# Physiotherapy Canada Review Guidelines

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Subject Matter and Scope

*Physiotherapy Canada* is the official, scholarly, refereed journal of the *Canadian Physiotherapy Association*, giving direction to excellence in clinical science and reasoning, knowledge translation, therapeutic skills and patient-centred care.

Recognized as one of the top five evidence-based journals of physiotherapy worldwide, *Physiotherapy Canada* publishes the results of qualitative and quantitative research including systematic reviews, meta analyses, meta syntheses, public/health policy research, clinical practice guidelines, and case reports. Key messages, clinical commentaries, brief reports and book reviews support knowledge translation to clinical practice.

Each volume of *Physiotherapy Canada* is comprised of four issues to meet the diverse needs of national and international readers and serve as a key repository of inquiries, evidence and advances in the practice of physiotherapy.

Peer Review Process

*Physiotherapy Canada* uses a bilingual online peer review system called ScholarOne Manuscripts where authors, peer reviewers, and book reviewers can submit articles, evaluations, and book reviews online. From initial submissions to finished proofs, ScholarOne Manuscripts streamlines the publication process to make it easy and effective for authors, reviewers, and editors alike. When your review is ready for submission, you will submit it through the ScholarOne Manuscripts interface.

Blinding

*Physiotherapy Canada* uses a double-blind peer review process, meaning that neither the reviewers nor the authors know each other’s identity. In addition, the reviewers are not aware of each other’s identity. Each manuscript is evaluated by at least two reviewers.

Please remove any information that would identify you from the “properties” section of your Word file. To do this go to the document and click on “file,” scroll down to “properties” and delete any identifying information. If you are sending a PDF please remove your information before you create the PDF version of the review.

Appointment of Reviewers

Manuscript reviewers are appointed by the Scientific Editor. They are selected because they have expertise related to the content that is published in *Physiotherapy Canada*. Manuscript reviewers must have some experience as authors of articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Reviewer reappointments are contingent upon reviewers fulfilling their responsibilities in a timely and effective manner.

Reviewer’s Responsibilities

The following information may clarify how to provide sound and objective evaluations that will be useful to both authors and editors.
Reviewers are invited to contact the Scientific Editor if they have any concerns about a manuscript, if they feel they lack the expertise to complete a review, or have any questions regarding potential conflicts of interest.

Manuscripts sent to reviewers are privileged communications. However, during the review process, manuscript reviewers are free to solicit the advice of people who they believe can assist them with their reviews. These people should respect the confidential nature of the manuscript review process.

- Reviewers must not cite the manuscript or refer to the work it describes before it has been published.
- Reviewers must adopt a respectful and impartial attitude towards each manuscript under review.
- Comments designed for the author should be expressed in clear, respectful and objective terms. Suggestions for revision should not include any reference to possible acceptance or rejection of the manuscript.
- Reviewers are not expected to correct deficiencies in style or mistakes in grammar. However, any observations related to these faults will be appreciated by the editor.

Evaluating the Manuscript

As a reviewer for Physiotherapy Canada, you are requested to evaluate each manuscript on the basis of its accuracy as well as its scientific relevance to physiotherapy. Specifically, you are asked to rate:

- Overall importance to the field of physiotherapy
- Appropriateness of the manuscript for Physiotherapy Canada
- Appropriateness of the approach or experimental design
- Quality of writing
- Usefulness of tables and figures

If you are reviewing a qualitative manuscript, please format your review using the following guidelines and questionnaire.

The manuscript must be presented in clear and precise language, grammatically correct, and logically structured. Tables and figures must complement, not duplicate, the text and must clearly present accurate and comprehensible details. References should be accurate, appropriate, and presented in accordance with the style used by Physiotherapy Canada. Because reviewers are selected on the basis of their professional knowledge and experience, they are expected to watch for the accuracy of the information and terminology used in papers related to their particular field. The credibility of the rationale and the interpretation of other studies cited are also factors to be considered.

