ColoCare Consortium-wide Publication Policy

I. PURPOSE

The most important products of the ColoCare Consortium are timely publications that describe the scientific findings from this collaborative study. Peer-reviewed publications will be the main vehicle for disseminating our findings to scientists and the public. Publications are critical to the future funding of ColoCare research, and to the careers of those collecting and analyzing data. A large volume of high-quality publications is encouraged; recognizing that many scientists will be involved in the collection and use of the data, the following guidelines for publication and authorship have been developed. The purposes of this policy are:

1) To document a consortium-wide Publication Policy for ColoCare publications, defined as publications derived from any data or biospecimens collected from ColoCare patients.
2) To state guidelines and procedures that are required for ColoCare publications and are consistent with the principles of data sharing and collaboration within the ColoCare Consortium.
3) To provide practical and fair assignment of authorship and acknowledgment that credit those who design, analyze and substantially participate in the ColoCare study overall, or in specific manuscripts resulting from approved projects within the ColoCare Consortium.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All publications using data from the ColoCare Consortium are required to have an approved project proposal before the manuscript can be submitted for publication. If multiple ColoCare study sites are involved, the manuscript is required to be approved by the ColoCare Executive Committee (i.e., PIs of all participating ColoCare sites).

The ColoCare Publication Policy is designed to advance and incorporate the following principles:

1) Maintain an inclusive stance on publications
2) Provide appropriate credit to the many ColoCare researchers, including use of multi-lead or multi-senior authorships on manuscripts where appropriate
3) Require a timely central review process of manuscripts and abstracts (involving the ColoCare PIs or, if multiple ColoCare sites are involved, the ColoCare Executive Committee) for all publications that will be acknowledged as ColoCare publications to ensure consistency and quality
4) Prevent duplication of effort in analysis and preparation of manuscripts
5) Require that all contributors to a work intended for publication receive authorship credit, and the provided contributions are consistent with the authorship recommendations by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)
6) Foster the careers of junior investigators; wherever possible, early career researchers should be encouraged to take the lead in ColoCare manuscript development.

III. OWNERSHIP OF TOPICS

ColoCare manuscripts are proposed following an established process within the ColoCare Consortium with appropriate review and approvals required depending on the number of ColoCare sites participating in the Project. All internal as well as external ColoCare researchers are required to fill an internal or external data request form prior to commencing work on a new manuscript. The publications coordinator will review the data request form to assess overlap with existing projects, notify all ColoCare PIs of the proposed analyses, and
offer authorship. However, approval will be sought only from relevant PIs, i.e. PIs of sites contributing data to the manuscript.

Upon approval the “ownership” of the proposed manuscript is granted. “Ownership” will be revoked by the ColoCare Executive Committee if no or minimal progress is made towards publication over a period of at least one year, and there isn’t a clear plan to complete the project. To ensure that the approved manuscript proposals move forward, we have outlined some example benchmarks for manuscript leads to aim for, and for the Executive Committee to evaluate progress. These are just guidelines and manuscripts will be evaluated by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis.

By end of Year 1: Data dispatched, data analyses commenced (e.g., preliminary descriptive tables generated)
By end of Year 2: Manuscript tables prepared, paper outline drawn (e.g., early drafts of the manuscript)
By end of Year 3: Manuscript draft circulated, co-authors comments sought, manuscript submitted for review

If there are overlapping aims in a manuscript proposal, the ColoCare Executive committee will encourage integration of interests across project leads, and provide opportunities for joint lead and joint senior authorships by multiple researchers. Every attempt will be made to integrate topics, however, if mutual agreement for collaboration cannot be reached then the Executive Committee will mediate and facilitate separating proposal aims.

Data generated under specific projects within ColoCare belong to the collaborating researcher(s), defined as researchers who are not key personnel on a ColoCare grant or on the Executive committee, generating the data and the ColoCare PI(s) who approved of the research. This newly generated data can be shared with other interested researchers upon approval by both the ColoCare PI(s) and the collaborating researcher(s). A generous attitude to data sharing, as outlined in the ColoCare data sharing plan (U01 grant), is expected, for the benefit of research.

