

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

Thank you for your interest in *Women's Health Investigation* (WHI). Please consult the following instructions to help you prepare your manuscript, and feel free to contact us with any questions. To ensure fast peer review and publication, manuscripts that do not adhere to the following instructions will be returned to the corresponding author for technical revision before undergoing peer review. We are looking forward to your submission.

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## 1. ABOUT THE JOURNAL

*Women's Health Investigation* (WHI; Women's health Investig; ISSN 2616-4299) is a peer-reviewed and open access journal that embraces the full scope of research in women's healthcare. The breadth of *Women's Health Investigation* spans basic science, clinical medicine, surgery, epidemiology, and prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and supportive care. The aim of the journal is to provide a forum for all clinicians and researchers including but not limited to, gynecologists, obstetricians, internists, and surgeons to publish original scientific articles in clinical and laboratory research relevant to diagnosis and treatment of women's health disorders. Additionally, the journal seeks to publish articles regarding innovations in medical education of women's health specialists.

## 2. MANUSCRIPT CATEGORIES

### (1) ORIGINAL ARTICLE

**Word limit:** 6,000 words (Max) including abstract but excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Structured. 450 words (Max)

**References:** No maximum.

**Figures/tables:** No maximum, but no more than a total 10 figures and tables are recommended.

**Videos\*:** 3 (Max)

\*Playback time of all videos should be no more than 15 min - to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.

**Description:** Originality and clinical impact are essential for acceptance of Original Articles.

The abstract should contain the following subheadings:

**Background, Methods, Results and Conclusions.**

Original articles should entail a section describing the contribution of each author to the manuscript. See section "Authors' Contribution" for details. Meta-analysis will be categorized into this type.

### (2) REVIEW ARTICLE

**Word limit:** 6,000 words (Max) including abstract but excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Unstructured. 300 words (Max)

**References:** No maximum

**Figures/tables:** Minimum 1 image or figure

**Videos\*:** 3 (Max)

\*Playback time of all videos should be no more than 10 min

- to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.

**Description:** Reviews are comprehensive analyses of specific topics. Review articles are generally solicited by the editors, but unsolicited materials may be considered. Proposals for reviews should be submitted with an outline for initial consideration. Both solicited and unsolicited review articles will undergo peer review prior to acceptance.

### (3) RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

**Word limit:** 1,500 words maximum.

**Abstract:** 300 words maximum, unstructured (no use of sub-headers).

**Description:** Research Highlight is a 'digest' of the best/most interesting research findings that have been recently published in the field of women's health. They are usually solicited by editors and written by outstanding experts.

### (4) CASE REPORT/Surgical or Procedural Videos

**Word limit:** 2,500 words (Max) excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Unstructured. 250 words (Max)

**References:** 20 (Max)

**Figures/tables:** 8 (Max) in total

**Videos\*:** 3 (Max)

\* Playback time of all videos should be no more than 15 min - to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.

**Description:** New observations of diseases, clinical findings, or novel/unique treatment outcomes in the field of women's health. Innovative techniques or devices can be reported in the format of surgical or procedural videos. A brief review of a small series of similar cases are highly encouraged. The text should be arranged as follows: Introduction, Case Report, Discussion or Introduction, Patient selection and workup, Pre-procedure preparation, Equipment preference card, Procedure, Role of team members, Post-procedure management, Tips, Tricks and Pitfalls, Discussion.

The authors should provide a statement at the end of the main text to confirm that the patient has given their consent for the Case reports to be published. The editorial office may request copies of the informed consent documentation at any time. We recommend the following wording is used for the consent section: "Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this Case Report and any accompanying images. A copy of the written consent is available for review by the Editor-in-Chief of this journal."

If the patient has passed away, informed consent for publication must be sought from the next of kin of the patient. If the patient is a minor, or unable to provide

consent, informed consent must be sought from the parents or legal guardians of the patient. In these cases, the statement in the 'Consent' section of the manuscript should be amended accordingly.

