

### **Definitions**

The AAFP National Research Network (AAFP NRN) conducts many studies, with many different investigators, and we want to make preparing publications as efficient and conflict-free as possible. With this in mind, we begin by specifying several definitions.

#### ***Principal Investigator***

The principal investigator (PI) is the person responsible for the conception and design of the study and the analysis and interpretation of the data. The principal investigator is identified early in the study design process.

#### ***AAFP NRN Director***

The AAFP NRN Director is ultimately responsible for all research conducted by the AAFP NRN. The Director may delegate responsibility for monitoring specific AAFP NRN research activities to other members of the AAFP NRN staff. Any delegated research monitoring activities will be made with the specific understanding and consent of the PI and AAFP NRN member responsible for the delegated authority.

#### ***AAFP NRN Director of Research***

This person is responsible for overseeing the validity of the research methods used for AAFP NRN studies. This person is also responsible for reviewing the validity of data analysis and communication (either written or presented) for all AAFP NRN publications and presentations. The Director of Research may delegate review responsibility to other members of the AAFP NRN senior scientist staff with the agreement of the individual accepting the delegated activity.

#### ***Primary Publication***

A primary publication is one that details the design, methods, or primary results of an AAFP NRN study.

#### ***Secondary Publication***

A secondary publication is one that details a secondary aim of an AAFP NRN study or a question developed and pursued by an investigator using AAFP NRN resources such data from an AAFP NRN study. The principal investigator must agree to the preparation of manuscripts that do not directly relate to the original stated purposes or hypotheses of a study. In the event the principal investigator is no longer involved with AAFP NRN, the AAFP NRN Director will assume responsibility for approving manuscripts not related to original study purposes.

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### ***Presentation***

A presentation is any abstract, poster, or presentation that

- describes either an AAFP NRN study or describes a study that uses AAFP NRN resources or
- is presented to an audience that is outside the investigator's institution; for example, a national meeting.

### **How Do AAFP NRN Investigators Prepare a Manuscript for Publication?**

The results of all AAFP NRN studies should be reported in a timely fashion through a publication in a peer reviewed scientific journal. The manuscript should be well written, following the style required by the journal to which the author wishes to submit. Please refer to the AAFP NRN ***Writing Process for Manuscripts***.

### ***Manuscript Preparation for Primary Publications***

The principal investigator is responsible for ensuring that the results of an AAFP NRN study are reported in the appropriate scientific journal. The steps involved in getting a manuscript published include:

- analyzing data generated from the AAFP NRN study;
- writing a manuscript that presents the results;
- obtaining the AAFP NRN Director's approval of the manuscript;
- submitting the manuscript to the journal;
- revising the manuscript according to the requirements set by the journal's peer review (if such changes are significant and reframe the gist of the article, the author should obtain the AAFP NRN Director's approval of the manuscript again);
- submitting the final manuscript to the journal.

The principal investigator may delegate any of these tasks to others; however, the principal investigator is ultimately responsible for publishing the results.

Primary publication of study results is expected to occur within **one year** of the completion of study data collection. If the publication of the primary outcomes of the study is not submitted within one year of completion of study data collection, the Director of the AAFP NRN has the authority to reassign the primary authorship role or the publication production manager role for the primary publication (see Manuscript Preparation document.)

Once the principal investigator has completed the above sequence, she or he may allow the release of the data gathered in the AAFP NRN study for others to use with appropriate approvals as outlined in the study specific data sharing agreement, if one exists, or with approval of the AAFP NRN Director. All data released for secondary review must comply with all relevant Institutional Review Boards. In general, de-identified, raw data will be released to qualified

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investigators for secondary analysis with appropriate data sharing agreements (see Data Sharing Template). With approval of the Director, secondary analysis may be carried out by AAFP NRN personnel for outside investigators.

### **What is the Title of Primary Publications?**

A primary publication's title must include the suffix: "A Report from the AAFP National Research Network". Any deviations from this policy must be approved by the Director. In the case of joint projects where the AAFP NRN is not the primary data collection site or there are multiple data collection sites, the AAFP NRN Director will negotiate with the study PI and other co-investigators titles and attestation statements for publications or presentations prior to public dissemination of study results, including study methods papers.

### **How Should the AAFP NRN Be Named in Papers?**

Within the abstract and methods section of the paper, the phrase "AAFP National Research Network" must appear, usually when describing the study sites. Examples are available upon request.