Note: For project proposals that will generate new data, a ColoCare Consortium-wide project approval process has been outlined. The project leads (first and senior author) must adhere to those guidelines for project approval and data generation. For publishing the data from approved project proposals, project leads then need to adhere to guidelines outlined in this policy.

**IV. DETERMINATION OF AUTHORSHIP**

All persons designated as authors must meet the criteria outlined below for authorship on a ColoCare manuscript. Based on the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts as submitted to Biomedical Journals by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (http://www.icmje.org, August 2014, updated December 2017) authorship credit is defined by the following 4 criteria:

- Substantial contributions to
  - the conception or design of the work;
  - OR the acquisition, analysis,
  - OR interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.
Recognizing the many data and biospecimens sources that are contributed by the ColoCare collaborators the following guidelines apply:

In keeping with the scientific collaborative spirit, it is strongly recommended that first/lead author of the manuscript offers co-authorship to:

- Any research groups whose data have been used (e.g., surgery and pathology if tissue is used). Generally 2 authors will be included from each of these groups per participating ColoCare site (e.g. 2 surgeons, 2 pathologists, etc.), in exceptions up to 3 authors if substantial contributions have been made by all 3 authors. More authors are possible if the project is led by external investigators. (See Attachment A)
- Any research groups with specific projects within the ColoCare Consortium (e.g., gut microbiome project at HCI, HCI CCPS pilot projects), if their data have been used in the research. (See Attachment A)
- ColoCare study coordinators from each site who have worked for the study for at least one year and who were responsible for the coordination of the study at the time when patients were included whose results are used in publications. A rotational basis is implemented if there is a limitation on the number of authors.
- The ColoCare PI(s) from each site who was/were responsible for the conduct of the study during the time when patients were included or followed
- The ColoCare junior researchers (e.g., PhD students or postdocs) who contributed substantially to the collection of data used in this project.

Researchers who accept the offer for authorship commit to participating in the manuscript writing or editing process to ensure that all criteria for authorship are met at the time of submission as outlined above for the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts as submitted to Biomedical Journals by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

Authorship of abstracts:

The ColoCare Consortium highly encourages submission of findings to national and international meetings. As the timeline for abstract submissions is usually tight, this may not always allow for a long time period for review by all potential authors. The first/lead author of the manuscript should convey to the Executive Committee their intent to submit an abstract to a particular meeting and send a courtesy email along with the proposed analysis topic, circulated at least a week prior to the abstract submission deadline to all the ColoCare PIs. At this time, the Executive Committee will notify the first/lead author of any overlapping aims and facilitate collaboration. At least one PI from the Executive Committee should provide verbal/written support before the first/lead author can proceed with abstract preparation. An administrative review of the abstracts is not mandated, however, it is recommended that the abstracts are circulated to all the co-authors for review at least 48-hours prior to the submission deadline (assuming a courtesy email is sent a week before deadline). At least one PI from the Executive Committee should provide written approval of the abstract text before the first/lead author can proceed with abstract submission. If the aforementioned procedures are followed (courtesy email week before, draft abstract 48-hrs before deadline, written approval from a ColoCare PI) and the first/lead author does not hear back from co-authors prior to the abstract submission deadline, a passive consent may be assumed. The authorship on the abstracts should be appropriately representative to show collaboration and joint productivity, and the ColoCare PI(s) collaborating on the abstract has the responsibility to ensure this.
If the abstract is selected for poster or oral presentation, then ColoCare funding must be included in the poster/presentation as described below in the financial acknowledgements section. Additionally, it is recommended that the ColoCare Consortium is acknowledged in the authorship e.g. the phrase “on behalf of the ColoCare Consortium” added to the end of the author list.

**Sequence of authorship:**

As noted above, junior researchers should be given an opportunity to lead manuscripts. The ColoCare PI(s) who approved of the project initially is offered senior or joint senior authorship. The senior author (in consultation with the first author) suggests the sequence of authorships after all contributions to the manuscript have been performed.

