

# Example Authorship and Acknowledgement Guidelines

## 1 Purpose of this document

Publishing and presenting information from our practice and research is an important way to disseminate information to broader groups, including fellow population health practitioners and academics. These guidelines are for published reports and peer-reviewed papers, as well as work disseminated via conference presentations.

These guidelines, and the key documents upon which they are based, should be referred to by project/service teams when discussing the publication of material derived from their project/service. This should commence as soon as feasible in the project/service and is the responsibility of the project/service leader.

## 2 Key documents outlining criteria for authorship and acknowledgement

The criteria for authorship and acknowledgement outlined in this document are based upon the following statements and guidelines:

- Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice (<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research/general/nhmrcavc.htm>);
- Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors) (<http://www.icmje.org/#author>);
- JAMA Authorship Responsibility, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer and Acknowledgement (<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/data/291/1/125/DC1/1>).

In summary, these documents state that authorship should be based only on substantial intellectual contributions to each of the following paper writing stages:

1. Conception and design, and/or acquisition of data, and/or analysis and interpretation of data;
2. Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and,
3. Final approval of the version to be published.

## 3 Determining authorship

### 3.1. What it means?

Authorship means that your name appears on the by-line of a published paper and will be listed whenever the paper is referenced.

### 3.2. How and when it is decided?

Authorship should be discussed between researchers at an EARLY stage in any project/service, or as soon as it is decided that a paper will be written. A contribution plan

should be developed which documents the contributions each researcher will make in order to justify their status as an author. Authorship and contribution plans should be reviewed whenever there are changes in participation.

The trial research Director will arrange for paper dissemination meetings biannually for the research team to identify and prioritise and track research papers to be produced using trial data. All members of the trial advisory group will be invited to participate in the meetings. Opportunities will be provided during these meetings for Advisory Group members to express an interest in leading or co-authoring research papers and authorship lists will be confirmed at each Advisory Group meeting. In principle, research papers should include representatives from each of the partner organisations (X, Y, Z, G).

All identified by-line authors must be provided with the opportunity to honour their contribution, for instance, be sent drafts upon which to comment.

### **3.3. What is required for authorship?**

At the very least, each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the portion of the research that is their area of expertise. All authors must confirm this contribution in writing prior to manuscript submission.

Authorship of a paper is not the automatic right of anyone involved in the project/service. The following things ALONE do NOT justify authorship on a paper:

- Acquisition of funding (eg being an investigator on a grant)
- Collection of the data
- Working on the project/service (eg being part of the implementation team)
- Assisting with the analysis and/or preparation of project/service reports
- General supervision of the research group

However, people that have been involved in these various stages of the projects/services may indeed become authors, and should be consulted in the process of determining who will be involved in writing the paper. If a person involved in the project/service does not meet the requirement for authorship, they may still be included as an acknowledgment (refer to section 4 of this document).

The following checklist should be used to determine who will be an author. No person who satisfies this checklist should be excluded without their written permission.

### **3.4. Authorship Checklist**

In order for an individual to qualify for authorship, at least one box per section must be checked.

1. I have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for:

- Part of the content
- The whole content

2. I have made substantial intellectual contributions to the:

- Conception and design

- Acquisition of data
- Analysis and interpretation of data

3. I have made substantial intellectual contributions to the:

- Drafting of the manuscript
- Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content

4. I have made substantial intellectual contributions to the:

- Statistical analysis
- Obtaining funding
- Administrative, technical, or material support
- Supervision
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Each author listed in the by-line of a published manuscript should have provided approval of the version to be published.

### **3.5. Order of authors**

In general, the author who has contributed the major amount of work, as indicated by the checklist, should be first author.

The order of the remaining authors should be a joint decision of the group. The number of checks against the list above per author may provide assist in this decision-making.

As a general guide:

- For papers that will form all or part of a post-graduate student (including Honours) thesis, the student should be the first author, unless someone else in the team has made a greater contribution;
- For projects/services in which someone is being mentored to write a paper, it would be expected that the mentee would be the first author in many cases, unless someone else in the team has made a greater contribution.

Some journals now require one or more authors to take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, "guarantor/s". The first author should be the/one of the "guarantor/s". The corresponding author (may not be first author, although this is generally the case) and "guarantor/s" should be prepared and able to explain the presence and order of authors listed.

### **3.6. Resolving disputes over authorship**

If disagreements about authorship arise, the project/service team should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve these internally. If a solution cannot be reached, the issue should be discussed with the grant CIA and the Policy Agency Director.

## 4 Use of acknowledgements

The acknowledgement is a paragraph written by the authors to thank other persons or organisations for their contribution to the project/service, paper or report. Persons who are acknowledged are not listed when a paper is referenced.

Funding and support from all partner organisations should be included in acknowledgement section of all RCT related papers.

Suggested wording:

*The research team acknowledges funding and support from the X, Y, Z, G.*

The logos of partner organisations should appear on the cover page of any conference presentation slides.

Where authors believe that others have contributed considerably to the work, but not at a level that satisfies authorship, the first author may recognise this input via acknowledgement. This may be relevant for:

- Persons who have contributed intellectually to the research content but whose contributions do not justify authorship. This could apply to a policy agency staff member, a project/service collaborator, or someone who reviewed a draft;
- Those who, as project/service team members, have provided specialised support without necessarily contributing intellectually. This may apply to project officers, programmers, statisticians, interviewers and administrative assistants.

Individuals or organisations that contribute financially to a project/service should always be acknowledged. Always check all relevant documents (contracts, memorandums of understanding etc) to ensure appropriate acknowledgement is provided.

The first author must ensure that written permission to acknowledge is gained from any person or organization proposed for acknowledgment and that those who are acknowledged receive a copy of the final paper or, as a minimum, a copy of the acknowledgement itself.

## 5 Reviewing manuscripts

The authorship team delegated by the advisory group will jointly plan and implement paper review timelines appropriate to the scale and nature of the review task

Adapted from guidelines originally developed in 1993 by Hunter Centre for Health Advancement (HCHA), University of Newcastle (Discipline of Behavioural Science in Relation to Medicine) and the Cancer Education Research Program (CERP). Revised in 2008 by Hunter New England Population Health .

Authorship checklist based on JAMA Authorship Responsibility, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer and Acknowledgement, JAMA, January 7, 2004- Vol 291, No. 1 (<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/data/291/1/125/DC1/1>).