know from this paper?
- Keep it pithy, keep it simple
- This needs to come across in every form of dissemination you use



# Know the mistakes that can be made in your field

- Journalists are busy generalists
- Many in-house image banks for "psychiatric illness" are...not good...
- Direct people to appropriate images and to initiatives like the Mental Health Foundation Positive Image Library



# Blogs, Podcasts

- Opportunity to summarise paper
  - Accessible
  - Nuanced
- FAQs
  - Address important issues, controversies, misinterpretations
  - Great examples from SSGAC
  - Can also be a useful resource for authors



# Video-on-demand and Podcasts





Video-on-demand and  
Podcasts

**Work with your  
institution's PR  
team...**




# Press releases

- ▶ Talk to institutional PR teams early, pre-acceptance
- ▶ Draft carefully, get many eyes on it, ensure accuracy
- ▶ Prime site → Other sites
- ▶ Liaise with publisher and **be aware of embargoes**
- ▶ Liaise with key funders
- ▶ Think outside the box – newspapers? TV? Radio? Web bulletins? Magazines?



# Media

- Be available (sweat equity again)
- Respond quickly to media enquiries, if only to say when you will be available
- Find time in the week after release – the day of embargo will be busiest, but there will still be busyness in the days after



# ~~Twitter~~ Bluesky

- Draft a series of messages (a Bleatorial?!)
- Short, simple, pithy
- Use figures – if possible, one figure per Bleat\*


\* Bl(uesky equivalent of a tw)e[a]t

# Bleatorial example (1)

 **PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h


The latest @PGCgenetics study of #anorexianervosa has just been released in @NatureGenet!  
[nature.com/articles/s4158...](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-023-04158-1)  
Here's a brief tweetorial telling you everything you need to know about our paper. 1/9

2 53 64

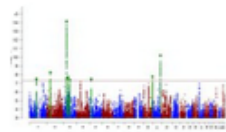
 **PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

Since 2015, we've brought together data from over 13K individuals with anorexia nervosa, and 9K healthy controls, as part of the Anorexia Nervosa Genetics Initiative (ANGI)  
[med.unc.edu/psych/eatingdi...](https://med.unc.edu/psych/eatingdi...) 2/9

1 2 5

 **PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

Combined with data from the @uk\_biobank and previously published data, we performed a genome-wide association study in 17K cases and 55K controls, identifying 8 regions of the genome associated with anorexia nervosa 3/9



1 6 14

# Bleatorial example (2)



**PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

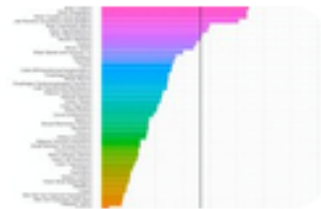
Across these 8 regions, 58 brain-expressed genes were identified near to and in physical contact with the associated region, and where expression of the gene was associated with an AN-associated genetic variant 4/9

1 3 6 ...



**PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

Genes associated with anorexia nervosa were enriched for expression in the brain, and particularly medium spiny neurons and pyramidal neurons from hippocampal CA1 (in mice). 5/9



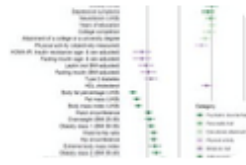
1 6 6 ...

# Bleatorial example (3)



**PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

We used these results to assess genetic correlations with other traits – we find anorexia nervosa is significantly correlated with a variety of psychiatric disorders, but also with metabolic and glycemic traits, as well as type 2 diabetes and physical activity 6/9



2 8 16



**PGC Consortium** @PGCgenetics 20h

Anorexia nervosa had a SNP-based heritability of 11-17% in our study (c.f. 50-60% twin heritability). Using a leave-one-out approach, polygenic risk scores captured an average of 1.7% of variance in anorexia nervosa in study cohorts. 7/9



1 4 11



# Bleatorial example (4)



**PGC Consortium**

@PGCgenetics

This work relied on an international consortium of 100s of scientists. Particular thanks go to Laura Thornton, Patrick Sullivan (not on twitter) [@hunnawatson](#) [@ZYilmazPhD](#) [@topherhuebel](#) [@Joni\\_Coleman](#) [@helenagasparFR](#) [@JulienBryois](#) [@AnkeHinney](#) [@virpi\\_leppa](#) [@psychgenomics](#) [@cbulik](#)  
8/9

11:28am · 15 Jul 2019 · Twitter Web Client



# Build your audience

- Target influential people (and gather handles in advance)
  - Authors
  - Colleagues
  - Funders
  - Datasets
  - Favourite journalists!



# LinkedIn, Facebook, Reddit...

- Use the communities your authors inhabit
- Produce simple, short, catchy explanations of the paper
- Use the “I” in ISPG!
  - ~75% of the world don't speak English

# Don't feed the trolls

- Respond to good faith questions...
- ...but there are lots of bad faith actors out there, and lots of disinformation you're not going to change





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