

Cardiovascular Research Network
CVRN PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

August 14, 2008

I. MEMBERSHIP AND SPECIFIC DUTIES

A. Membership

The Publications Committee consists of members selected from the CVRN Steering Committee. It shall be comprised of the same members as the New Proposals Committee and will meet coincident with the New Proposals Committee. The Committee will be chaired by at least one member of the CVRN Executive Committee.

B. Specific duties

The specific duties of the Publications Committee are as follows:

- Track the number and status of CVRN-related and leveraged scientific papers and abstracts
- Develop and update authorship guidelines consistent with internationally accepted criteria for authorship
- Review CVRN manuscripts and accepted abstracts
- Assure that the CVRN is appropriately acknowledged and described in manuscripts and accepted abstracts

C. Schedule

The Publications Committee shall meet no less than quarterly to carry out the duties specified above in Section I.B.. A report to the Steering Committee shall be provided at least semi-annually.

The report to the Steering Committee shall include a list of manuscripts and accepted abstracts reviewed by the Publications Committee during the previous 6-month period.

II. PROCEDURES TO FOSTER A HIGH VOLUME OF HIGH QUALITY SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

A. Advocacy

On a periodic basis, the Publications Committee shall request time on the Steering Committee agenda to publicize the need for papers. The duties of Site and Project Investigators to recruit lead authors will be stressed at that time.

B. Responsibilities of CVRN writing groups

With multiple authors located in multiple institutions, manuscript development can be challenging. The purpose of this guideline is to outline the roles and expectations for Project PIs, as well as lead authors and co-authors once a writing group has been formed to develop a manuscript for publication.

Responsibilities of the Project Principal Investigator. The responsibilities of the Project PIs with respect to forming writing groups are as follows:

- Select the lead author early during project development in a manner agreed upon by the project investigators.
- To the extent possible, identify opportunities for interested investigators to take the lead on writing projects.
- Equitably assign project investigators to the writing groups.
- Encourage the appropriate representation of investigators from CVRN sites on scientific papers.
- Encourage junior-level investigators to participate on writing groups.
- Find experienced mentors to assist junior-level investigators leading writing groups.
- Regularly monitor the progress of writing groups.

Responsibilities of the Lead Author. The lead author has overall responsibility for organizing the writing group and completing the manuscript in a reasonable amount of time. Specific duties include:

- Upon request, informing the Project PI about the progress of the writing group.
- Managing communications for the writing group.
- Identifying an appropriate mechanism for sharing drafts and using it consistently.
- Writing a detailed outline of the paper or presentation.
- Coordinating the development of a written data request (if necessary).
- Coordinating the writing of each section of the manuscript.
- Combining all sections of the manuscript into a completed paper.

- Monitoring all controversies in the writing group, documenting subsequent decisions, and discussing these decisions with the other authors.
- Coordinating the final editing and approval of the paper by all authors.
- Determining the order of authorship based on the relative contributions of each co-author.
- Shepherding the final draft of the paper or presentation through the Publications Committee review.
- Submitting the approved manuscript for review by a journal or professional group.
- Coordinating the response to reviewers.
- Providing reasonable deadlines for each review/revision and promoting an understanding among collaborators that these will be adhered to unless scheduling issues are discussed with the lead author prior to a review deadline.

Responsibilities of co-authors. Co-authors are expected to actively participate in all aspects of the writing process. Specific responsibilities include:

- Participating actively in all writing group meetings.
- Reasonably considering appropriate writing assignments and deadlines.
- Promptly completing all writing assignments.
- Promptly responding to requests for review and editing of manuscript drafts.
- Working cooperatively with the other authors in resolving disagreements.
- Taking responsibility for the accuracy and content of the final manuscript in its entirety.
- Promptly responding to recommended revisions from peer review.

C. The writing process

The Publications Committee encourages early deliberation about papers that are likely to result from a research project, with designation of a leader or first author for each paper. We further encourage open discussion among co-authors of each paper about the order of authorship early in the research process, *with final decisions made by the first author*. We recognize that final authorship order may change during the writing and editing of the paper - it is the responsibility of the lead author to communicate such changes to the writing group. In the event of disagreements regarding authorship on a given manuscript, the Project PI or Publications Committee will arbitrate the dispute.

