



North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (NASPGHAN) Policy on Ethics in Journalism.

Preamble.

The mission of the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition (NASPGHAN) is to be a world leader in advancing the science and clinical practice of pediatric gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition in health and disease. One means of accomplishing this mission is through the publication of scientific and educational materials. NASPGHAN sponsors numerous publications including: educational materials developed by NASPGHAN task forces; clinical practice and technological guidelines; research abstracts presented at national and international meetings, and educational materials and career guidelines for use by trainees, practitioners, and attendees at scientific conferences. Sites for publication of these materials include the *Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition* (JPGN) and its website, and the NASPGHAN website. Educational materials co-sponsored or endorsed by NASPGHAN in conjunction with other organizations (e.g. the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (ESPGHAN), the Children's Digestive Health and Nutrition Foundation (CDHNF), the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America) are available through publications and the web sites of these organizations. Most of these publications are accessible to both health care professionals and the lay public, and are easily duplicated and distributed.

NASPGHAN has earned the respect and trust of the scientific community and the public as a reliable and authoritative source of information on childhood digestive and nutritional disorders. To maintain this trust, NASPGHAN must ensure that materials endorsed or published by NASPGHAN are both scientifically acceptable and free from bias and outside influence. This document is designed to serve as a guide to those involved in the development of publishable material sponsored or endorsed by NASPGHAN. The purpose of this policy document is to:

- Guarantee NASPGHAN endorsed publications meet the highest scientific and ethical standards and are free of bias introduced by the interests of authors, editors or financial sponsors.
- Create mechanisms to ensure there is complete and honest disclosure of any potential conflict of interest, and deal appropriately and fairly with instances of conflict of interest and professional or ethical misconduct involving published materials.

The mission of the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition is to be a world leader in advancing the science and clinical practice of pediatric gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition in health and disease

In developing this document NASPGHAN endorses the guidelines for medical editors of the World Association of Medical Editors (www.wame.org/index.htm) and the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors in their document entitled “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publications” (www.icmje.org - updated October 2004).

1. Policy on Ethical Issues Related to NASPGHAN Sponsored Publications.

1.1 Principle.

NASPGHAN will ensure that all publications endorsed by the Society are scientifically rigorous, ethically defensible, socially responsible and free from bias or commercial influence.

1.2 Policy and Procedure.

- The NASPGHAN Executive Council is ultimately responsible for assuring that publications endorsed by the Society are scientifically accurate and free from potential conflict of interest. This process should begin by selecting authors who have no commercial interests or affiliations that might compromise the integrity of the final document.
- Authors of publications are required to disclose any relationship with a commercial firm or organization that has potential for a conflict of interest prior to participation as a document author. This includes, but is not limited to research, consulting fees, speaker fees or support from industry financed educational foundations. The NASPGHAN Executive Council, or their designated appointee, will determine whether any disclosed relationship is of such nature that it disqualifies the individual from participation in preparation of the document. (See NASPGHAN policy on Conflict of Interest and Relationships with Industry and Other Organizations).
- Authors should not publicize their work, or share it with other parties including those in government or industry, except with the prior approval of the NASPGHAN Executive Council. If the manuscript is to be published in JPGN, the Editor-in-chief must also grant permission for a manuscript that has been reviewed and accepted for publication to be disseminated prior to actual publication in the journal.
- If NASPGHAN, or the CDHNF, receive funds from industry for the purpose of producing a publication or document, this must be disclosed. Regardless of the source of funding, NASPGHAN or the CDHNF remain responsible for the content of the publication or document and this must be free of any influence by the industry sponsor.

- In the event a complaint is lodged regarding an alleged COI for any Society-endorsed publication or document, the NASPGHAN President will refer the matter to the Ethics Committee to review the complaint. The findings and recommendations of the Ethics committee will be referred to the NASPGHAN Executive Council who shall have the final say in the matter. (See NASPGHAN Policy on Due Process for Professional and Ethical Misconduct).

2. Policy on Editorial Leadership of JPGN.

2.1 Principle.

- The editorial leadership of JPGN must be free of any bias or conflict of interest that might detract from the integrity of this publication.

2.2 Policy and Procedure.

- The process by which the NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief is chosen should be clearly defined and the standards by which applications for the position are judged made clear to both members of the Publications Committee and applicants. The term of office should be clear and a specific statement as to the possibility of a second term defined.
- Publications Committee members must disclose any potential conflict of interest which might prevent them from serving effectively on the Committee. Examples include but are not limited to: editorial services for a competing journal (excluding reviewer services); receipt of salary support from industry sources; personal conflict with the applicant for an editorial leadership position, or his/her institution. All COI disclosures by Publications Committee members will be reviewed by the Ethics Committee of NASPGHAN. In the event the Ethics Committee believes a member of the Publications Committee has a significant COI, this finding, together with a recommendation to either resolve the conflict or disqualify the individual from membership on the committee, will be sent to the Executive Council who shall have the final say in the matter.
- During the selection process for the NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN, any member of the Publications Committee with a potential conflict of interest that might prevent an unbiased evaluation of an application for the position will be excused from deliberations on that application.
- An applicant for the position of Editor-in-Chief must declare any potential conflict of interest that might have an impact on his/her ability to perform the duties of Editor. Such declaration must include any association with organizations or journals in direct competition with JPGN for manuscripts and

reviewers. The applicant must declare all financial or otherwise rewarding relationships with industry or other for profit health care organizations in the five years prior to his/her application. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, research/salary support, consultantships, service on speakers' bureaus and paid lectures.

