

Editors

Acknowledging and Thanking Our Peer Reviewers

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Although some editors, authors, and readers have questioned the value of peer review,¹ I have no doubt that it improves the articles we publish in *American Family Physician* (AFP). Our reviewers regularly point out ways to enhance the presentation of information, mention important details to add, and occasionally discover errors that might otherwise mislead readers if not identified.

Reviewers have been part of the fabric of science for decades, yet their work is largely unsung. Most reviewers volunteer their time, working behind the scenes to contribute to the common good. At AFP, we send manuscripts to three external reviewers—two content experts (who may be subspecialists or family physicians) and a family physician representative—to help ensure relevance for our readers. In addition, two family physician medical editors review each manuscript. So, authors generally receive comments from five reviewers, and they

must address each comment during their revision and resubmission. Anyone seeing the before-and-after papers would readily attest that even good manuscripts are improved because of this process.

To assist our reviewers, we have created an online Reviewers' Guide and developed a set of resources.² The American Academy of Family Physicians has authorized continuing medical education credit for members who serve as peer reviewers for AFP, at three prescribed credits per manuscript, limited to 30 credits per three-year reelection cycle.

For various reasons, it has been a while since we have formally recognized our reviewers in print. Going forward, we plan to give credit to these contributors to excellence regularly, as their names remain anonymous throughout the review process. We will also start archiving each year's thank-you list on our website,² in case any reviewers need documentation of their work for credentialing or other purposes.³⁻⁷

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for AFP, please visit our Reviewers' Guide (<http://www.aafp.org/journals/afp/reviewers/guide.html>) and complete a

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reviewer profile, or e-mail us at afpjurnal@aafp.org. We rate the quality of each review we receive and reward those who do a good job by inviting them to do more reviews! We usually send two to four requests a year—hopefully a manageable number. Serving as a reviewer can sharpen your writing and critical analysis skills; seeing weaknesses in others' work helps sensitize you to what to avoid in your own writing and can help carve a path to successful authorship.

Recently, *AFP* contributing editor Jennifer L. Middleton, MD, MPH, wrote about the value of peer review for the *AFP* Community Blog during the first-ever Peer Review Week, created by a group of science organizations with the goal of supporting and improving the peer review process.⁸ She expressed her appreciation for all of our reviewers, and now it is time to do that again by name, in print and online. So, on behalf of the entire editorial team at *AFP*, many thanks to all of our wonderful reviewers!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Siwek is editor of *AFP*.

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American Family Physician's Peer Reviewers for 2015 (continued)

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* Person completed more than one review in 2015.