Only cases of exceptional interest and novelty are considered. For manuscripts that do not qualify, Editors may ask authors to shorten manuscripts and rewrite as other article types.

### (5) CLINICAL GUIDELINE

**Word limit:** 6,000 words (Max) including abstract but excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Unstructured. 450 words (Max)

**References:** No maximum

**Figures/tables:** Minimum 1 image or figure

**Description:** Guidelines need to be the product of a large group of individuals who are recognized authorities in their field. Guidelines will be written by a working party to include a steering committee (usually at least 4 members) and other authors representing a wide range of those with special relevant expertise as well as those whose everyday practice will be influenced by the guidelines.

### (6) PERSPECTIVE

**Word limit:** 3,000 words (Max) including abstract but excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Unstructured. 300 words (Max)

**References:** 25 (Max), including the article discussed

**Videos:** 2 (Max)

\* Playback time of all videos should be no more than 5 min - to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.

**Description:** Perspective can be more personal, forward-looking or speculative, compared with reviews of a scientific topic. A paper presenting controversial positions or papers of the same topic advocate opposite sides will be published as a Perspective. Most of Perspectives will be solicited by the editors; however, we also welcome timely, unsolicited Perspective. Proposals for perspective may be submitted; however, in this case authors should send an outline of the proposed article prior to submission.

### (7) EDITORIAL

**Authors:** 5 (Max)

**Abstract:** Not required Text: 2500 words (Max)

**References:** 25 (Max), including the article discussed

**Figures and Tables (combined):** 2 (Max)

**Videos\*:** 2 (Max)

\* Playback time of all videos should be no more than 5 mins

- to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.  
**Description:** Editorials are written by recognized leader(s) in the field. Editorials are generally solicited by the Editor(s)-in-Chief.

### (8) COMMENTARY

**Authors:** 5 (Max)

**Abstract:** Not required

**Text:** 1500 words (Max)

**References:** 20 (Max), including the article discussed.

**Figures and Tables (combined):** 3 (Max)

**Videos\*:** 2 (Max)

\* Playback time of all videos should be no more than 5 min - to be distributed amongst the videos as authors see fit.

**Description:** Commentary, upon Editor's invitation, discusses a paper or report or event within the past few months or so, or in the near future. It should set the problems addressed by the paper/report/event in the wider context of the field. Proposals for Commentary may be submitted; however, in this case authors should only send an outline of the proposed paper for initial consideration.

### (9) VIEWPOINT

**Word limit:** 1,200 words (Max) excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Not required. References: 10 (Max)

**Figures/tables:** 1 (Max) in total

**Description:** Viewpoints may address virtually any important topic in the field of women's health and generally are not linked to a specific article. Viewpoints should be well focused, scholarly, and clearly presented and must have no more than 3 authors.

### (10) CORRESPONDENCE

**Word limit:** 1,000 words (Max) excluding references, tables and figures

**Abstract:** Not required

**References:** 10 (Max)

**Figures/tables:** 1 (Max) in total

**Description:** Correspondences on content published in the Journal or on other topics of interest to our readers are welcomed. The journal might invite replies from the authors of the original publication, or pass on letters to these authors. Correspondence is also referred to as a Letter to the Editor. An appropriate title should be provided.

### (11) IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

**Word Limit:** Should contain no more than 150 words. No

abstracts are required.

**Title:** Should contain no more than eight words.

**Authors:** No more than two authors may be listed.

**References:** Not allowed.

**Description:** Images in Clinical Medicine are classic images of common medical conditions. Images are an important part of much of what we do and learn in medicine. This feature is intended to capture the sense of visual discovery and variety that physicians experience. Images in Clinical Medicine are not intended as a vehicle for case reports. Original, high-quality images are considered for publication (subject to editing and abridgment) provided they do not contain material that has been submitted or published elsewhere. Images in Clinical Medicine will be reviewed and decided to be accepted or not by the Editor(s)-in-chief without peer-review process. To submit an image for publication in the Journal, please follow the submission instructions below. Please include a title for your submission. The title should contain no more than eight words. No more than two authors may be listed. The maximum length is 150 words. No abstract is required.

