

**1**  
SMA works with volunteers to routinely identify topics appropriate for scientific statements

Should occur at minimum at each face-to-face meeting of Councils/ Science Committees

**2**  
SMA helps volunteers identify writing group Chair and outlines RWI policy

Chair can have no relevant RWI and will be listed first on final paper

Vice-Chair can have RWI but will not be listed first on final paper

Initial writing group should target 10-12 writing group members. Chair and Vice Chair should not extend invitations to participate in writing group until after MOC approval.

Writing group should aim to achieve 60% authors with no relevant RWI, 40% with RWI.

Writing group must include:

- Early career rep
- Underrepresented minorities in science rep (SMA to discuss these requirements with Chair—tracked internally but not worded this way in invitations to potential authors)
- Lay writing group member

Council will not be allowed to submit new MOC commissions if Council has any papers in development longer than 12 months until these papers have been sent to production

Council cannot endorse any papers if it has any papers that have not been submitted for peer review by 6 months

AHA's official RWI policy (50%+1 no RWI) still applies.

Early Career & Minority Reps are tracked internally and not reported to volunteers!

**7**  
Publishing staff sends MOC commission request form to Council Chairs for review

**6**  
Publishing staff collects RWI from initial writing group (letter explains that nominee is not a member of writing group yet and still must be approved by MOC)

**5**  
Writing Group Chair completes and submits MOC commission request form at online site

**4**  
Council Chair reviews and approves draft MOC commission request form

**3**  
SMA works with Writing Group Chair to complete draft MOC commission request form

Form must include a proposed outline for the paper and proposed assignments for members of the writing group

**8**  
Council Chairs review MOC commission request form—determine if Council wants to cosponsor

If Council Chair wants to nominate author, must explain expertise and why author should be added. Decisions to add authors will be made at MOC meeting

Publishing staff updates MOC commission request form with Councils that have signed on to cosponsor statement for MOC review and consideration

Publishing staff collects RWI from council nominated authors ONLY after MOC approval

Publishing staff puts together RWI table showing writing group balance as initially proposed

**9**  
MOC monthly conference call is held

MOC members discuss MOC commission request form and RWI table

MOC considers involvement from other organizations as cosponsors or endorsers (may result in additional authors depending on organization and involvement)

MOC determines if proposed paper should move forward

MOC determines if proposed authors from cosponsoring councils should be invited to join group:

- Publishing Staff records approved nominees from councils on MOC commission request form
- Publishing staff contacts approved organizations for writing group member nominations—records nominees on MOC commission request form
- Publishing staff collects RWI from organization nominees and updates RWI table, sending to SMA and Writing Group Chair

MOC reviews and approves RWI tables from previously commissioned statements

MOC reviews letters to the editor concerning statements and guidelines and determines if letter and/or response should be posted on AHA site

Completed/ approved forms must be submitted no less than 3 weeks prior to MOC meeting

# PHASE I: Initiation & MOC Approval

[estimated time to completion:  
2-3 months]

1

SMA communicates outcome of MOC call, author list and RWI table to Writing Group Chair within 24 hours of MOC call

2

Publishing staff sends thank you letter to nominees not included in final writing group, cc: SMA

3

Writing Group Start-Up Call is held within 2-4 weeks of MOC approval



When writing group composition and RWI table are approved by MOC, Publishing staff sets up writing group start-up call

Publishing staff develops timeline/roster and sets up access to SharePoint site for writing group members.

SMA staffs the start up call; Publishing staff attends to discuss confidentiality, authorship criteria, timeline, SharePoint site, Guidelines for Manuscript Preparation

Writing group discusses literature search parameters and outline/writing assignments

5

Publishing staff sends reminders to writing group members every 90 days to verify or update RWI

4

Writing group members develop drafts of statement sections

Drafts must be completed within 4-6 months of MOC approval

SMA will work with writing group Chair/Vice Chair to regularly track progress of all drafts

Writing group Chair compiles information about lit searches:

- Describe databases(s) searched
- Time frame of lit search
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria used during search
- Specific search terms used

This step necessary for National Guideline Clearinghouse to accept AHA statements

6

Prior to submitting for peer review, SMA and Writing Group Chair review concordance of recommendations with existing AHA statements and guidelines

Publishing staff polls writing group members over formal recommendations (wording, classes of recommendation and levels of evidence assigned to each recommendation)

Publishing staff sends results of polling to SMA/Writing Group Chair for adjudication

Writing Group Chair and SMA contact authors with concerns to achieve consensus of voting (each recommendation must be approved by at least 51% of writing group)

7

SMA sends reminders to Writing Group Chair regarding timeline throughout writing, on monthly basis at minimum.

