

## **GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS**

*The Journal of Women's Health Physical Therapy (JWHPT)* is dedicated to presenting state-of-the-art evidence in support of physical therapists and other healthcare professionals practicing in women's health and abdominal pelvic care. *JWHPT* is the official peer-reviewed publication of the Section on Women's Health (SOWH) of the American Physical Therapy Association. *JWHPT* encourages manuscript submission on all topics in women's health and gender-related issues related to abdominal and pelvic physical therapy. Manuscripts are considered for publication with the understanding that the manuscript, with any original findings or data, has not been published previously or is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Research publications and meta analyses receive the highest priority for publication, however, case reports, technical reports, systematic reviews, and clinical commentaries are all solicited on an equal basis. The Editorial Board reserves the right to return any manuscript that does not meet Journal review criteria.

The purpose of the review is to provide expert opinion regarding the quality of the manuscript under consideration, and should also supply authors with explicit feedback on how to improve their manuscripts so that they will be acceptable for publication in *JWHPT*. Although confidential comments to the Editor-in-Chief/Associate Editor are respected, any remarks that might help to strengthen the manuscript should be directed to the authors themselves. The following is a summary of guiding principles all reviewers should be comfortable abiding by.

### **1. Manuscript Review**

Provide a concise review of the manuscript following the suggested reviewer template (see below). This may include confidential comments to the editorial staff but must include specific comments to the author.

### **2. Confidentiality**

The review process is strictly confidential and should be treated as such by reviewers. Because the author may have chosen to exclude some people from this process, no one including colleagues or other experts in the field, should be consulted by the reviewer unless such consultations have first been discussed with the Editor-in-Chief.

### **3. Timely Review**

*JWHPT* understands that an efficient editorial process that results in timely publication provides a valuable service both to authors and to the community at large. We therefore request that reviewers respond promptly, usually within 14 days of receipt of a manuscript. If reviewers need more time, we request that they contact the Associate Editor assigned to their manuscript promptly so that we can keep the authors informed and, if necessary, assign alternate reviewers.

### **4. Anonymity**

*JWHPT* practices blinded peer review. We appreciate that blinded peer review is most appropriate review process because of the close-knit readership community we serve. Authors are informed of the assigned Associate Editor at the time of decision notification. Authors may choose to contact the Associate Editor with queries related to the review of their manuscript. We disapprove of any attempt on the part of authors to discover the identity of any reviewer or to contact this person directly. Reviewers are asked to adopt the same policy.

## **5. Editing Reviewers' Reports**

The Editor-in-Chief, Senior Editor or Associate Editors do not edit any comments made by reviewers that are intended to be read by the authors unless the language is deemed inappropriate for professional communication or the comments contain information considered confidential. Such remarks should be reserved for the Confidential Comments to the Editor section of the review form, which is intended to be read only by the Editor-in-Chief. Reviewers are encouraged to be honest but not offensive in their comments to authors. On the other hand, authors should not confuse frank language with unfair criticism.

## **6. Competing Interests**

To the extent possible we respect requests by authors to exclude reviewers whom they consider to be unsuitable. We also, as much as possible, try to rule out those reviewers who may have an obvious competing interest, such as those who may have been collaborators on other projects with the authors of the manuscript under review, those who may be direct competitors, those who may have a known history of antipathy with the author(s), or those who might profit financially from the work. However, it is not possible for all such competing interests to be known by *JWHPT*, so reviewers who recognize a potential competing interest must inform the Editor-in-Chief and recuse themselves if they feel they are unable to offer an impartial review.

On occasion, reviewers may be asked to offer their opinion on a manuscript that they may have previously reviewed for another journal. This is not in itself a competing interest, it does not in any way decrease the validity of that opinion and may perhaps even enhance it.

## **7. Feedback to Reviewers**

We send reviewers' comments along with the decision letter to all reviewers of that manuscript. Reviewers who may have offered an opinion not in accordance with the final decision should understand that their recommendation was duly considered and that their service was greatly appreciated. Experts often disagree, and it is the job of the Editor-in-Chief, Senior Editor and Associate Editors to make a final publication decision.

## **Thank You!**

We offer sincere thanks to all our reviewers. Your contribution of time and expertise are highly valued and we hope you will continue to support *JWHPT* in this way.