## 3. STRUCTURE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

### (1) PREPARATION OF THE TEXT

Document structure. The text should be prepared using Microsoft Word processing software (.doc or .docx) and structured as follows:

Title page

Abstract

Keywords

Main text (see Content Specifications section above)

Tables

Legends

References

Figures

The text should be keyed double-spaced throughout. A clearly readable font should be used (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, Verdana). Font size should be 10 or 12. Pages should be numbered. Language should be English. Spelling can be British or American, but consistent throughout. Any abbreviations should be defined on first usage in the text. Terms that are mentioned less than 3 or 4 times in the text should not be abbreviated.

#### Title page

The title page should include:

1) A brief and descriptive title of the article (no

- abbreviations allowed);
- 2) A running head of no more than 60 characters including spaces;
  - 3) The full first name and last name of the author(s) (but no qualifications), and the name and location of the establishment where the work was carried out (in English);
  - 4) The name, address, telephone and/or fax numbers and the e-mail address of the corresponding author;
  - 5) The contribution made by each author should be briefly stated in the Authors' Contributions section (See "Authors' Contributions" in detail);
  - 6) Footnote section: Conflicts of Interest (See specific statement in the following Policy of Conflict of Interest);
  - 7) Acknowledgements (All sources of funding for the work should be included in this section).

### **Abstract**

The Abstract should conform to the requirements noted in the Content Specifications section above. It should not contain any abbreviations or reference citations.

### **Keywords**

Following the Abstract, 3-5 keywords should be given.

### **Main text**

The text part should be arranged into short/sharp paragraphs, which are best suited for reading on-screen. Authors are instead urged to use tables, videos and figures to explain their points. **IMPORTANT:** supporting description concerning the multimedia objects should be contained within the Legends only and **NOT** repeated in the text. The company name, city and country of any commercial material must be included at first mention within parentheses in the text.

If an article describes any procedure, technology or apparatus that is new, has not been used in the indication described, or is being used for a purpose for which it was not originally intended, it is the responsibility of the authors to ensure that all ethical committee, institutional review board, and/or governing body approval has been properly obtained. Such approval must be explicitly stated in the main text.

### **Tables**

Tables should be self-explanatory, supplementing but not duplicating the text. A brief title should be provided. Any

abbreviations used in the Tables should be defined at the bottom. Each Table should be on a separate page.

### **Legends**

Legends are required corresponding to each individual figure and video (do not repeat legend information in the text).

A list of references to the literature should be arranged sequentially following appearance in the text. Referenced articles should ideally be not older than 5 years.

Personal communications, and unpublished data should not be included in the list of references, but can be mentioned in the text.

The Vancouver system of referencing should be used (examples are given below). In the text, references should be cited using numbers in round brackets in which they appear consecutively [e.g., "cancer-related mortality (19)"; "adenocarcinoma (29,30)"]. If cited in tables or figure legends, number according to the first identification of the table or figure in the text. In the reference list, cite the names of all authors when there are three or fewer; when more than three, list the first three followed by et al.

Do not use *ibid.* or *op cit.* Reference to unpublished data and personal communications should not appear in the list but should be cited in the text only (e.g., Smith A, 2000, unpublished data). All citations mentioned in the text, tables or figures must be listed in the reference list. Journal names should be abbreviated according to Index Medicus: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals>. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the references.

To optimize hyperlinking of references to enable editors and reviewers to cross-reference online, the format and punctuation should be as given in the examples below:

### **Journals**

- [1] Angeli E, Gerelli S, Beyler C, et al. Bicuspid pulmonary valve in transposition of the great arteries: impact on outcome. *Eur J Cardiothorac Surg* 2012; 41:248-255.