If a manuscript draft has not been submitted in 6 months since start-up call, Publishing Staff sends "subject to decommissioning letter" to Writing Group Chair, Council Chair, cc: SMA

If a manuscript draft has not been submitted in 9 months since start-up call, Publishing Staff sends decommissioning letter to Writing Group Chair, Council Chair, cc: SMA

MOC considers decommission request on upcoming conference call

# PHASE II: Start Up & Submission

[estimated time to completion: 6 months]

8

Writing Group Chair submits manuscript for peer review in online site within 6 months of MOC approval.

Publishing staff reviews format of submitted manuscript

Publishing staff reviews figure and table files for format (are original files included?)

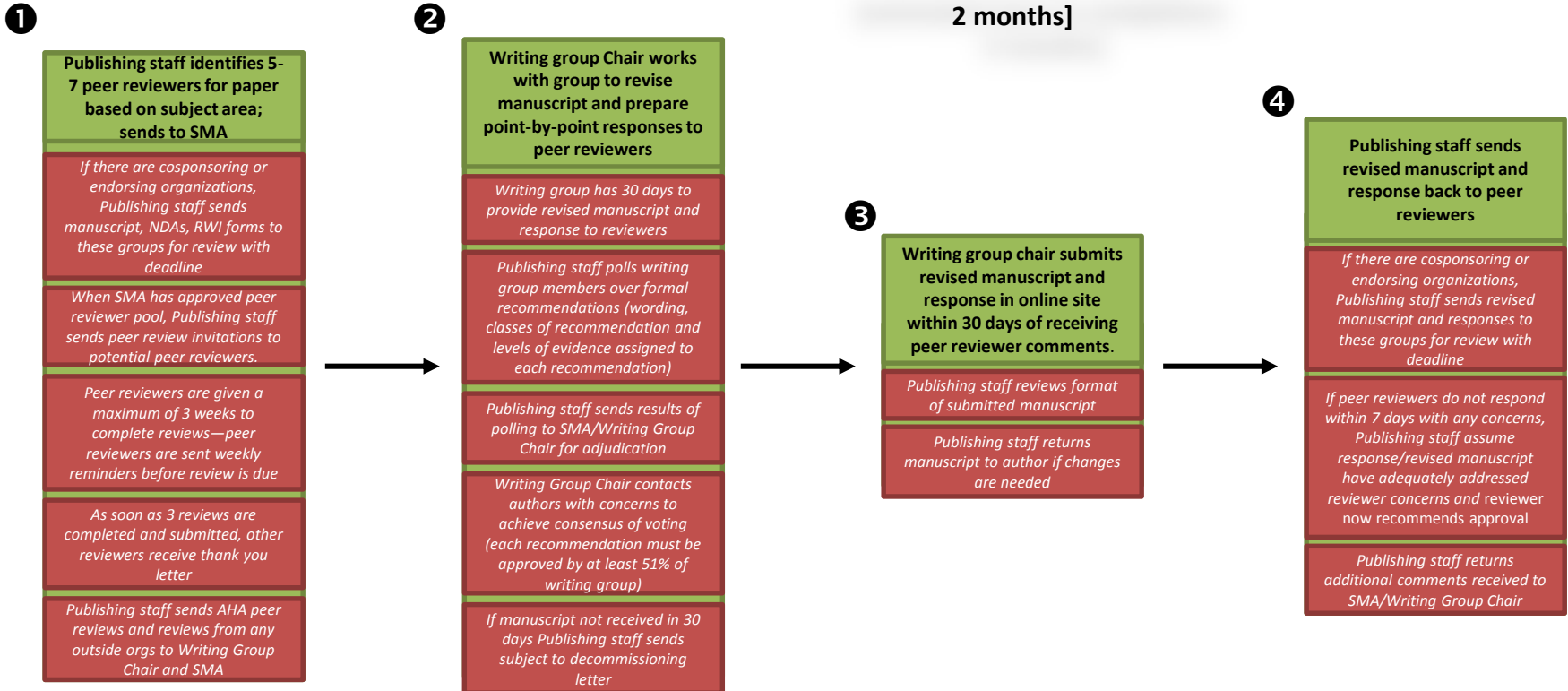
Publishing staff returns manuscript to author if changes are needed



