## Scientific Publication Authorship Guidance

Authorship discussions should begin when a project is being developed; don’t wait until the analysis is completed: authorship roles help define who-does-what for idea development, obtaining funding, coordinating analyses, and drafting the manuscript. The first and senior author, in particular, should be established at the project’s beginning and confirmed in writing, such as an email. This establishes a clear understanding and a basis for future modification if roles change during the project.

### Common Authorship Criteria and Roles

First author (some journals allow co-first-authors):

* Leads or co-leads *concept creation*
* Usually leads or co-leads *securing resources*/funding for the study/analysis
* Leads or co-leads *analytic plan development* and coordinates execution
* Takes primary responsibility for *creating first draft of manuscript* and tables
* Co-shares primary *accountability for accuracy and content*

Second author:

* Co-leads or assists with concept creation
* Co-leads or assists with analytic plan development and coordinated execution
* Takes secondary responsibility for creating first draft of manuscript and tables

Other authors:

* Assist with concept creation AND/OR
* Assist with analytic plan development and execution
* Assist with manuscript creation AND/OR detailed review/editing

Senior author:

* Co-leads or assists with concept creation; often leads a group or team
* Usually leads or co-leads securing resources/funding for the study/analysis
* Co-leads or assists with analytic plan development and coordinated execution
* Takes primary responsibility, with the first author, for working with primary writing group on manuscript, graphs, and tables for format, content, and clarity
* Takes secondary responsibility, with the first author, for *detailed manuscript and table editing, prior to full author group distribution.* The goal is as publication-ready a presentation as feasible for next-step distribution to other authors for further review.
* *Co-shares primary accountability for accuracy and content with first author*

Collaborators or in acknowledgements:

* Participant recruitment alone
* Development of databases, without involvement in other efforts that define authorship
* Editorial or other logistical support
* Developed clinical programs under analysis but no other activities that define authorship

**Author Description Formats**

**Using a department (examples):**

Investigator/Author:

Division/Department/Section: Department of Surgery, The Permanente Medical Group\*

Organization/Institution: Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Location: Oakland, California (for regional offices) or can use specific medical center city

**Using a research group name (example):**

Investigator/Author:

Division/Department/Section: The Clinical Research on Emergency Services & Treatments (CREST) Network, The Permanente Medical Group\*

Organization/Institution: Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Location: Oakland, California (for regional offices) or can use specific medical center city

**Using a clinical group name (example):**

Investigator/Author:

Division/Department/Section: The Prevent Heart Attacks and Strokes Everyday (PHASE) program, The Permanente Medical Group\*

Organization/Institution: Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Location: Oakland, California (for regional offices) or can use specific medical center city

\*NOTE: If space limitations for full description as above, first preference would be “The Permanente Medical Group” under Division/Department/Section

**For people from non-TPMG divisions (or ones that are mixed TPMG/KFH)**

**Resident/Fellow (example**) – The usual approach is:

Resident / Fellow Author:

Department: PGY-2, Internal Medicine Residency Program

Organization / Institution: Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Location: Oakland, California

At least one of the other authors or the senior author will be a physician:

Examples as above, such as for “department”

**Division of Research (example):**

Investigator/Author:

Division/Department/Section: Division of Research\*

Organization/Institution: Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Location: Oakland, California

\*For MD Researchers, consider Division of Research, The Permanente Medical Group if journal format allows

### APPENDIX For Additional Reference

### International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Authorship Guidelines

An excerpt is below; the full guidelines can be found at http://www.icmje.org/.

#### 1. Why Authorship Matters

Authorship confers credit and has important academic, social, and financial implications. Authorship also implies responsibility and accountability for published work. The following recommendations are intended to ensure that contributors who have made substantive intellectual contributions to a paper are given credit as authors, but also that contributors credited as authors understand their role in taking responsibility and being accountable for what is published.