### **Books**

- [2] Kouchoukos N, Blackstone E, Doty D, Hanley F, Karp R. *Cardiac Surgery*, WB Saunders, 2003:11-17.

### **Multi-author books**

- [3] Laine GA, Melhorn U, Davis KL, Allen SJ. Myocardial interstitium lymphatics: pathophysiology and effects on cardiac function. In: Reed RK, McHale NH, Bert JL, Winlowe CP, Laine GA, editors. *Interstitial*,

connective tissue and lymphatics, London: Portland Press, 1995:271-282.

#### **Online publications**

[4] Hraska V, Photiadis J, Poruban R, Asfour B. Ross-Konno operation in children . Multimed Man Cardiothorac Surg doi: 10.1510/mmcts.2008.003160.

or

[5] Thurber JS, Deb SJ, Collazo LR. Ascending-to-descending aortic bypass for coarctation of the aorta. CTSNet [published 12 May 2008, accessed 30 November 2011]. Available from: <http://www.ctsnet.org/sections/clinicalresources/adultcardiac/>

## **(2) PREPARATION OF FIGURES AND VIDEOS**

### **Figures**

Electronic artwork (photos, schematics, graphs) should be prepared to render high quality images when enlarged to full screen width. All artwork and lettering must be of professional quality.

*Specifications:* .tiff or .jpg files; resolution: 300 dots per inch; pixel screen width: 1280, grayscale for black and white, RGB for colour.

### **Videos**

WHI will accept digital files in mp4, flash video (flv.), MPEG(MPEG video file), DVD video format, mov., avi., and mww. formats or video on CD/DVD. Contributors are asked to be succinct, and the Editor-in-chief reserves the rights to require shorter video duration if necessary. Video files can be submitted with a manuscript online: <http://whi.amegroups.com/pages/view/submit-multimedia-files>.

**Duration:** Video files should be limited to 15 minutes.

**Quality:** Please set the video aspect ratio as 4:3 or 16:9 (widescreen). The original video should be of high quality. The resolution is no less than 1280\*720, the frame rate no less than 24 frames per second and the bit rate no lower than 5Mbps.

**Text in video:** All the text notes, explanations or descriptions, etc. in the video must be in English. The logo or watermark of the hospital or practice should not be included. Patient identifiers should be erased from the video.

**Video legends:** Legends for the video files should be provided. The video files should be numbered consecutively in the order of reference in the text.

## **4. PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE FIGURES AND EXTRACTS**

Permission to reproduce copyright material, for print and online publication in perpetuity, must be cleared and if necessary paid for by the author; this includes applications and payments to DACS, ARS and similar licensing agencies where appropriate. Evidence in writing that such permissions have been secured from the rights-holder must be made available to the editors. It is also the author's responsibility to include acknowledgements as stipulated by the particular institutions. Please note that obtaining copyright permission could take some time.

For a copyright prose work, it is recommended that permission is obtained for the use of extracts longer than 400 words; a series of extracts totalling more than 800 words, of which any one extract is more than 300 words; or an extract or series of extracts comprising one-quarter of the work or more.

## **5. SUBMISSIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS**

All articles are now submitted electronically, and the total review process is electronic. The electronic format is through OJS system. Accordingly, the system is well designed and functions very well with minimal difficulties.

New users will find it user friendly, but if problems arise, there is a web link to the managing editor. Just contact us ([whi@amegroups.com](mailto:whi@amegroups.com)), and we will help solve the problem. Please make sure the publication ethics (<http://www.whi.org/public/system/whi/whi-publication-ethics.pdf>) are followed strictly before your submission.

Please note that change of author information (except for grammatical errors) and retraction of manuscript are not allowed after the manuscript is accepted.

