(a) What to do if you suspect peer review manipulation during the peer review process.*

*See also infographic “How to recognise potential manipulation of the peer review process” https://bit.ly/2wbBtkt and flowcharts on “What to do if you suspect systematic manipulation of the publication process”

**During peer review process**

[SUSPEND PEER REVIEW PROCESS IF PEER REVIEWER NAME APPEARS LEGITIMATE BUT SUSPICIOUS EMAIL ADDRESS PROVIDED]

- Verify peer reviewer at organisation
  - Yes
    - Check publication record, online search or reviewer database to find other means of independently locating email address
  - No
    - Contact named peer reviewer and ask if they also use the email address provided to you
      - Yes
        - Can named reviewer independently provide details of the manuscript they are reviewing?
          - Yes
            - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
          - No
            - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
      - No response
        - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate

- Contact individual who suggested the named peer reviewer (eg, handling editor) and ask for explanation
  - Thank individual and consider whether an additional peer reviewer could be sought
    - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake
      - Thank reviewer
    - If unsatisfactory/no response or author seemingly suggested the peer reviewer
      - Explain situation to author and author institution in neutral terms and see if any further information can be shared

[REJECT MANUSCRIPT]

- Explain to author and author institution

[THANK AUTHORITY AND INSTITUTION, CONSIDER CONTINUING WITH PEER REVIEW BUT INVITE ADDITIONAL REVIEWERS]

- Thank author and institution
  - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake
    - Thank author and institution
  - If unsatisfactory
    - Explain to author and author institution

[THANK INDIVIDUAL AND CONSIDER WHETHER AN ADDITIONAL PEER REVIEWER COULD BE SOUGHT]

- Thank individual
  - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake
    - Thank individual
  - If unsatisfactory/no response or author seemingly suggested the peer reviewer
    - Explain situation to author and author institution in neutral terms and see if any further information can be shared

[CONTACT NAMED PEER REVIEWER AND ASK IF THEY ALSO USE THE EMAIL ADDRESS PROVIDED TO YOU]

- Yes
  - Can named reviewer independently provide details of the manuscript they are reviewing?
    - Yes
      - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
    - No
      - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
  - No response
    - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate

[CHECK PUBLICATION RECORD, ONLINE SEARCH OR REVIEWER DATABASE TO FIND OTHER MEANS OF INDEPENDENTLY LOCATING EMAIL ADDRESS]

- Verify peer reviewer at organisation
  - Yes
    - Check publication record, online search or reviewer database to find other means of independently locating email address
  - No
    - Contact named peer reviewer and ask if they also use the email address provided to you
      - Yes
        - Can named reviewer independently provide details of the manuscript they are reviewing?
          - Yes
            - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
          - No
            - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate
      - No response
        - Thank the contacted individual and say you plan to investigate

(b) What to do if you suspect peer review manipulation after publication.*

Contact named peer reviewer on organisational email address and ask if they also use the email address provided to you.

- **Yes**
  - Can reviewer confirm details of manuscript?
    - **Yes**
      - Thank contacted individual and say you plan to investigate.
      - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake:
        - Thank individual but check other reviewers had sufficient expertise to assess the manuscript.
          - **If ok**
            - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
          - **If no**
            - CONDUCT POST-PUBLICATION PEER REVIEW
              - Consider adding expression of concern
    - **No**
      - Contact individual who suggested the named peer reviewer (eg, handling editor) and ask for explanation.
      - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake:
        - Thank individual but check other reviewers had sufficient expertise to assess the manuscript.
          - **If ok**
            - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
          - **If no**
            - CONDUCT POST-PUBLICATION PEER REVIEW
              - Consider adding expression of concern
      - If unsatisfactory/no response or author seemingly suggested the peer reviewer:
        - Explain situation to author and author institution in neutral terms and see if any further information can be shared.
        - If satisfactory, eg, naive or genuine mistake:
          - Thank author and institution but check other reviewers had sufficient expertise to assess the manuscript.
            - **If ok**
              - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
            - **If no**
              - CONDUCT POST-PUBLICATION PEER REVIEW
                - Consider adding expression of concern
        - If unsatisfactory:
          - Check if other reviewers had sufficient expertise to assess the manuscript or if revisions are needed.
            - **If ok**
              - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
            - **If no**
              - CONSIDER POST-PUBLICATION CHANGES AS APPROPRIATE
                - Such as correction, retraction, or expression of concern

- **No response**
  - Consider adding expression of concern
  - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS

*See also infographic “How to recognise potential manipulation of the peer review process” https://bit.ly/2wbBtkt and flowcharts on “What to do if you suspect systematic manipulation of the publication process”