The lead author should schedule regular meetings of the writing group, either in person or via telephone conference call. Lead authors will be responsible for finding the resources for scheduling and conducting these meetings. In some cases

project funds may be available for conference calls, in other cases the lead author will need to find other resources for conference calls. Each member of the writing group is expected to participate in the conference calls and to promptly complete their writing and editing assignments.

Most of the work of the writing groups will be conducted off-line, with individuals and small working groups taking responsibility for various tasks such as preparing a data request, literature reviews, writing sections of the manuscript, etc. Writing, editing, and discussion of the paper will continue until the lead author feels that the paper is ready for submission. At times there may be methodologies or analytic disagreements that are difficult to resolve through the editing process. The Project PI will serve as mediator for any issues where necessary. If an author cannot agree with the final consensus then they may withdraw authorship, recognizing that the paper will still go forward as a CVRN paper.

D. Responsibilities of PIs of CVRN spinoff studies (i.e., separately funded studies that include a CVRN component, core, or other element).

The long-term viability of the CVRN is dependent on its ability to demonstrate its impact, including those studies not funded under the core award. PIs of separately funded grants that include a CVRN component accept and acknowledge their responsibility to inform the Publications Committee of their publications. All such publications must adhere to recommendations of the Publications Committee regarding the description and acknowledgement of the CVRN.

III. AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES

The CVRN Publications Committee may be called upon to adjudicate disputes regarding authorship. This may need to occur when project investigators and the Project PI cannot come to agreement regarding authorship of a particular manuscript. In such cases, Publications Committee members with an apparent conflict of interest will not participate in the deliberations. Investigators who are not satisfied with the decision of the Publications Committee have the option of bringing their dispute to the CVRN Steering Committee.

Project PIs should offer all CVRN sites that contribute data or which have other links to the study the opportunity to have site-based investigators participate in the research process leading to the development of manuscripts as early as possible, so these investigators can meet the accepted standards for authorship.

The following statement of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors should be used as the guiding standard in dealing with authorship issues in the CVRN. A complete version of that document may be found at <http://www.icmje.org>.

“All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the content.

Authorship credit should be based only on substantial contributions to (1) conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data; and to (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and on (3) final approval of the version to be published. Conditions 1, 2, and 3 must all be met. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not justify authorship. General supervision of the research group is not sufficient for authorship. Any part of an article critical to its main conclusions must be the responsibility of at least one author. Editors may ask authors to describe what each contributed; this information may be published.

Increasingly, multicenter trials are attributed to a corporate author. All members of the group who are named as authors, either in the authorship position below the title or in a footnote, should fully meet the above criteria for authorship. Group members who do not meet these criteria should be listed, with their permission, in the acknowledgments or in an appendix.

The order of authorship should be a joint decision of the co-authors. Because the order is assigned in different ways, its meaning cannot be inferred accurately unless it is stated by the authors. Authors may wish to explain the order of authorship in a footnote. In deciding on the order, authors should be aware that many journals limit the number of authors listed in the table of contents and that the US National Library of Medicine (NLM) lists in MEDLINE the first 24 plus the last author, when there are more than 25 authors.”

All persons designated as authors on CVRN publications should fulfill the three criteria of authorship listed above. These criteria provide an inclusive rather than exclusive approach to authorship, but rightfully exclude “guest” authors. Furthermore, CVRN publications should not have “ghost” authors, persons who made substantial contributions to a research project or wrote substantial portions of a manuscript without attribution.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR MANUSCRIPT REVIEW BY THE CVRN PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

A. Overview

At the request of the CVRN Steering Committee, current CVRN guidelines require that all papers from the CVRN research program be reviewed by the Publications Committee. This review must occur before submission for review by a scientific journal or other source of publication. The CVRN publication policy may be found on the program web site. Anyone planning to write a CVRN paper should read the policy before starting. The procedures presented here will be used by the Publications Committee in performing its review.

All accepted abstracts will also be reviewed by the Publications Committee. Abstracts and draft presentations should be submitted for review at least 10 business days prior to the date of presentation.

B. Submission of manuscripts and accepted abstracts to the Publications Committee

Manuscripts, accepted abstracts, and draft presentations to be reviewed by the Publications Committee should be sent electronically to the chair(s) of the Publications Committee.