Because authorship does not communicate what contributions qualified an individual to be an author, some journals now request and publish information about the contributions of each person named as having participated in a submitted study, at least for original research. Editors are strongly encouraged to develop and implement a contributorship policy. Such policies remove much of the ambiguity surrounding contributions, but leave unresolved the question of the quantity and quality of contribution that qualify an individual for authorship. The ICMJE has thus developed criteria for authorship that can be used by all journals, including those that distinguish authors from other contributors.

#### 2. Who Is an Author?

The ICMJE recommends that authorship be based on the following 4 criteria:

* Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
* Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
* Final approval of the version to be published; AND
* Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. In addition, authors should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors.

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged—see Section II.A.3 below. These authorship criteria are intended to reserve the status of authorship for those who deserve credit and can take responsibility for the work. The criteria are not intended for use as a means to disqualify colleagues from authorship who otherwise meet authorship criteria by denying them the opportunity to meet criterion #s 2 or 3. Therefore, all individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting, and final approval of the manuscript.

The individuals who conduct the work are responsible for identifying who meets these criteria and ideally should do so when planning the work, making modifications as appropriate as the work progresses. It is the collective responsibility of the authors, not the journal to which the work is submitted, to determine that all people named as authors meet all four criteria; it is not the role of journal editors to determine who qualifies or does not qualify for authorship or to arbitrate authorship conflicts. If agreement cannot be reached about who qualifies for authorship, the institution(s) where the work was performed, not the journal editor, should be asked to investigate. If authors request removal or addition of an author after manuscript submission or publication, journal editors should seek an explanation and signed statement of agreement for the requested change from all listed authors and from the author to be removed or added.

The corresponding author is the one individual who takes primary responsibility for communication with the journal during the manuscript submission, peer review, and publication process, and typically ensures that all the journal’s administrative requirements, such as providing details of authorship, ethics committee approval, clinical trial registration documentation, and gathering conflict of interest forms and statements, are properly completed, although these duties may be delegated to one or more coauthors. The corresponding author should be available throughout the submission and peer review process to respond to editorial queries in a timely way, and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with any requests from the journal for data or additional information should questions about the paper arise after publication. Although the corresponding author has primary responsibility for correspondence with the journal, the ICMJE recommends that editors send copies of all correspondence to all listed authors.

When a large multi-author group has conducted the work, the group ideally should decide who will be an author before the work is started and confirm who is an author before submitting the manuscript for publication. All members of the group named as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, including approval of the final manuscript, and they should be able to take public responsibility for the work and should have full confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the work of other group authors. They will also be expected as individuals to complete conflict-of-interest disclosure forms.

Some large multi-author groups designate authorship by a group name, with or without the names of individuals. When submitting a manuscript authored by a group, the corresponding author should specify the group name if one exists, and clearly identify the group members who can take credit and responsibility for the work as authors. The byline of the article identifies who is directly responsible for the manuscript, and MEDLINE lists as authors whichever names appear on the byline. If the byline includes a group name, MEDLINE will list the names of individual group members who are authors or who are collaborators, sometimes called non-author contributors, if there is a note associated with the byline clearly stating that the individual names are elsewhere in the paper and whether those names are authors or collaborators.

#### 3. Non-Author Contributors

Contributors who meet fewer than all 4 of the above criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged. Examples of activities that alone (without other contributions) do not qualify a contributor for authorship are acquisition of funding; general supervision of a research group or general administrative support; and writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading. Those whose contributions do not justify authorship may be acknowledged individually or together as a group under a single heading (e.g. "Clinical Investigators" or "Participating Investigators"), and their contributions should be specified (e.g., "served as scientific advisors," "critically reviewed the study proposal," "collected data," "provided and cared for study patients", "participated in writing or technical editing of the manuscript").

Because acknowledgment may imply endorsement by acknowledged individuals of a study’s data and conclusions, editors are advised to require that the corresponding author obtain written permission to be acknowledged from all acknowledged individuals.