PEER REVIEW MANIPULATION
SUSPECTED AFTER PUBLICATION

Note
See also infographic ‘How to recognise potential manipulation of the peer review process’ https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.15 and guidance on ‘Systematic manipulation of the publication process’ https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.23.

PEER REVIEWER NAME APPEARS LEGITIMATE BUT SUSPICIOUS EMAIL ADDRESS PROVIDED

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
      - Satisfactory explanation. Thank reviewer, leave publication as stands
    - No
      - Thank contacted individual and say you plan to investigate

- No
  - No response

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
  - Explain situation to author and author institution in neutral terms and see if any further information can be shared

If unsatisfactory/no response or author seemingly suggested the peer reviewer

Check if other reviewers had sufficient expertise to assess the manuscript, if revisions are needed or if the manuscript is flawed

- If other reviews unsatisfactory
  - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
- If ok
  - Thank author and institution
    - If satisfactory (eg, naive or genuine mistake)
      - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
    - If unsatisfactory
      - CONDUCT POST-PUBLICATION PEER REVIEW
        - Consider adding expression of concern
          - If ok
            - LEAVE PUBLICATION AS STANDS
          - If revisions needed or if flawed
            - CONSIDER POST-PUBLICATION CHANGES AS APPROPRIATE
              - Such as correction, retraction, or adding expression of concern

If ok

Can reviewer confirm details of manuscript?

- Yes
  - Satisfactory explanation. Thank reviewer, leave publication as stands
- No
  - Thank contacted individual and say you plan to investigate