

## **Society of Abdominal Radiology (SAR)**

### **Proposed Protocol for Intersociety Collaborations and SAR Endorsements of Guidelines, White Papers, and Position Statements**

*Interdisciplinary collaboration and clinical excellence are part of the mission of SAR. The specialized expertise of our members is valued by many groups, including other radiology societies, clinical societies and organizations, and patient advocacy groups. Relationships between SAR and non-SAR groups can lead to multicenter research projects, expert guidelines, white papers, and position statements that advance our mission. When a collaborative document is to be published or shared on a website **with the SAR endorsement**, we will follow a standardized process.*

#### **I. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

- a. An MOU is recommended to clarify and formalize a relationship whenever SAR and one or more non-SAR groups share intellectual content, authorship, copyright, royalties, or fees.
  - i. MOUs describing substantive intersociety collaboration(s): Meeting management staff (Veritas) will assist in brokering the agreement with management contacts for the other societies or groups involved.
  - ii. MOUs are not generally recommended for individual projects or literature reviews, although specific situations can be presented to the board for advice.
- b. An MOU should usually be in place prior to creation of the work product.

#### **II. Creation of MOU and Work Product**

- a. Authorship decisions should be made by those involved, at the beginning of the process when possible, to promote collaborative outcomes.
- b. Work product creation will vary in time and structure depending on the product and the collaborators.
- c. The MOU will be approved by the authors before submitting to Veritas and the Board for approval and signature. The MOU should specify the involved SAR members or parties (e.g., naming a DFP, if appropriate). When submitting an MOU for approval, an explanatory letter to the Board and Veritas is required, along with contact information for the other Society or scientific journal (or other party).
- d. A SAR MOU template is available (and recommended) and asks parties to specify the involved individuals, work products, ownership and rights and responsibilities. In general, the Board will not approve Society funds for MOU-designated work products.
- e. MOU's should be submitted during the planning stages and beginning of a collaboration. Veritas will retain all MOU's signed by both parties, along with relevant contact information.
- f. Work products should be in a near final state before seeking SAR endorsement (see approval process, below).

#### **III. Approval by the signatory SAR committee or group**

- a. Productive collaborations generally originate at the DFP/ETC/committee level rather than the Board level.

- b. The members of any signatory committee (such as a Disease Focused Panel) should approve the collaborative document to ensure it is supported by scientific evidence and agreement of content experts before submitting to the Board.
- c. The process for approval is at the discretion of the originating committee chair(s). If an MOU is present, processes outlined in the MOU should be followed.

**IV. Assignment of an SAR Reviewer**

- a. Following approval by the originating SAR committee, the document(s) should be submitted to the respective portfolio director and board member.
- b. The portfolio director and board member will solicit a qualified independent reviewer from SAR membership. The reviewer may be a member of the originating committee, but should not be an author of the document.

**V. SAR Expert Independent Review**

- a. The independent SAR reviewer will work on behalf of the Board to independently evaluate the work product over a 2-week period. Key questions for the reviewer:
  - i. Is the work supported by appropriate evidence?
  - ii. Is it coherent?
  - iii. Can it be adopted by the general radiology audience?
  - iv. Is it free of commercial bias?
- b. The reviewer will provide to the portfolio director and board member a list of substantive major (requiring completion before approval) and minor (optional) suggestions for improvement.
- c. The portfolio director and board member may elect to send the review to the originating committee for additional edits prior to submission to the Board.

**VI. SAR Board Approval**

- a. The portfolio director and board member will submit the review and final work product to the Board for review.
- b. Submission for Board review does not guarantee endorsement.
- c. The Board will approve, request further revisions of, or decline the work product within 1 week.
- d. Portfolio director or board member will communicate decisions to the originating committee.
- e. Revisions will follow the above process, starting with II: Creation of Work Product, and will utilize the same independent reviewer.
- f. Approved work products may publicize SAR endorsement.
- g. Declined work products may be published without SAR endorsement.

**VII. Veritas/meeting management documentation**

- a. Staff will create a formal endorsement letter for the originating group, submit for signature by the SAR board president within two weeks following board approval, and send completed letter to appropriate recipient
- b. Staff will create a thank you letter for the independent reviewer for service on behalf of the board, submit for signature by the SAR board president within two weeks following board approval, and send completed letter to appropriate recipient