Submit via: <http://whi.amegroups.com/author/submit>

Complete the online submission form carefully and upload the following items as specified:

1. **Cover letter:** a submission letter to the Editor must be included in the 'cover letter box'.
2. **Text** (including title page, main text and tables (tables must be typed; tables should not be inserted as images) plus any embedded artwork - optional) combined into ONE word processor file (.doc) - upload as 'Manuscript file' (filename eg. text.doc).
3. **Artwork:** .jpg or .tif files prepared according to the afore-mentioned specifications. One file per figure - upload as 'Image files' (filename eg. Figure 1). Figures with composite parts A, B, C... should be mounted into one image/one electronic file.

4. **Videos:** Uploading large files (up to 200 MB) is possible if you have a good reliable Internet connection, but it will take time – upload as ‘Multimedia file’ at: <http://www.whi.org/index/author/submitMultimediaFiles>.

Alternatively send the video sequences on a DVD to the Editorial Office or transfer them via a transfer service as you know.

## 6. COPYRIGHT

All rights of the submitted article is to be transferred and assigned to AME Publishing Company, for sole right to print, publish, distribute and sell in all languages and media internationally. The transfer of copyright is deemed in effect if and when the submitted article is accepted for publication. If the submitted article contains any material already protected by prior copyright, the corresponding author will deliver to the AME Publishing Company written permission from the copyright holder, for the reproduction of the material in this article.

Permission from AME Publishing Company ([permissions@amegroups.com](mailto:permissions@amegroups.com)) is required if one would like to reuse any materials published and copyrighted. Royalty fee is exempted in case of the authors asking permission to reuse the materials (figure, tables) for non-commercial purposes.

## 7. STYLE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Manuscripts must follow the style of the Vancouver agreement detailed in the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors’ revised ‘Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication’, as presented at: <http://www.ICMJE.org/>.

**Author name:** Each author’s given name should be followed by family name. Capitalize each letter of the Family name. A hyphen could be used in Family name according to the rule in Author region Capitalize the first letter of those words/syllables that they hope to be abbreviated in their given name, otherwise, DO NOT capitalize the first letter and use a hyphen to connect it with its anterior word.

**Spelling:** The Journal uses US spelling and authors should therefore follow the latest edition of the Merriam—Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary.

**Units:** All measurements must be given in SI or SI-derived units. For more information about SI units, please go to the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM) website at: <http://www.bipm.fr>.

**Abbreviations:** Must be used sparingly—only where they ease the reader’s task by reducing repetition of long,

technical terms. Initially use the word in full, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter use the abbreviation only.

**Trade names:** Drugs should be referred to by their generic names. If proprietary drugs have been used in the study, refer to these by their generic name, mentioning the proprietary name, and the name and location of the manufacturer, in parentheses.

## 8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Authors must state that the protocol for the research project has been approved by a suitably constituted Ethics Committee of the institution within which the work was undertaken and that it conforms to the provisions of in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration as revised in 2013, available at: <http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/%20index.html>. The journal retains the right to reject any manuscript on the basis of unethical conduct of either human or animal studies. All investigations on human subjects must include a statement that the subject gave informed consent. Patient anonymity should be preserved. Photographs need to be cropped sufficiently to prevent human subjects being recognized (or an eye bar should be used).

❖ **For studies in the following categories:**

**Randomized controlled trials or other intervention research:** This category includes any study that carries out medical intervention(s) on patients or healthy individuals.

**Case-control study:** A case-control study is designed to retrospectively analyze the exposure to the risk factor of interest in subjects with known outcomes (with or without disease; dead or alive; or, with or without other pre-determined endpoints).

**Prospective cohort study:** In a prospective cohort study, patients with known exposure to a risk factor are followed and then the outcomes (with or without disease; or, dead or alive) were identified.

**Cross-sectional studies:** Cross-sectional studies are performed to investigate the occurrence of a specific disease or the status quo of a clinical condition.

**Basic or translational medical research using human specimens:**

- Authors must state whether their studies had been approved by an institutional review board (IRB) (if yes, please provide the number of approval document). For a multi-center study, IRB approval must be obtained

from each center.