Process

Physiotherapy Canada strives to have the initial review back to authors as soon as possible and usually provides authors a few weeks to revise the manuscript depending on the revisions. Manuscript reviewers have to complete their review on ScholarOne Manuscripts.

Reviewers can upload a file that contains the review or copy and paste it right into the comment boxes. The box for the Author and Editor is for the list of major and minor issues and the box for the Editor only will include comments you do not want passed on to the author. The comments should be in list form and refer to specific pages and line numbers.
Do not mark up the manuscript as your review, this will be sent back to you to reformat in list form with the specific page and line numbers along with your comments or suggestions for improvement.

The reviewer is also expected to make a recommendation to accept, accept with revisions, revise and resubmit, or reject the article. This includes considering the overall importance, appropriateness of the manuscript for *Physiotherapy Canada*, appropriateness of the approach or experimental design, quality of writing and usefulness of tables and figures. Manuscript reviewers may also suggest to the Scientific Editor the use of a third reviewer or statistical consultant when they believe additional expertise is required.

**Comments to be Transmitted to the Authors**

Note that comments to be transmitted to authors should not include any reference to possible acceptance or rejection of the manuscript. Please ensure that the tone of comments is respectful. Associate Editors may edit the reviewers’ comments if the tone is not appropriate. Remember that the purpose of the review is to assess and improve the quality of the manuscript. Be specific in your comments: if the problem is lack of data, indicate what is missing; if the presentation is confusing, propose a better organization.

Comments should be structured into three sections:

- Brief summary of the study
- Major issues (if any)
- Minor issues

The brief summary can be simply one short paragraph highlighting the purpose, methods and findings.

Examples of major issues are weaknesses in the approach or experimental design, the soundness of conclusions and interpretations, the accuracy and appropriateness of statistical analysis, the relevance and accuracy of references, and the credibility of the rationale and interpretations of other studies cited in the manuscript.

Examples of minor issues are grammatical errors, duplication between text and table, need for further clarification around a detail in the study, and need for reorganization of material.

**Confidential Recommendation**

In a confidential recommendation to the Associate Editor and Editor, you are asked to choose and justify your recommendation from one of the following:

Accept
- No changes needed from author(s). Manuscripts that are accepted are immediately scheduled for publication. Note: Very few manuscripts are "Accepted" at the initial review stage!

Accept with Revisions
- Manuscript is accepted for publication, conditional on author(s) making minor changes and resubmitting manuscript. This recommendation should be made when some clarifications or changes are needed in the manuscript but the credibility of the manuscript is not in question. For
example, this category would be appropriate if a reviewer believes that discussion in a manuscript exceeds what can be supported by results.

Revise and Resubmit

- Authors are asked to make substantial changes to the manuscript. Manuscript acceptance for publication is conditional on the content contained in the revised manuscript. For example, this category would be appropriate if the reviewer had concerns with the psychometric properties of the measure used or if the rationale of the study was not outlined.

Reject

- This recommendation should be made when deficiencies indicate that a manuscript should not be published. For example, this category would be appropriate if there were irremediable threats to the internal validity of the manuscript.

Decision Letter

Reviewers should keep their copies of manuscripts until they receive a decision letter. The decision letter will inform the reviewer of the course of action that was taken on the manuscript. The letter will contain the comments of the reviewer, the other reviewers, the Associate Editor, and the Scientific Editor. Reviewers may find it beneficial to compare their comments with those of the rest of the team.

Should the Authors choose to revise the manuscript, the revised manuscript and the point by point responses will be sent to the Associate Editor and to the reviewers, at the discretion of the Scientific Editor, for re-review.

Thank you so much for your willingness to review an article. Not only are you helping the journal, but you are providing a professional development opportunity for the author(s) of the article you review.

Contact Information

Please fill out all sections on the ScholarOne Manuscripts registration screen.

Queries

Questions relating to any of the above details may be directed to the Physiotherapy Canada Scientific Editor at the address below:

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