

GUIDELINES FOR PEER REVIEWERS

Medicare & Medicaid Research Review (MMRR) will consider for publication manuscripts that report original health care research, program evaluations, and analyses of major policy issues. As a definitive source for peer-reviewed research on the Medicare, Medicaid, and Children’s Health Insurance programs, MMRR will not exclude from consideration manuscripts where the study results are presented in an existing government-funded research deliverable.

All manuscripts published in MMRR are subjected to a formal peer review process, involving at least two external reviewers. We use a “double blind” review process, in that the author is not identified to the reviewers and the reviewers are not identified to the author. In the event that you recognize the article as the probable work of a particular person, please do not attempt to contact the author to discuss the manuscript.

An unpublished manuscript is a privileged document. We are asking that you review and handle manuscripts in the strictest of confidence. We therefore, specifically ask that you please observe the following restrictions:

1. Do not reproduce the manuscript in any form.
2. Do not distribute or circulate the manuscript, even when recommending an alternate reviewer.
3. Do not quote from or cite any text, notes, tables, figures, or any part of the draft. This applies to all forms of communication including: oral, written, and electronic.
4. Do not cite the manuscript or refer to the work it describes before it has been published.

Reviewers also are expected to refrain from using the information the manuscript contains for the advancement of their own research.

Process

Authors submit manuscripts to the MMRR editors. Manuscripts are scanned for completeness and appropriateness to the scope of the journal. Any questions of appropriateness are referred to the Editor-in-Chief who will determine whether to return the manuscript or retain it for review. MMRR editors submit the manuscript’s abstract and a request for review to

appropriate experts in the peer reviewer pool. If an expert accepts the review assignment, the entire manuscript is sent.

Immediately upon receipt of a manuscript

Please re-read the request for review and determine whether you can complete the review within the requested time frame (usually 21 days). Also read the author's cover letter and the abstract to determine whether there is any conflict of interest with you and the authors, their institution, or funding sources that may not allow you to judge the manuscript objectively. Scan the abstract and manuscript to determine whether the topic falls within the scope of MMRR. If you believe that you cannot complete the review appropriately, please contact the [MMRR editors](#) for instruction. They may extend the review deadline, ask you for a suggested alternative reviewer, or review again the fit of the manuscript with MMRR's scope.

Reviewing a manuscript

Please strive to adopt a positive, impartial, yet critical attitude toward the manuscript under review. Your position should be that of the author's ally, with the aim of promoting effective and accurate scientific communication. In preparing comments intended for the author's eyes, please present criticism dispassionately and avoid abrasive comments.

Your criticism, arguments, and suggestions concerning the manuscript will be most useful to the author if they are carefully explained. We ask that you critique the manuscript, including exhibits and references, in terms of substance, originality, validity, clarity, significance, and for policy implications and/or policy relevancy. Please identify any problems or concerns you find in the manuscript, explain why you believe the manuscript is incorrect, and if possible, briefly explain what the authors might or should do to address your concerns.

Peer reviewers are not required to correct deficiencies in style or mistakes in grammar, but we will appreciate any help you can offer in drawing attention to unclear or ambiguous passages, suggesting reorganization, or pointing out the need for condensing particular passages. After technical and professional review, and if the manuscript is accepted for publication, it will be edited for style, grammar, spelling, and construction by our editorial staff.

MMRR values peer reviewer recommendations. However, because editorial decisions are usually based on evaluations derived from several

sources, a reviewer should not expect MMRR to honor every recommendation presented in a review. For that reason, please make comments about the acceptability of a manuscript only in the confidential comments to the editors. Please distinguish between revisions considered essential and those merely desirable. Do not express suggested revisions as conditions of acceptance.

Completing your review

When you have completed your review, please return your written comments and the “Recommendation Sheet” to: MMRR-Editors@cms.hhs.gov.