EDITORS' NOTE

Peer Reviewers for the *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine* in 2007

External peer reviews provide a vital service to *JABFM* and to the family medicine specialty. By donating their time and expertise to reading manuscripts and writing critiques, reviewers assist authors in improving their manuscripts and raising the quality of work published in *JABFM*. The activity of peer reviewing also helps reviewers develop their own writing and critical appraisal skills.

In October 2007, the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) developed a new policy statement "Definition of a Peer Reviewed Journal," which is posted on its website at http://www.wame.org/resources/policies#definition. Here we excerpt selections from that statement:

"A peer-reviewed biomedical journal is one that regularly obtains advice on individual manuscripts from reviewers who are not part of the journal's editorial staff. Peer review is intended to improve the accuracy, clarity, and completeness of published manuscripts and to help editors decide which manuscripts to publish. Peer review does not guarantee manuscript quality and does not reliably detect scientific misconduct.

Peer reviewers should be experts in the manuscript's content area, research methods, or both; a critique of writing style alone is not sufficient. Peer reviewers should be selected based on their expertise and ability to provide high quality, constructive, and fair reviews.

Peer reviewers advise editors on how a manuscript might be improved and on its priority for publication in that journal. Editors decide whether and under which conditions manuscripts are accepted for publication, assisted by reviewers' advice.

Peer reviewers are sometimes paid for their efforts but usually provide their opinions free of charge, as a service to their profession. Editors should require all peer reviewers to disclose any conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, related to a particular manuscript and should take this information into account when deciding how to use their review. Generally speaking, people with a direct financial interest in the results of the manuscripts should not be reviewers."

Authors and researchers are invited to enlist as a peer reviewer for *JABFM* (see the peer reviewer registration form on the website at www.jabfm.org). We aim to secure a content specialist and family physician generalist for each reviewed manuscript to provide a broad and scholarly critique to assist authors in disseminating their work. Reviewers receive a copy of the editor's decision letter and the reviews. We have published information about the *JABFM* peer review process,[1] as well as guidance on how to write a helpful review.[2] Reviewers should also be aware of the *JABFM* editorial statement regarding conflict of interest.[3]

In 2007, the following 350 individuals provided their expert assistance to the *JABFM* peer review process:

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Justine P. Wu

Tsu-Yin Wu

George C. Xakellis, Jr.

Jinping Xu

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Bektas Murat Yalcin

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Atif Zafar

Adam J. Zolotor

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Marjorie A. Bowman, MD, MPA
Anne Victoria Neale, PhD, MPH
Phillip Lupo, MLIS

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