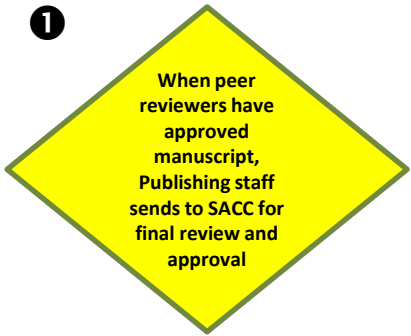
Tracking against PRA goal for time to completion begins

# PHASE III: Peer Review

[estimated time to completion:  
2 months]



1



- Peer reviewers are contacted to identify commentary author for Science News—if none available, Publishing staff contacts SMA for additional commentary author nominees
- Manuscript sent to Production team for permissions review—Production team obtains any necessary permissions.
- If there are cosponsoring or endorsing organizations, Publishing staff sends manuscript for Board review/approval with deadline if required
- FDA/CDC/NIH or other government approval initiated if appropriate
- SACC reviews manuscript for 3 weeks
- Publishing staff sends AHA SACC reviews and reviews from any outside orgs to Writing Group Chair and SMA

2

- Writing group Chair works with group to revise manuscript and prepare point-by-point responses to SACC reviewers**
- Writing group has 30 days to provide revised manuscript and response to SACC reviewers
- Publishing staff polls writing group members over formal recommendations (wording, classes of recommendation and levels of evidence assigned to each recommendation)
- Publishing staff sends results of polling to SMA/Writing Group Chair for adjudication
- Writing Group Chair contacts authors with concerns to achieve consensus of voting (each recommendation must be approved by at least 51% of writing group)
- If manuscript not received in 30 days Publishing staff sends subject to decommissioning letter

# PHASE IV: SACC Review

[estimated time to completion:  
2 months]

3

- Writing group chair submits revised manuscript and response in online site within 30 days of receiving SACC reviewer comments.**
- Publishing staff reviews format of submitted manuscript
- Publishing staff returns manuscript to author if changes are needed

4



- Publishing staff sends revised manuscript and response back to SACC reviewers**
- If there are cosponsoring or endorsing organizations, Publishing staff sends revised manuscript and responses to these groups for review with deadline
- If SACC reviewers do not respond within 7 days with any concerns, Publishing staff assume response/revised manuscript have adequately addressed reviewer concerns and reviewer now recommends approval
- Publishing staff returns additional comments received to SMA/Writing Group Chair



Tracking against PRA goal for time to completion ends

1

After SACC approval, Publishing staff notifies Production team that manuscript is ready for production.

Document is now considered "In Press"

*Publishing staff uploads author and reviewer disclosure tables to online site as supplemental files to manuscript*

*Publishing staff checks author list for FAHAs and updates author list*

*Publishing staff runs "Accept" action in online site*

*Production team contacts authors to complete CTA forms*

*Publishing staff sends manuscript to endorsing organizations with deadline*

*Publishing staff uploads Word version of final manuscript file to SharePoint site for archive in case paper is revised in the future*

2

Production team prepares transmittal paperwork and sends transmittal form with files to LWW (eventually through online site)

5

Publishing staff sends form and literature search terms to National Guideline Clearinghouse to create abstract

4

Upon publication, Science News email containing link to statement, commentary, and Top 10 is sent

3

When proofs are complete, Publishing staff reviews author and reviewer disclosure tables for accuracy.  
Author and SMA review proofs and respond to author queries

6

Publishing staff sends any changes to abstract or approval to NGC

# PHASE V: Publication

**Total estimated time to completion:  
12-13 months + time in press**