

Peer review process

(Case reports)

This guide offers practical information, basic principles and norms peer reviewers of the Journal of CM & NH should comply with during the review process.

- *Confidentiality*

Manuscripts submitted to the Journal of CM & NH are strictly confidential and premature disclosure of their content to a third party without the written consent of the editor is prohibited. Reviewers should treat manuscripts with the greatest discretion. Data or insights acquired throughout the peer review process may not be used to one's own advantage or for other than strict review purposes.

Reviewers should not seek contact with authors themselves and must not engage others in the review process without explicit permission of the editor. The identity of the reviewer will not be disclosed without the reviewers' written approval.

- *Timelines*

Reviewers are expected to respond promptly and to submit reviews within a reasonable, mutually agreed timeframe. Apart from exceptional cases, the review invitation will stipulate a deadline of 14 days. The editor should be notified if circumstances arise that threaten the submission of a timely review.

- *Competence*

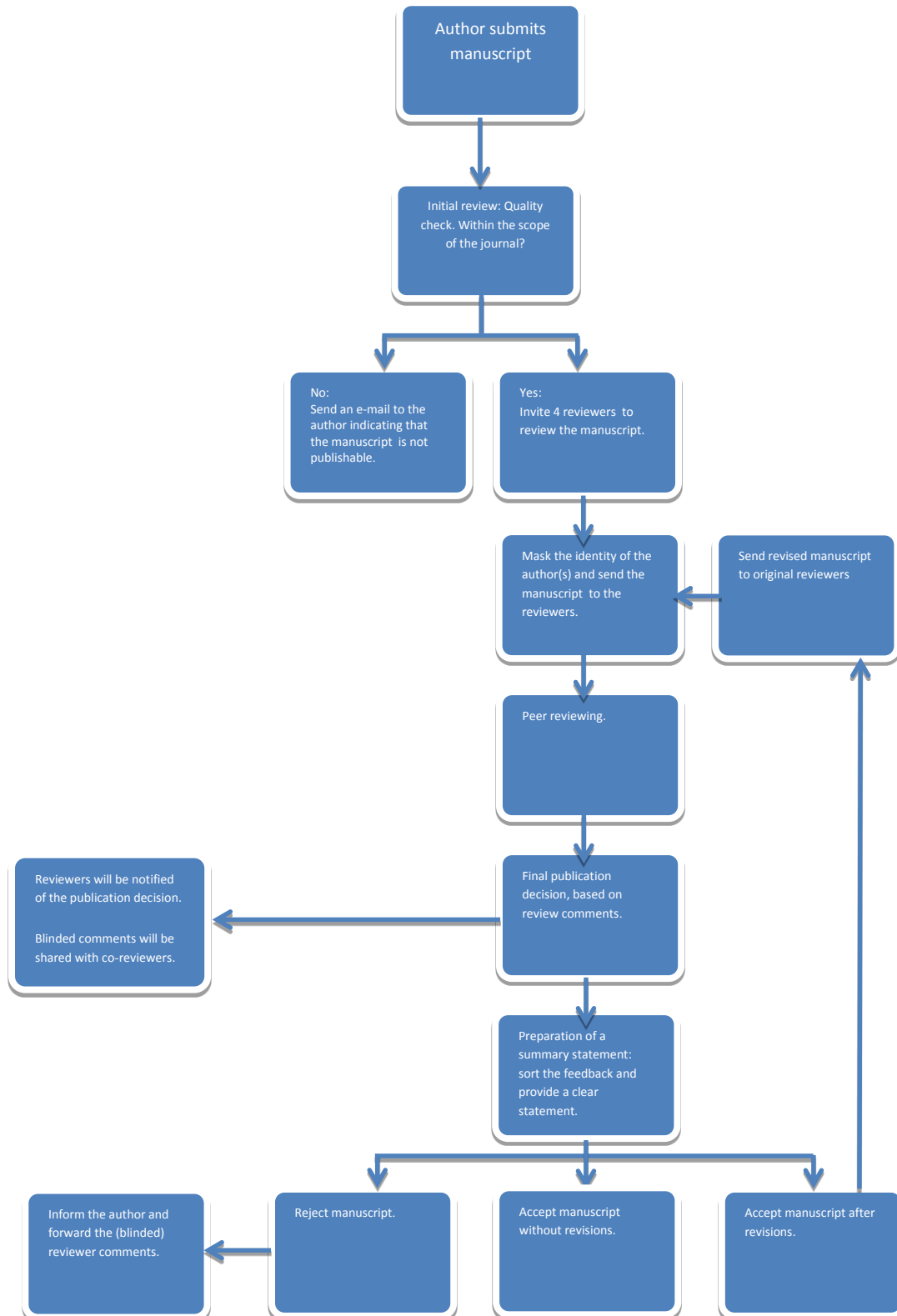
Reviewers should determine if they have the expertise required to assess the manuscript and should only review the document if they are confident they can provide an authoritative assessment within the established interval. The editor will be notified immediately if the reviewer's expertise does not cover all manuscript sections.

- *Conflict of interest*

Reviewers should disclose any potentially conflicting or competing interests that might affect objectivity and lead to decreased independence of judgement (personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political, religious or other motives for tangible personal benefit). Please consult the editor if prior or ongoing connections with the author(s) might be interpreted as a conflict of interest. If you experience any challenges preparing a fair, trustworthy review, please return the manuscript at once.