### **Who is the Author of Primary Publications?**

Authorship will be openly discussed early in the project and will be presented to the NRN staff for discussion, if needed. We expect that individuals intimately involved in the conduct of the study will be authors on the paper. The AAFP NRN follows the authorship guidelines defined in the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*.

Primary publications should acknowledge the contribution of AAFP NRN members to the study. This contribution should be acknowledged by listing the names of AAFP NRN practices in the Acknowledgement section unless a practice specifically requests not to be listed or the journal prohibits an acknowledgement of this type. All acknowledgements will follow the *Uniform Requirements* for the Acknowledgement section.

### ***Manuscript Preparation for Secondary Publications***

Once the principal investigator releases AAFP NRN data for others to use, other AAFP NRN investigators or outside individuals may prepare secondary publications under the guidance of the data sharing agreements in place for the study. Secondary data sharing agreements will be executed prior to secondary analysis by investigators not covered by the original data sharing agreement.

All secondary data analysis is the responsibility of the secondary publication author. He or she may contact the AAFP NRN Director to request assistance. The AAFP NRN Director or the AAFP NRN Director of Research will determine

what assistance AAFP NRN staff may provide. Any publications, presentations, or abstracts developed through secondary data analysis by outside investigators will follow the requirements specified within the data sharing agreement that covers the secondary analysis, including review of the analytical plan as well as all public communication resulting from the analysis.

The sequence of the manuscript publication described above in the “Manuscript Preparation for Primary Publications” section also applies to secondary publications. The only additional step is for the author to obtain approval of the manuscript from the principal investigator or AAFP NRN Director of Research’s approval (if the principal investigator is no longer involved with the data set) before submitting it to a journal.

### **What is the Title of Secondary Publications?**

A secondary publication’s title may include the suffix: “A Report from the AAFP National Research Network” at the discretion of the AAFP NRN Director.

### **How Should the Study Site Be Named?**

Within the abstract and methods section of the paper, the phrase “AAFP National Research Network” must appear, usually when describing the study sites.

### **Who is the Author of Secondary Publications?**

The authorship guidelines listed for primary publications apply to secondary publications. The investigators who conduct the secondary analysis of AAFP NRN study data are generally listed as authors of the secondary publication. Additionally, those conducting the secondary analysis must consult with the principal investigator or designee from the original research. The principal investigator or designee will determine who, among the authors of the primary publication, should also be listed as an author of the secondary publication. This determination must be in accordance with *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*.

The principal investigator or designee is expected to assist with writing the methods section for the secondary publication, particularly as the methods relate to the primary data collection.

A secondary publication must include in the Acknowledgement section a statement that the source data came from AAFP NRN. The author should reference a primary article that lists all collaborators in the original study.

### **What are Appropriate Keywords for an AAFP NRN Publication?**

Most journals ask authors to submit keywords that relate to the content of the article. Authors should include keywords that describe the topic of the study. All articles related to AAFP NRN studies or data must list “**PBRN**” as a keyword. The following **bolded** MeSH keywords may also be useful for describing AAFP NRN studies, depending on the content of the article and focus of the research:

- **PBRN** (required for all articles)
- **Physician’s Practice Patterns** (diagnosis and treatment as influenced by cost of service requested and provided)
- **Professional Practice** (The use of one’s knowledge in a particular profession. It includes professional activities related to health care and the actual performance of the duties related to the provision of health care. *The emphasis is on individual physicians and their practices.*)
- **Primary Health Care**

### **How Do AAFP NRN Investigators Prepare Presentations?**

Like publications, presentations should be prepared in a professional style according to the guidelines required by the meeting. Presentations also require review by the principal investigator (if she or he is not the presenter) and the AAFP NRN Director. The presenter is responsible for analyzing the data, ensuring that all data are correct and correctly interpreted, and ensuring that the data support all conclusions.

### **Dispute Resolution**

Any disputes that arise as a result of this policy will initially be referred to the AAFP NRN Director. Disputes will be referred to the AAFP NRN Director of Research if the AAFP NRN Director is a party to the dispute. If both of these individuals are party to the dispute, then another AAFP NRN senior scientist will serve to arbitrate the dispute.

Should discussions among the parties and the referee fail, then a list will be developed of two senior scientists selected by the collaborating institution and two AAFP NRN Senior Scientists selected by the AAFP NRN, none of whom may be involved in the project. If no AAFP senior scientists are available to fill this role, then the AAFP NRN Director may select two individuals within the AAFP to serve in this capacity. From this list, one individual will be randomly selected to arbitrate the dispute. The individual selected through this process will have final authority to resolve the dispute if arbitration cannot be successfully completed.