

# Reviewer guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to review for *AFP*. Your comments are extremely valuable in helping the editors to decide whether or not the manuscript should be accepted for publication. Your comments can also be helpful to the authors, even if the manuscript is rejected. Please advise the editors if you believe you have a conflict of interest in reviewing the manuscript.

## The review process

You will be sent an email with a copy of the manuscript and access to *AFP*'s 'Reviewer Centre' on 'Manuscript Central'. After reading and assessing the manuscript, you will be asked to:

1. Assess the relevance of the manuscript to Australian general practice
2. Make a recommendation about publication
3. Provide specific and detailed feedback.

*AFP* uses a double-blind peer review process, so you will not be told who the authors are and your review will be given anonymously to the authors. After the editors make a final decision on publication, you will be sent an email detailing that decision and copies of the de-identified reviewers' feedback.

### 1. Relevance

To help *AFP* editors select content that is useful for GPs in their day-to-day practice, assess the importance of the manuscript to Australian GPs across their varying roles, including clinician, researcher or contributor to a specific field. If the manuscript can be changed to improve its relevance to GPs, please provide specific suggestions in your feedback.

### 2. Recommendation

Make a recommendation about whether the manuscript is suitable for publication and suggest any changes you feel are necessary. Your recommendation is advice only; the editors of *AFP* make the final decision on whether to publish a manuscript.

### 3. Feedback

Your comments should reflect your unique perspective as a practising GP, specialist or academic and focus on what can be done to improve the manuscript, even if it is already of high quality. Please make your suggestions as specific and detailed as possible. There is a section for comments to the author and another section for confidential comments to the editor. Most of your comments should be in the authors comments section so they can be passed to the authors to improve the manuscript or used by the editor to justify their decision on publication. The following questions may be helpful as a guide to writing your review (additional questions for reviewers of research articles are also listed):

- Does the manuscript add anything to the literature already published on the topic?
- Is the manuscript appropriately evidence-based?
- Are conclusions and take-home messages properly based on the data/evidence offered?
- Has the author overlooked content that you feel is important?

- Do any areas need to be revised for clarity?
- Is the manuscript presented in a clear and logical way? If not, how can the presentation be improved?
- Could the article be shortened or sections omitted to make it more concise?
- Is the article in the correct format for *AFP*?
- Is there a structured abstract that accurately and clearly summarises the article?
- Has the author used the appropriate article type for the topic in question\*?
- Do you have any concerns about the possibility of plagiarism or prior publication?
- If you are unable to appropriately comment on a section of the manuscript, would you suggest a further review from a specialist, statistician or other expert?

## Additional questions for reviewers of research articles

- Is there a clear research question?
- Is the research question likely to be important to Australian GPs?
- Has ethics approval been obtained? Do you have any ethical concerns about how the research was conducted?
- Has the existing literature been considered appropriately?
- Is the method sound and appropriate to the research question?
- Is the data analysed appropriately for the method?
- Does the manuscript meet relevant reporting standards (eg. CONSORT, STROBE. For further details on reporting standards see [www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org))?
- Are conclusions properly based on the data/evidence offered?
- Are there any other alternative explanations for the data that have not been explored?
- Are there any obvious limitations to the generalisability of the findings that have not been stated?

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