- The authors must state whether all the subjects had signed the informed consent forms. For subjects under 18 years of age or those with limited capacity for civil conduct, the authors must state whether their caregivers had signed the informed consent forms.
- Also, the authors should state whether the study outcomes will affect the future management of the patients.

❖ **For other categories:**

**Retrospective and ambispective cohort studies:** In these studies, the patients' exposure to risk factor(s) were retrospectively identified, followed by the retrospective follow-up of the patients to determine the relationship between the future or current endpoints (with or without disease; or, dead or alive) and the exposure.

- For studies in this category, authors must state whether their study had been approved by an institutional review board (IRB) (if yes, please provide the number of approval document). For a multi-center study, IRB approval must be obtained from each center.
- Also, the authors should state whether the study outcomes will affect the future management of the patients.
- The authors must state whether all the subjects had signed the informed consent forms before enrollment. For subjects under 18 years of age or those with limited capacity for consent, the authors must state whether their caregivers had signed the informed consent forms. For deceased patients or those who had lost capacity for consent, the informed consent forms could be signed by their family members or caregivers. For studies on patient data retrieved from hospital medical record system or social insurance systems, an informed consent form is not required; however, the authors still need to declare whether the patient's personal data have been secured.

**Systematic review and meta-analysis, review, opinion, hypothesis, and editorial**

- No statement on medical ethics is required.

**Case report and visualized surgery/procedure:**

- No statement on medical ethics is required. However, in cases of involving new and controversial treatments, approval from IRC might be required.
- Informed consent must be obtained from the subjects

or their caregivers.

**Diagnostic accuracy tests:** These studies are performed to evaluate the efficiency of a specific index test in disease diagnosis.

- For studies in this category, authors must state whether their study had been approved by an institutional review board (IRB) (if yes, please provide the number of approval document). For a multi-center study, IRB approval must be obtained from each center.
- Also, the authors should state whether the study outcomes will affect the future management of the patients.
- If the study has a prospective design: the authors must state whether all the subjects had signed the informed consent forms before enrollment. For subjects under 18 years of age or those with limited capacity for civil conduct, the authors must state whether their caregivers had signed the informed consent forms. However, for retrospective studies based on a hospital medical record system, no informed consent is required.

**Nested case-control study:** In a nested case-control study, the patients were followed up after the biological samples are obtained from the subjects, and then a subset of patients are chosen for the analysis.

If the study has a prospective design:

- Authors must state whether their study had been approved by an institutional review board (IRB) (if yes, please provide the number of approval document). For a multi-center study, IRB approval must be obtained from each center.
- Also, the authors should state whether the study outcomes will affect the future management of the patients.
- The authors must state whether all the subjects have signed the informed consent forms before they enter the study, no matter whether they enter the final analysis. For subjects under 18 years of age or those with limited capacity for civil conduct, the authors must state whether their caregivers had signed the informed consent forms.

If the study is based on a previously available specimen bank, the authors must:

- State whether the specimen bank had been approved by the IRB upon its establishment;

- State whether all the subjects had signed the informed consent forms during the establishment of the bank (attached with the numbers of approval documents).

**Post hoc analysis:** In a post hoc analysis, the authors re-examines the currently available data from different perspectives.

- The authors need to state whether the previous studies had been approved by the local medical ethics committee(s)
- Also, it is important to state whether all the subjects had signed the informed consent forms in the previous studies.

For more information on statement of ethics, please feel free to consult our editorial staff.

## 9. INFORMED CONSENT

Identifying information, including names, initials, or hospital numbers, should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, or pedigrees unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or parent or guardian) gives written informed consent for publication. Informed consent is required for **Case reports, original articles and surgical videos**. The statement should be included in the footnote.

It may be possible to publish without explicit consent if the report is important to public health (or is in some other way important); consent would be unusually burdensome to obtain; and a reasonable individual would be unlikely to object to publication (all three conditions must be met).

