Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure

The mission of the journal is to advance knowledge through the publication of scientific and scholarly works. These works must be created with mindful intent to avoid or minimize bias. Conflicts of interest (COI) may increase the probability of bias. A COI exists when an author, reviewer, or editor, or this person’s institution or employer, has financial or personal relationships, or other affiliations that could influence or bias the methods, conclusions, assertions, or opinion that are expressed. While it may not be possible to entirely eliminate the potential for bias, the editors of AOHP Journal believe that disclosure of COI is the most transparent and efficient way to minimize bias. The editors also believe that disclosure of COI, when present, permits the readers to judge for themselves whether bias is likely. Further, requiring disclosure of COI may motivate manuscript authors to avoid potentially biased or misleading statements. All persons involved in the research/project, manuscript, and editorial decision process are required to disclose all potential conflicts of interest, including but not limited to specific financial interests, relationships, and affiliations relevant to the subject of the manuscript.

AOHP Journal uses the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) COI of interest form, available at http://www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf, to manage submission of COI information to the journal. All editors are required to submit a completed form once a year, in January. The first author on every submitted manuscript, regardless of the type of manuscript, is required to submit a completed form at the time of Manuscript Central submission. For manuscripts that are not declined before being distributed for peer review, COI forms will be required from all co-authors during the peer review and production process.

All relevant disclosures should be listed on the title page or elsewhere in each submitted manuscript, and will be printed in the front matter of each article. Authors are also required to report detailed information regarding all financial and material support for the research and work, including but not limited to grant support, funding sources, and provision of equipment and supplies on the title page or elsewhere. Authors without conflicts of interest should include a statement that no such interests exist; this, too, will be published in the front matter. The editor-in-chief will make the final determination regarding what disclosures are relevant and thus will be published. Although the editors are willing to discuss disclosures with authors, AOHP Journal’s policy is one of complete disclosure of all potential conflicts of interest. All COI submissions will be kept on file for a minimum of five years, and may be the subject of future research.

AOHP Journal’s editors take issues of undisclosed conflicts of interest very seriously, and investigate such allegations rigorously. AOHP Journal subscribes to the concepts promulgated by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the COPE flowcharts
will guide investigations of allegations of undisclosed conflicts of interest and other
publication irregularities. See http://publicationethics.org/flowcharts for these charts. If
an author's disclosure of potential conflict of interest is determined to be inaccurate or
incomplete after publication, a formal correction will be published in the journal. In
investigating allegations of inaccurate or incomplete disclosure, the editors will require
the authors to verify or refute the allegations, and to provide a detailed explanation to
support their position. The editors will also ask all other authors of the manuscript in
question to verify that their published disclosure information was complete and accurate.
Such investigations will be conducted by the editors with due diligence to ensure that
such allegations are evaluated fairly and the record is corrected as necessary, but also to
ensure that confidentiality of the individual bringing the allegations and of the author(s)
in question are maintained as much as possible. AOHP Journal requires that the
individual bringing the allegation of inaccurate or incomplete disclosure provide a written
explanation of the concerns, and provide supporting documentation. This individual will
be informed of the progress of the investigation, and will be notified when the
investigation is completed.

In addition to the annual submission of the ICMJE COI form outlined above, all editors
are required to make a disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest, or lack of such
COI, for each paper they adjudicate. This helps ensure full disclosure of COI in between
annual submission of the ICMJE form. Editors and reviewers should refrain from
accepting reviewer or decision editor responsibility for any paper for which they have a
potential COI, and should contact the editor-in-chief if unsure.

Instructions for editors’ annual completion of ICMJE form:

In the “Manuscript Title” box, indicate “Annual editor’s disclosure, January 20xx”. Skip
question 2. For question 3, list any relevant financial relationships that could potentially
present a conflict of interest in your work as an editor at AOHP Journal. For recurring
items (e.g. reimbursement for travel to the same meeting each year, or annual royalties
from sale of a book), list the item once, with the years in which that relationship existed
(e.g. “Reimbursed for travel to National AOHP Board Meeting & Educational
Conference, 2013, 2014”). Skip question 4. For question 5, list any nonfinancial roles
(such as serving as a volunteer editorial board member at another journal) that could
potentially present a conflict of interest in your work as an editor at AOHP Journal. The
form must be submitted to the journal manager in January each year.