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1 Editorial roles during the peer review process

Editorial roles will vary between the Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs). Below is a general guide to editorial roles during the peer review process.

1.1 Role of the Managing Editor

The CRG Managing Editor (sometimes in collaboration with other CRG staff, including Assistant Managing Editor or Editorial Assistant) is responsible for managing the peer review process, including:

- selecting and inviting suitable peer reviewers, according to the Cochrane policy on peer review (e.g. using workflows in Archie or other CRG-specific systems);
- for DTA protocols and Reviews, liaising with the DTA Editorial Team, to ensure that the DTA editorial process is followed;
- keeping accurate records of the peer review process, including who has been invited and when, and recording all permissions and conflict of interest statements, compliant with the Data Protection Policy (e.g. using workflows in Archie or other CRG-specific systems);
- providing deadlines for receipt of comments (e.g. via email or automated prompts from the Archie workflow);
- providing suitable materials (e.g. guidance on peer review, peer review checklist, etc., via email, workflows in Archie or links to the CRG or EPPR website);
- ensuring that all peer reviewers have provided a "Potential conflict of interest" statement (e.g. via email);
- sending reminders for late reports (e.g. via email or automated prompts from the Archie workflow);
- collating peer review comments;
- dealing with all communication relating to the peer review process (e.g. via Archie workflows or email);
- maintaining a list of CRG peer reviewers to be published on the CRG website on an annual basis;
- collating and sending feedback to peer reviewers (e.g. via email or workflows in Archie);
- raising any concerns with the CRG Editor or Co-Ed.

1.2 Role of the Co-ordinating Editor

The CRG Co-ordinating Editor (or, in some cases, responsibility is delegated to an Editor or Contact Editor) is responsible for oversight of the peer review process, for example:

- ensuring that peer review is conducted according to current Cochrane policy;
- ensuring that the CRG-specific peer review procedures are up to date and published on the CRG website;
- evaluating the final draft of the Cochrane Review and ensuring that it is ready for external peer review;
- suggesting appropriate peer reviewers;
- reviewing the collated peer review reports and, based upon these reports, advising the Cochrane Review authors how to revise the manuscript;
- ensuring that all relevant peer review comments have been addressed by the authors;
- raising any concerns with the Editor in Chief.

1.3 Role of the Cochrane Editor-in-Chief

The Editor in Chief is responsible for all content in the Cochrane Library and therefore has the following role in peer review of articles included in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR):

- ensuring that the Cochrane policy on peer review is up to date and in-line with international conventions;
- supporting CRG Co-ordinating Editors in making decisions relating to peer review;
- adjudicating on matters relating to peer review;

- raising any concerns with the appropriate external body; for example, institutions and funders;
- delegating any of the above roles to appropriate members of the Editorial and Methods Department.

2 Peer reviewer conduct

Peer reviewers are requested to be aware of, and to follow, the [Committee on Publication Ethics' Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers](#). In summary, peer reviewers should:

- only agree to review manuscripts for which they have the subject expertise required to carry out a proper assessment and which they can assess in a timely manner;
- respect the confidentiality of peer review and not reveal any details of a manuscript or its review, during or after the peer-review process, beyond those that are released by the journal;
- not use information obtained during the peer-review process for their own or any other person's or organization's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others;
- declare all potential conflicting interests, seeking advice from the journal if they are unsure whether something constitutes a relevant interest;
- not allow their reviews to be influenced by the origins of a manuscript, by the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, or by commercial considerations;
- be objective and constructive in their reviews, refraining from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libellous or derogatory personal comments;
- acknowledge that peer review is largely a reciprocal endeavour and undertake to carry out their fair share of reviewing and in a timely manner;
- provide personal and professional information that is accurate and a true representation of their expertise;
- recognize that impersonation of another individual during the review process is considered serious misconduct.