## 10. AUTHORS' RESPONSIBILITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORM

### (1) Authors' responsibility

We ask all authors to confirm that: 1) they have not previously published or have not submitted the same manuscript elsewhere, 2) they took a significant part in the work and approved the final version of the manuscript, 3) they have complied with ethical standards, 4) they agree to allow the AME publishing company to get a license to publish the accepted article when the manuscript is accepted, and 5) they have obtained all necessary permissions to publish any figures or tables in the manuscript, and assure that the authors will pay for Article Processing Charges (WHI).

### (2) Conflict of Interest

Our journal complies with the International Committee of

Medical Journal Editors' uniform requirements on Conflict of Interest statement.

Conflict of Interest exists when an author (or the author's institution), reviewer, or editor has financial or personal relationships with other persons or organizations that inappropriately influence (bias) his or her actions. The existence of such relationships does not necessarily represent true conflict of interest. The potential for conflict of interest can exist whether or not an individual believes that the relationship affects their judgment. Financial relationships (such as employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patents) are the most easily identifiable conflicts of interest and the most likely to undermine the credibility of the journal, the authors, and of science itself (<http://www.icmje.org/index.html>).

### 1). Participants

All participants in the peer-review and publication process—not only authors but also peer reviewers, editors, and editorial board members of journals—must consider their conflicts of interest when fulfilling their roles in the process of article review and publication and must disclose all relationships that could be viewed as potential conflicts of interest.

#### a. Authors

When authors submit a manuscript of any type or format they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships that might bias or be seen to bias their work.

#### b. Peer Reviewers

Reviewers should be asked at the time they are asked to critique a manuscript if they have conflicts of interest that could complicate their review. Reviewers must disclose to editors any conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the manuscript, and should recuse themselves from reviewing specific manuscripts if the potential for bias exists. Reviewers must not use knowledge of the work they're reviewing before its publication to further their own interests.

#### c. Editors and Journal Staff

Editors who make final decisions about manuscripts should recuse themselves from editorial decisions if they have conflicts of interest or relationships that pose potential conflicts related to articles under consideration. Other editorial staff members who participate in editorial



decisions must provide editors with a current description of their financial interests or other conflicts (as they might relate to editorial judgments) and recuse themselves from any decisions in which a conflict of interest exists. Editorial staff must not use information gained through working with manuscripts for private gain. Editors should publish regular disclosure statements about potential conflicts of interests related to the commitments of journal staff. Guest editors should follow these same procedures.

## 2). Reporting Conflicts of Interest

Articles should be published with statements or supporting documents, declaring:

- Authors' conflicts of interest; and
- Sources of support for the work, including sponsor names along with explanations of the role of those sources if any in study design; collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; writing of the report; the decision to submit the report for publication; or a statement declaring that the supporting source had no such involvement; and
- Whether the authors had access to the study data, with an explanation of the nature and extent of access, including whether access is on-going.

To support the above statements, editors may request that authors of a study sponsored by a funder with a proprietary or financial interest in the outcome sign a statement, such as "I had full access to all of the data in this study and I take complete responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis."

If there is conflict of interest for the authors, authors must state conflict of interest based on the actual condition; if there is no conflict of interest, state conflict of interest section as the following format: the authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

## 11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing or language editing assistance, or a department chairperson who provided only general support. Financial and material support should also be acknowledged.

WHI policy requires that all authors of all manuscripts sign a statement revealing: 1) Any financial interest in or arrangement with a company whose product was used in a study or is referred to in an article, 2) Any financial

interest in or arrangement with a competing company, 3) Any other financial connections, direct or indirect, or other situations that might raise the question of bias in the work reported or the conclusions, implications or opinions stated including pertinent commercial, governmental, private or other sources of funding for the individual author(s) or for the affiliated department(s) or organization(s), personal relationships, or direct academic competition. Statements related to study design, such as providers of the drugs used in the study should be indicated in the Methods section of the article, and other financial interests which are not directly related to carrying out the study should be stated in the Acknowledgements.

When there is no one to be acknowledged, authors should also indicate Acknowledgements as "None".

## 12. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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