

Sepsis Canada Authorship and Publications Policy

Objectives:

1. To provide Sepsis Canada members with a framework to address issues of authorship on documents that emerge from collaborations within the Sepsis Canada Network and between Sepsis Canada investigators.
2. To ensure that all contributors to a project are recognized in a fair and transparent manner using pre-defined criteria.
3. To ensure that Sepsis Canada members shall not be restricted from presenting at conferences, symposia or professional meetings, or from publishing in abstracts, journals, theses, or dissertations, or otherwise, whether in printed or in electronic media, the methods and the results of the Project, except where such publication or presentation would result in the premature public disclosure of commercializable intellectual property or breach the confidentiality terms of the Network Partner Agreement or Sepsis Canada IP Policy.

Why Authorship is Important

Research publications are important to disseminate findings and share new knowledge with others. Through the process of publication, the principal investigator (PI) assumes responsibility for the conduct of the study including compliance with institutional and regional regulations and policies. Publishing is a requirement for academic promotion and is widely considered as an index of productivity.

It is important to appropriately recognize the contributions of all who engage in scholarship.

How to Determine Authorship

Authorship should be discussed with all members of the research team as early as possible (e.g., in the planning phase) and revisited periodically as the study progresses.

Authorship should be revisited when there are changes in personnel and/or levels of participation (e.g., students who are engaged for brief periods).

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors* (ICMJE) recommends that authorship be based on the following 4 criteria:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Who should be included as Authors:

To be inclusive, the PI should provide opportunities for authorship to all investigators, collaborators, trainees, analysts/statisticians, and research personnel who meet the above criteria.

Contributions should be assessed on an individual basis.

For contributors who do not meet the above criteria and yet have made a substantial contribution, their role can be explicitly recognized as a formal collaborator (for which a category of acknowledgment exists on PubMed® citations) or through a written acknowledgement in the manuscript.

The PI should be responsible for keeping track of all contributions made by individuals to the study.

Team members who leave the study should provide the PI with their updated contact information.

Ultimately, decisions regarding authorship are the responsibility of the PI.

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Responsibilities of Authorship: Principal Investigator (PI)

The PI is responsible for discussions with all team members about potential authorship.

It is the PI's responsibility to ensure that all contributors are listed as authors or acknowledged as appropriate (see above).

The PI should negotiate an appropriate time-frame for completion of contributions and review of the manuscript with all co-authors.

The corresponding author is responsible for submission of the manuscript to the journal. S/he will receive feedback from the reviewers and editors and respond to the comments in collaboration with the study co-authors.

When a document has been accepted for publication, it is the corresponding author's responsibility to inform all co-authors in writing.

Process for Manuscript Publication

All manuscripts must be reviewed by the Publications Subcommittee before they can be submitted. This review will ensure that confidentiality is protected; that the publication will not bring the study into disrepute; and that the publication is a fair representation of Network and of the contribution of investigators. It will also provide advice and feedback to authors where it may be helpful.

All authors considering publications of research conducted within the Network are to submit a brief publication proposal to the Publications Subcommittee for approval, outlining what will be covered, who will be authoring and where is it likely to be submitted. Following approval, the corresponding author(s) shall forward a draft of their publication to the Publications Subcommittee at least four weeks prior to the intended submission. A late draft implies a document that is approaching readiness for submission, and which would ordinarily be circulated among co-authors. The late draft will not vary substantially in its use of data, principal analyses or theoretical content from the final submitted version, i.e., the final version should be easily recognized from the late draft, while permitting authors to correct, clarify and amend the paper in its final stages; The Publication Subcommittee will review all such material within three weeks of acknowledging its receipt, and confirm approval to submit for publication, subject to any necessary amendments, to the lead author(s).

