

**Process for Reviewing and Responding to Requests from Members for  
Endorsement of Papers and Position Statements**

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The collective work of SGIM often produces manuscripts that are submitted for publication and/or distributed to external audiences. Some of these are products of committees, commissions, task forces, or interest groups (collectively “SGIM groups”), some are the result of collaborations with other organizations, and some are policy or position statements developed on behalf of the organization. This document clarifies the procedures for: 1) engaging Council during the development phase (if needed); 2) having Council review draft manuscripts intended for publication or other forms of public dissemination; and 3) expectations for review and consideration for publication of these manuscripts in JGIM.

Manuscripts generally fall under three major categories:

**1. Original Research Papers**

SGIM groups occasionally engage in research as part of their annual plans. This type of scholarly work may receive staff or financial support from SGIM which must be acknowledged.

**Original Research (Not endorsed by the Society):** If an SGIM group conducts original research but does NOT seek specific endorsement of the Society, it should still share the manuscript with Council prior to submission to any journal or publication outlet in order to obtain approval for the acknowledgement of SGIM support.<sup>1</sup> Approval could be done expeditiously by the Executive Committee. Because these papers represent independent thought and work, the manuscripts would not be reviewed for scientific content. Any acknowledgement should therefore state that any recommendations in the paper do not represent the opinions of SGIM.

Sample statements:

*The development of this manuscript was supported by the Society of General Internal Medicine. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of members and staff of the SGIM xxxxx Committee.*

*The development of this manuscript was supported by the Society of General Internal Medicine. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of members and staff of the SGIM xxxxx Committee. The opinions expressed in this manuscript do not represent the opinions or policies of SGIM.*

**Original Research (Endorsed by the Society):** If an SGIM group conducts original research and is seeking specific endorsement of the Society, it should share the manuscript with Council prior to commencing work on the project. Council may want to approve early outlines, drafts, or abstracts of the research. Once the paper is in final draft, Council will review it to ensure that the paper meets expectations for scientific rigor and is consistent with SGIM’s mission, vision, and core values. Council may: 1) reject endorsing the paper outright, in which case it may still be published without endorsement; 2) ask the authors to revise and resubmit the paper to Council based on preliminary feedback; or 3) immediately vote to approve the paper for endorsement.

The endorsed paper may then be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. Any *major* changes to the paper that happen during the peer review stage should be brought back to Council or the Executive Committee for review and approval. The Executive Committee will expedite the review when there is an urgent deadline or time sensitive issue.

Sample statement:

*The development of this manuscript was supported by the Society of General Internal Medicine. The*

*Society's Council endorsed the content of this manuscript.*

## **2. White Papers**

An SGIM group may want to develop a white paper, defined as an authoritative report intended to help readers understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.<sup>3</sup> These papers may make statements or recommendations that may be viewed erroneously as SGIM policy. Therefore, this class of papers should be reviewed by Council or the Executive Committee prior to submission for publication to determine if there are statements or recommendations that may be viewed externally as SGIM policy. The Council will determine a course of action, such as inclusion of acknowledgement of support or a statement that the recommendations are supported by SGIM. Because white papers may make recommendations that are relevant to SGIM policy, the authoring group should notify Council early that the work is underway. Any major changes to the paper that happen during the peer review stage should be brought back to Council or the Executive Committee for review and approval. The Executive Committee will expedite the review when there is an urgent deadline or time sensitive issue.

Sample statement:

*The development of this manuscript was supported by the Society of General Internal Medicine. The Society's Council has reviewed this manuscript and supports the statements and recommendations.*

If Council or the Executive Committee do not think that any statements could be construed to represent SGIM recommendations, it is sufficient to simply acknowledge support for development of the manuscript.

## **3. SGIM Policy and Position Papers**

SGIM committees and commissions occasionally want to develop papers or statements to recommend policies or positions.<sup>2,4</sup> Although Council wants to encourage such efforts, the idea for such a paper should be presented to Council prior to beginning work to ensure it aligns with SGIM's mission, vision, and values. Occasionally, Council convenes a group with cross-cutting membership and issues a charge to authors. Otherwise, the group developing the paper should send an initial outline of the plans for the paper to Council for review and discussion before writing the paper. The outline should include the type of paper (i.e., position paper or brief position statement), identification of the main issue, brief explanation of the need for the paper, expected key recommendations, proposed authors, and SGIM groups that will contribute (i.e., committees, commissions, interest groups, or task forces).

Once the paper is in final draft, Council or the Executive Committee will review it to ensure that the paper meets expectations for scientific rigor and is consistent with SGIM's mission, vision, and values. Council may: 1) reject endorsing the paper outright, in which case it may still be published without endorsement; 2) ask the authors to revise and resubmit the paper to Council based on feedback; or 3) immediately vote to approve the paper for endorsement.