- An applicant for the position of NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief who has a COI that is deemed by the Publications Committee likely to impact on his/her ability to impartially perform the duties of Editor must resolve such conflict to the satisfaction of the Publications Committee prior to being appointed. Failure to do so will disqualify the individual from consideration for the position.
- Applicants for the position of NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN are responsible for obtaining a COI disclosure statement from each proposed Associate Editor at the time of the application. All such COI statements will be reviewed by the Publications Committee. The Publications Committee is charged with monitoring the JPGN Associate Editors and JPGN Editorial Board for any potential conflict of interest, taking appropriate action to resolve any identified conflict of interest or disqualifying the individual from being appointed.
- The NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN is responsible for the review of manuscripts submitted to the JPGN editorial office and is responsible to the readership for the integrity of the manuscript, its authors, the reviewers, the publisher and the editorial staff in their duties associated with submission, review and publication of manuscripts
- The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for revising from time to time the conflict of interest directives in the instructions to authors. The Editor-in-Chief has the final decision on the publication of manuscripts and on whether a disclosed conflict of interest must be published with the paper or may be private between the editorial office and the author. The author may lodge a complaint to the Ethics Committee if he/she feels a manuscript has not received fair review because:
 - a) he/she has concerns about a conflict of interest on the part of the reviewers or editorial staff
 - b) a conflict of interest on the part of the author has been alleged to the detriment of the manuscript.
- The Ethics Committee will receive and review claims of ethical misconduct on the part of the Editor, Associate Editors or Editorial Board members by authors, reviewers, staff or others associated with the review and publication of submitted manuscripts. Adjudication of complaints will be on a case by case basis and the recommendations of the Ethics Committee will be sent to

the Executive Council who shall have the final say in the matter (See Policy on Due Process for Professional and Ethical Misconduct).

3. Policy on Conflict of Interest relating to JPGN.

3.1. Principle

- The NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN is responsible for ensuring that all manuscripts accepted by the NASPGHAN editorial office for publication in JPGN are free of commercial bias or other COI.

3.2 Policy and Procedure.

- The NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN is responsible for developing a comprehensive COI policy for manuscripts submitted to the NASPGHAN editorial office. Issues to be addressed in the COI policy include:
 - Procedures to identify and disclose a potential COI by an author.
 - Procedures to identify and deal with a potential COI by a reviewer.
 - Policy for dealing with reports or complaints regarding a COI in the review process by authors or sponsors of manuscripts.
 - Policy for dealing fairly with disparate reviews of manuscripts.
 - Policy for determining the appropriate level of contribution for individual authors on multiple author papers.
 - Policy for dealing with alleged or actual plagiarism, duplicate publishing, falsification of data or other scientific misconduct.
 - Policy for dealing with review or publication of studies conducted under unethical circumstances.
 - Policy for obtaining permission from the parents of subjects of case reports.
 - Policy for documenting the involvement of Human Subjects Committees in the design of clinical research.
- All such policies and procedures should be reviewed by the NASPGHAN Ethics Committee and Publications Committee and be approved by the NASPGHAN Executive Council prior to implementation.

- The NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN should work closely with the ESPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN to develop a uniform policy on ethical issues.
- JPGN policies on COI and ethics should be available on the Journal website and on the NASPGHAN website and be published once each year in JPGN. Regular review of policies should occur each year by the Ethics Committee and the NASPGHAN Executive Council.
- The NASPGHAN Editor-in-Chief of JPGN should present an annual report to the Ethics Committee on issues that have been active during the year and on the decisions made.

4. Policy on Uniformity in COI and Ethical Issues for NASPGHAN and ESPGHAN Editorial Offices.

4.1. Principle.

Publications in JPGN reflect on the integrity of both NASPGHAN and ESPGHAN. The two societies should be in agreement on issues pertaining to COI and ethics in journalism in order to protect their reputation as a reliable and authoritative source of scientific information on digestive and nutritional disorders in childhood.

4.2. Policy and Procedure.

- The Publication Committees and JPGN Editors-in-Chief for NASPGHAN and ESPGHAN should strive towards a consensus on COI and ethical issues relating to publications in JPGN.
- In the event there are issues that cannot be satisfactorily resolved between the two Societies, then the policies of each should be published on the Society's websites, the JPGN website or in the printed journal.
- All policy and procedures implemented by the Editor(s) should first be approved by the respective Councils of NASPGHAN and ESPGHAN.

Date of Policy approval by NASPGHAN Executive Council

October 1, 2005