Draft publications will be first reviewed with any Network Partner that has provided related data, materials and/or facilities to the specific project. Draft publications will be provided to the applicable Network Partner at least thirty (30) days before submission for publication or presentation. The reviewing Network Partners will then have fifteen (15) days offer comment concerning patentable content and to further request in writing:

- a) amendment of the draft to avoid publication of Intellectual Property; or;
- b) in the event that the publication or presentation contains subject matter that requires intellectual property protection a request for a publication delay for up to a maximum of six (6) months for the purposes of obtaining patent or other intellectual property protection.

It will be the responsibility of the lead author(s) to (i) notify the Publication Subcommittee of the acceptance of any manuscript and forward a copy of the final version, together with details of the name of the journal where the manuscript has been accepted, and (ii) to ensure that all conditions with respect to publication have been met and appropriate acknowledgements are included;

Process for Subsidiary Publications

There may be many publications authored by some/all Network co-investigators that are Sepsis Canada-related but not directly stemming from the Sepsis Canada Network Activities. These subsidiary publications must not undermine the impact or content of the principal publications. These publications should acknowledge Sepsis Canada and should be submitted to Sepsis Canada Network's Scientific Directors and/or the Managing Director of the Executive Committee for tracking purposes. Publishing fees will be paid for by the subsidiary study principal investigator.

Process for Abstracts, Presentations, Posters, and Conference Papers

No advanced approval is required for authorship list for conference presentations, but the principles of publication (e.g. no site-specific data that is intended for submission as a multicenter study) and authorship and recognition for contributions to publications should be upheld. The lead author(s) shall notify the Publication Subcommittee of the acceptance of any conference abstracts with the date of the meeting and presenting author; The lead author(s) shall forward a late copy of any poster presentation and final abstract to the Publication Subcommittee;

The Sepsis Canada and CIHR logos will appear on all posters and presentations. Institution specific logos will be left off posters and presentations, since the goal is to maintain the national/international profile for the study.

A standard poster template and a PowerPoint slide template is available to investigators as they become available on the Network website. The templates contain the necessary logos, slide colour schemes and acknowledgement slides.

Other institutions can be acknowledged in writing if they have provided financial support to the study.

Publicity, Press Releases and Interviews

A press release is defined as a document given to radio, television, newspapers, popular periodicals, or scientific journals not indexed by Index Medicus. An interview is any discussion with a member of the press, a science writer, or a radio or television commentator, which in turn provides information for public dissemination. Any Network investigator who plans to have a press release on any aspect of Sepsis Canada research activities must clear the release with the communications committee and/or the Sepsis Canada Scientific Directors and/or the Managing Director of the Executive Committee.

From time to time, the Sepsis Canada Scientific Directors and/or the Managing Director of the Executive Committee will develop press releases to be distributed by the participating study sites. It is suggested that these prepared releases be given to the media when interviews are requested to help ensure uniformity and accuracy in the information distributed through the media.

Acknowledgements

The PI shall ensure that on all publications, media releases and public disclosures regarding Intellectual Property generated using funds related to the Sepsis Canada, the contributions of Sepsis Canada are appropriately acknowledged and in compliance with the CIHR communications.

Other requirements may be to refer to local or national bodies that have significantly funded or contributed to the research or the funding agencies (e.g. the CCCTG or CCCTBG)

Recognition of Sepsis Canada

The Sepsis Canada should be credited in a manuscript if:

1. The ideas in the manuscript are related to a Sepsis Canada funded or supported project
2. The ideas in the manuscript germinated in a Sepsis Canada-sponsored communication (e.g. meeting, teleconference, email), and
3. Sepsis Canada Steering Committee or future manuscript committee has reviewed the final version and has approved having reference to Sepsis Canada.

Sepsis Canada should be credited using one of the following 3 suggested phrases (according to journal requirements)

“on behalf of Sepsis Canada” or

“For Sepsis Canada” or

“In collaboration with Sepsis Canada”

A statement of ethical approval should be included in all papers e.g., This study received local approval from the participating centre(s)’ Research Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board;

Additional Information

Partners are encouraged to utilize open-access options of journals. The only requirement for open access publication will be as per CIHR policy as it pertains to the Network at the time of publication. The Publication Subcommittee will inform the responsible author of such requirements.