**V. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The lead author ensures the appropriate citation of the ColoCare study population and text from collaborative data providers as described in Attachment A. A general ColoCare methods description will be available upon request. The following statement is included: “Patients were recruited as part of the ColoCare Study… in …. between date and date”. It is highly recommended that the first/lead authors cite the ColoCare Study Design Paper when they are describing the ColoCare cohort. Appropriate text modules are available in Attachment A in order to describe and cite the relevant data sources.

**VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

At an appropriate place in the manuscript (title-page foot note, acknowledgment or appendix to the text, depending on journal’s requirement), abstract, poster, or presentation, one or more statements should specify:

1) Scientific or other contributions that need acknowledging but do not justify authorship (e.g. ColoCare study nurses, staff)
2) Acknowledgments for technical help
3) Acknowledgments of financial and material support, specifying the nature of the support
4) Financial relationships that may pose a conflict of interest

**ColoCare Acknowledgments:**

All manuscripts, abstracts, posters and presentations whose subjects/samples include more than 50 percent ColoCare participants/samples are encouraged to reference ColoCare in the title.

**Financial acknowledgements:**

All manuscripts, abstracts, posters and presentations shall acknowledge the ColoCare funding as follows: 

*Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health under U01 CA206110.*

Additionally, inclusion of the following text for manuscripts is recommended:

*The content of this manuscript does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the National Cancer Institute or any of the sites in the ColoCare Consortium, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the US Government or the ColoCare Consortium.*
Note: For data and/or tissues collected prior to the U01 funding, acknowledgement of other funding or institutional sources may be required. Hence, the first/lead author must contact the publications coordinator to ensure appropriate funding sources are being acknowledged.

Additional funding acknowledgements:

Depending on the manuscript aims, acknowledgement of other ColoCare funding may be required. Therefore, it is required that the first/lead author of the manuscript contacts the publications coordinator and consults with the ColoCare PI collaborating on the project to ensure proper acknowledgement of all relevant funding sources. These project- and site-specific acknowledgements will be updated periodically and all ColoCare researchers need to review these periodically so as to be able to appropriately cite relevant funding sources in their manuscripts.

VII. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

These guidelines assume that the named authors have all read and approved the proposed work before submission to the ColoCare review process. All manuscripts will be submitted to the publications coordinator, who will review the ColoCare Study description and funding acknowledgements to ensure they are adequate and meet with the Consortium policies. The publications coordinator will communicate with the ColoCare PI(s) who approved of the project for approval, if needed. The publications coordinator will get back to the manuscript leads within 5-10 business days with any required changes, after which the manuscript is ready for submission.

As noted above, abstracts may be submitted without prior review, but with approval of the relevant ColoCare PI(s) and as long as the processes for abstract submission outlined in this policy are followed.

VIII. PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Publication Fees: The first or the senior author of the manuscript will be responsible for the publication fees associated with the manuscript.

Upon acceptance for publication or presentation, copies of all published manuscripts, abstracts and presented posters are to be submitted to the publications coordinator for tracking purposes within 30 days of acceptance to ensure up-to-date tracking.

IX. CONFLICTS AND DISPUTES

Authorship: The principal authors (lead and senior author) are ultimately in the position to make decisions regarding authorship.

Grievances: If the publication policy is not upheld or the ICMJE guidelines are not met, any researchers who claim authorship are asked to first bring their case to the lead/senior authors. If the issue is not resolved, then the ColoCare Executive Committee will be asked to mediate and ensure inclusion of authors (as a reminder, a principle of the ColoCare guidelines is an inclusive authorship style). If the dispute cannot be resolved the Ombudsperson of the respective ColoCare site will be asked for guidance.
Other conflicts: Any other arising conflicts will be resolved by the ColoCare PI(s) or Executive Committee. Otherwise procedures as described in the Master Collaborative Agreement will be used.

X. COLOCARE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The core of the multi-PI team forms the ColoCare Executive Committee, which will serve as the main decision making body of the ColoCare Consortium. This includes U01 site PI's Drs. Neli Ulrich (HCI), Christopher Li (FHCRC), Erin Siegel (MCC), Jane Figueiredo (CS) and Graham Colditz (WUSM) and affiliated ColoCare site PIs Drs. David Shibata (UTHSC) and Martin Schneider (HBG) or their designated alternates.

XI. CONTACTS

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