



MRC START publications & authorship arrangements

MRC START has the potential to generate a large number of publishable datasets, which will include nested trials of MRC START interventions run in single trials ('single datasets'), and the combined datasets of MRC START interventions run in multiple trials ('combined datasets').

This document describes the ground rules for publishing and authorship for applicants and researchers on the MRC START grant ('START research team') and researchers providing 'host' trials for the study ('START collaborators').

Core Principles

The core principle governing authorship are: clear communication; no surprises; no waiting to publish; and access to an independent adviser.

Ground rules:

1. All publications arising from the 'combined datasets' will include the START research team and representatives from START collaborators (normally host trial PI).
 - a) Where START collaborators request more than one representative, nominations for authorship will be discussed among the START research team.
 - b) Requirements for authorship are those of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (<http://www.icmje.org/>).
 - c) If author numbers become excessive, papers may be authored under a collaborative name or a combination of named authors (START research team) and a group collaborative name (START collaborators) (<http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3373>).
2. The START research team are keen to encourage publication from single datasets where possible.

- a) Publication of the final MRC START data takes precedence – we cannot delay publication, for example, to allow single datasets to be published first.
 - b) We would expect that START collaborators would look for opportunities to involve members of the START research team as authors in publications arising from individual datasets, either as individuals or under a collective name.
 - c) The START research team will be able to provide materials for papers on the development of the interventions, as well as general background and criteria for reporting standards in nested trials developed as part for the MRC START project.
3. All other publications arising from MRC START (ie not based on the combined datasets) remain in the authorship of the START research team
 4. START collaborators need to sign up to the MRC START authorship arrangements.
 5. We will appoint an independent adviser to whom the START research team or START collaborators can go for advice or independent arbitration in the event of a disagreement about authorship.