C. Review criteria

The Publications Committee reviews manuscripts to ensure that the following binding criteria are met:

- The Project PI has approved the paper.
- Each health plan name and research center name appear according to the site PI's preference.
- Clear affiliation with the CVRN is acknowledged and adequately described. CVRN affiliated projects are expected to include the following sentence in the methods section: "This study was conducted within the Cardiovascular Research Network, a consortium of research organizations affiliated with the HMO Research Network and sponsored by the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) (U19 HL91179-01)."
- No conflicts with other CVRN papers or writing groups.
- No serious or major scientific flaws in study design or data interpretation.

With respect to the last point, the Publications Committee may provide content feedback and suggestions for the authors, but these comments generally will not

influence the Committee's decision to approve or disapprove the manuscript. However, if the Committee believes that the manuscript contains flaws in methodology or interpretation of data that are sufficiently serious that they reflect negatively on the scientific integrity of the CVRN, then the manuscript will be disapproved. If the author disagrees with this disapproval, the issue and decision may be discussed with members of the Publications Committee or brought before the CVRN Steering Committee for resolution.

D. Time for review

The Publications Committee will make every effort to review papers, accepted abstracts, and draft presentations within 10 business days of receipt..

E. Review Structure

Two members of the Publications Committee, assigned on a rotating basis, will review each submitted paper. These Committee members will share their review comments with all other Committee members. All Committee members will have the option of reviewing a selected manuscript or accepted abstract. Committee members are asked to review papers within seven business days of receipt, and the Committee Chair(s) will make the approval decision based on the available comments.

F. NHLBI Publication Policies

In order to stay informed of findings from large studies and to prepare for press queries, NHLBI's Division of Prevention and Population Sciences requests, as a courtesy, that the Project Officer receive copies of manuscripts at the time of journal acceptance or before, particularly for "high-profile" papers. "High profile" papers generally include the following:

- Main results papers or key secondary results papers from clinical trials;
- Papers with direct clinical implications, particularly if they impact NHLBI policies (e.g., for hypertension control);
- Papers on potentially sensitive topics (e.g., on the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and blood pressure);
- Papers published in high impact journals, such as NEJM, JAMA, and Lancet.

G. NIH Public Access Policy

In accordance with federal law, the NIH requires the submission of all published articles resulting from NIH-funded research to PubMed Central. Please refer to the following website for additional information relating to the NIH public access policy - <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>

H. Appeals

As stated above in the CVRN Publications Policies, decisions of the Publications Committee can be discussed directly with Publications Committee members and appealed to the Steering Committee.

V. CONTACTING THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Routine communications should be sent to the CVRN Project Director. An additional contact is the Chair of the Publications Committee.

APPENDIX: Description of the CVRN

To ensure correct and consistent description of the CVRN aims, the member health plans and research organizations, please use the following text.

"This study was conducted within the Cardiovascular Research Network, a consortium of research organizations affiliated with the HMO Research Network and sponsored by the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (U19 HL91179-01)."

The following paragraphs can be used in the acknowledgements or methods sections of papers.

"The Cardiovascular Research Network (CVRN) consists of the research programs, enrollee populations and databases of 15 integrated healthcare organizations that are members of the HMO Research Network. The health care delivery systems participating in the CVRN are: Kaiser Permanente Northern CA, Kaiser Permanente Colorado, Fallon Community Health Plan, Group Health Cooperative, Geisinger Health System, Henry Ford Health System, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, HealthPartners, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, Kaiser Permanente Northwest, Kaiser Permanente Southeast, Kaiser Permanente Southern California, Lovelace Health Systems, Marshfield Clinic, and Scott & White Health Plan. The 15 health plans, with over 10 million enrollees, are distinguished by their long-standing commitment to prevention and research, and collaboration among themselves and with affiliated academic institutions.

The *overall goal* of the CVRN is to provide insights into cardiovascular disease epidemiology and management and to increase the effectiveness of preventive, curative and supportive interventions that span the natural history of cardiovascular conditions among diverse populations and health systems, through a program of collaborative research. This overarching aim of the CVRN, coupled with the expertise of the investigative team, and geographically-dispersed population base, fosters efficient and effective research on cardiovascular epidemiology and variations in cardiovascular prevention and treatment policies and practices."