Make sure that your review is based on the merits of the work and not affected favorably or unfavorably by conflicting considerations, personal favoritism or confirmation/intellectual biases.

- Peer review process



Before you accept or decline, please consider the following issues:

a. Does the manuscript truly match your area of expertise? Accept the invitation only if you are confident you can provide a high quality review.
b. Do you have a potential conflict of interest: please fill in the peer reviewer statement. A conflict of interest will not automatically disqualify you as a reviewer but full notification will enable the editor to make an informed decision.
c. Do you have sufficient time to conduct a thorough review and meet the deadline? On average, an article will take 3 hours to review properly.

If you do not take up the invitation, make some recommendations for surrogate reviewers.

- *Review report*

We rely on your substantive knowledge and professional assessment. Be objective, constructive and precise. Avoid personal comments. Highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the document, list points of improvements, and provide recommendations that will guide the author during the revision of his/her manuscript.

Please distinguish between crucial and additional comments and mark which points of improvement are most significant and which notes are additional and solely relevant for improving the strength of the document. Confidential comments to the editor should not include denigration or false accusation.

Provide feedback for any of the following issues that influenced your assessment of the manuscript.

General Issues

- a. Appropriateness of the journal:** Is the manuscript relevant to an international audience and the readers of the Journal of Cellular Medicine and Natural Health?
- b. Originality:** Is the work original and convincingly compelling/fascinating to justify publication? Does it include more than a standard textbook chapter? Is its main question significant? Does the study make a significant contribution to the continual development of the knowledge base of the field?
- c. Writing style:** Is it concise and straightforward? Engaging?
- d. Cohesiveness of reasoning:** Does the manuscript show cohesiveness of reasoning? To what extent are conclusions supported by data or relevant arguments? Are there any careless omissions?
- e. Structure:** Does the organization of manuscript elements/information units foster clarity? Is the document divided into clearly defined sections and are all decisive elements included?
- f. Length-content ratio:** Are paper length and information density proportionally balanced? Are certain sections too extensive? Or too condensed?

Specific remarks

List your points of criticism in as much detail as possible and include evidence in the form of references to definite sentences or manuscript sections. Comments may be embedded directly in the original word file via track changes or provided in a stand-alone document whereby remarks should be accompanied by line-numbers referring to the original manuscript.

Provide feedback for any of the following issues that influenced your assessment of the manuscript.

ISSUES

a. Title

- Does it clearly reflect the content of the article?
- Is it concise and informative?
- Are the words 'case reports' or 'testimonial' included?

b. Abstract

- Does it offer a brief and balanced reflection of the contents of the article?
- Is the case clearly defined, including interventions applied and main outcomes?
- Does the author(s) provide keywords?

c. Introduction/Background

- Is the case situated in a broader context? Does the author familiarize the recipient with the disease/health condition, the prevalence, symptoms and prognosis?
- Does the author summarize why this case is unique?

d. Case presentation(s)

- Are patients' characteristics described in a concise and chronological order?
- Are diagnostics methods and (comorbid) diagnoses clearly defined?
- Does the author provide enough quantitative and qualitative information to facilitate an assessment of the

validity of the results and conclusions?

e. Therapeutic intervention

- Does the author document types of therapeutic interventions applied?
- Does the author provide details on the administration and intensity of the intervention?
- Does the author provide an account of intervention adherence and tolerance?
- Are the clinical course, prognosis and follow up results well documented (both patient-reported and clinician assessed outcomes)?
- Did the patient suffer from adverse events? Did the author provide an explanation for adverse or unexpected events?
- Does the author provide enough quantitative and qualitative data to facilitate evaluation of the validity of results/conclusions?
- Are grounds for efficacy evaluation provided?

f. Conclusion/discussion

- Does the author provide an adequate outline of the main results and analyze the data in appropriate depth?
- Are conclusions supported by clinical data? Does the author provide alternative explanations?
- Does the author explore the significance of the results for future research and clinical practice?
- Are reports on clinical implications valid and well founded?

- Are study strengths and limitations listed?
- Does the author evade speculation, over interpretation or inflation of significance?

g. Citations

- Are the references suitable and accurately numbered in order of appearance?
- Does the author respect the citation standards of the American Medical Association?
- Are all references listed cited in the text and is the reference list complete?

h. Ethical issues

- Fraud: if you have doubts about the correctness of the case report, discuss it with the editor.
- Plagiarism: if anomalies or similarities with other manuscripts are detected or if you are disquieted about ethical issues of the work, you should inform the editor. Please include a reference to the copied work. However, concerns should be kept and communicated confidentially.
- Treatment of humans: did the patient give informed consent? Are personal data deleted or anonymized?

i. Additional comments

- Did you detect any errors in reasoning, interpretation, citing or other aspects of the document, which were not mentioned in previous sections?

- Do you have any additional comments?

j. Your recommendation

Is the manuscript suitable for publication? When you make a recommendation, please use the following categories:

- The case report should be rejected for its poor quality or because it is out of scope.
- The case report should be published without revision.
- The case report should be accepted after revision (indicate clearly what revision is needed and indicate whether or not you want to review the revised article).

k. Comments to the editor-only

- Confidential comments to the editor.