*The title of the paper should include "... : a Position Statement of the Society of General Internal Medicine." The byline should include individuals who meet standard criteria for inclusion as authors. The byline may refer to specific SGIM groups (i.e., committees, commissions, task forces, or interest groups) that contributed to the paper. The paper should acknowledge any support provided by SGIM, including staff support.*

JGIM is the target journal for a policy or position paper as it is the official journal of SGIM. The JGIM Editors should be made aware of the manuscript prior to submission. The editors will retain authority for deciding whether to publish the paper. Such papers will undergo peer review at the discretion of the editors. JGIM *may* send the paper through an internal peer review process rather than the usual external peer review (e.g., by asking JGIM Editorial Board members to participate in the review). Any major

changes to the paper that happen during the peer review stage should be brought back to Council or the Executive Committee for review and approval. Authors should inform Council when the paper is to be published so that it may be added to SGIM communication channels and promoted across social media.

The Executive Committee will expedite the review process when there is an urgent deadline or a time sensitive issue.

**Brief Position Statements:** An SGIM group may wish to prepare a brief position statement that is an official SGIM statement on an issue that directly affects SGIM membership or the field of general internal medicine, but is not intended for publication in a journal.<sup>5</sup> These position statements should be less than 1000 words and usually will have fewer references than a full position paper. A position statement may be proposed by any SGIM group (i.e., committee, commission, task force, or interest group), and must involve at least one recognized SGIM group. The authoring group should inform SGIM's President and CEO about the plans to prepare a position statement and whether they will request expedited review (i.e., in less than 30 days).

Once the position statement is in final draft, Council or the Executive Committee will review it to ensure that the statement is consistent with SGIM's mission, vision, and values. Council may: 1) reject endorsing the statement; 2) ask the authors to revise and resubmit the statement to Council based on feedback; or 3) immediately vote to approve the statement.

*The title of the statement should include "... : a Position Statement of the Society of General Internal Medicine." The byline may include individuals who meet standard criteria for inclusion as authors. The byline should identify specific SGIM groups (i.e., committees, commissions, task forces, or interest groups) that contributed to the paper.*

Occasionally, members request an immediate statement from SGIM in response to emergent issues (e.g., decisions by the United States Supreme Court or a critical incident). When a statement is needed within 24-48 hours, that statement may be crafted by designated SGIM leaders for rapid review and approval by the SGIM President or Executive Committee (<https://www.sgim.org/File%20Library/SGIM/About%20Us/Policies/SGIM-Statement-on-Gun-Related-Violence-2022.pdf>). These brief statements will be posted on the SGIM website and will be sent to members via SGIM communication channels.

#### 4. Position Papers and Statements Developed by Other Organizations

SGIM's leadership sometimes receives requests to endorse a position paper or statement developed by another organization. In such cases, Council or the Executive Committee will review the request to ensure that it is consistent with SGIM's mission, vision, values, and current priorities. Council may: 1) reject endorsement; 2) request revision prior to endorsement if the authors are willing to consider feedback; or 3) approve the paper for endorsement. When a decision is needed urgently, the decision may be made by the SGIM President or Executive Committee.

<sup>1</sup>Decamp M, Farber NJ, Torke AM, George M, Berger Z, Keirns CC, Kaldjian LC. Ethical Challenges for Accountable Care Organizations: A Structured Review. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2014 Mar 25. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 24664441.

<sup>2</sup>Byhoff, E., Kangovi, S., Berkowitz, S.A. *et al.* A Society of General Internal Medicine Position Statement on the Internists' Role in Social Determinants of Health. *J GEN INTERN MED* 35, 2721–2727 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-020-05934-8>

<sup>3</sup>Chang A, Fernandez H, Cayea D, Chheda S, Paniagua M, Eckstrom E, Day H.

Complexity in graduate medical education: a collaborative education agenda for internal medicine and geriatric medicine. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2014 Jun;29(6):940-6. doi: 10.1007/s11606-013-2752-2. PubMed PMID: 24557513; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC4026494.

<sup>4</sup>Jackson A, Baron RB, Jaeger J, Liebow M, Plews-Ogan M, Schwartz MD. Addressing the Nation's Workforce Needs. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2014; DOI: 10.1007/s11606-014-2847-4.

<sup>5</sup>SGIM Position Statement in Support of the LGBTQIA+ Community Noelle Marie Javier, Lucille M Torres-Deas, Celeste Newby, Safiya Richardson. Accessed 9.18.23  
<https://www.sгим.org/File%20Library/SGIM/About%20Us/Policies/SGIM-Position-Statement-on-LGBTQ--Rights-10.12.22.pdf>