



**LeadingAge Statement on Responsible Conduct Of Research and
Scholarly Activities**

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Statement of Scientific Principles

LeadingAge is dedicated to conducting high-quality applied research. As a recipient of Federal funds, LeadingAge has a responsibility to ensure that research funds are spent properly, in accordance with the law and in the public interest. Further, LeadingAge has a responsibility to clearly define its scientific role in conducting research that is privately sponsored. While it is nearly impossible to define appropriate scientific behavior comprehensively, this document presents a set of guiding principles that LeadingAge follows when conducting research.

1. The Research Climate

- a. It is the responsibility of the senior leadership of LeadingAge to create a climate that allows research to be conducted in accordance with principles of good scientific practice. These principles govern all aspects of the research process, such as maintaining professional standards, documenting methods and results, questioning one's own findings, and honestly acknowledging the contribution of others.
- b. The LeadingAge senior vice president of research is responsible for creating a research environment of mutual cooperation. This environment encourages all members of the research team to develop their skills. It also fosters the open exchange of scientific ideas. The senior vice president of research ensures that researchers and research students receive appropriate direction and supervision. It is the responsibility of individual researchers and support staff to work in accordance with these standards and to contribute to the research effort in a spirit of cooperation.

2. Education of Junior Researchers

- a. Researchers who are new to the scientific community may face challenges in conducting applied research, such as deploying methodological knowledge acquired in the classroom in the often ambiguous circumstances of the real world. Additionally, senior staff may essentially become 'junior researchers' when they conduct research in a new area.
- b. LeadingAge has a responsibility to ensure that junior researchers understand good scientific practice. This responsibility rests with all members of the LeadingAge scientific community, but particularly with senior investigators and research supervisors. This includes formally or informally mentoring junior staff, and when the need becomes apparent,

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conducting research seminars or providing other educational opportunities for junior staff to enhance their conformity to high research standards.

3. Documenting Results and Storing Primary Data

- a. Primary data, which form the basis of published research findings, must be securely stored in a durable form with guidance from the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston.
- b. LeadingAge requires researchers to keep clear and accurate records of the procedures they follow and the results they obtain. This requirement applies to both interim and final results. These records are necessary to demonstrate proper scientific practice and to answer later questions about the conduct of the research or the results obtained. Data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form. If kept in electronic form, the data may be temporarily stored in a password protected spreadsheet on a laptop (during site visits, etc..) but should be stored on a company-wide hard drive that is regularly backed up (at LeadingAge, the S: drive). LeadingAge expects data to be securely held for a period of three (3) years after the completion of a research project, unless a longer period is required by applicable regulations or the funder.
 - i. If hard copies of data include identifying information about participants, they must be kept in a locked cabinet in a locked room which only the principal investigator, statistician and building & operations manager have the cabinet key.
 - ii. If electronic copies of data include identifying information about participants, they must be securely encrypted, with only the principal investigator and statistician knowing the password.
 - iii. Data should be converted to a de-identified format as soon as possible after collection, with minimal access provided to the participant look-up table (determining identity).

4. Publishing Results

- a. Results of research conducted at LeadingAge are published in appropriate forms, often as papers in refereed journals. The refereeing process has long been accepted as the best system for reviewing research results and making them available to the scientific community for verification or replication. The issue of authorship is important in the context of good scientific practice. Following the general guidance provided by *Nature*, LeadingAge requires that individuals listed as authors on a paper accept

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personal responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents of the paper, and that they can identify their contributions to that paper.

LeadingAge adheres to the authorship credit recommendations set forth by the American Psychological Association which states: “Authorship credit should reflect the individual's contribution to the study. An author is considered anyone involved with initial research design, data collection and analysis, manuscript drafting, and final approval. However, the following do not necessarily qualify for authorship: providing funding or resources, mentorship, or contributing research but not helping with the publication itself. The primary author assumes responsibility for the publication, making sure that the data are accurate, that all deserving authors have been credited, that all authors have given their approval to the final draft; and handles responses to inquiries after the manuscript is published.”

Additionally, to ensure fairness in authorship the following procedural steps will be taken:

- i. At the beginning of a research project, the PI and other investigators should discuss what will constitute sufficient contributions to the research to warrant co-authorship.
 - ii. If the project evolves and becomes substantially different from its form at the outset, another discussion about contributions sufficient for co-authorship should take place.
 - iii. If a researcher leaves before a project is completed, their exit interview should include questions about their contributions to the project, to help determine whether co-authorship will be warranted.
- b. The LeadingAge website may feature whitepapers and reports that include preliminary research results, summaries of research results, trends derived from one or more research projects, and case studies from research projects that are meant to reveal generalizable knowledge. This practice ensures broad dissemination of and access to research results, particularly by aging services providers that are less likely to read peer-reviewed publications on a regular basis.

5. Acknowledging the Role of Collaborators and other Participants

- a. LeadingAge researchers must properly and appropriately acknowledge the contributions of formal collaborators and all others who directly assist or indirectly support the research. This practice applies to any circumstances in which statements about the research are made, including provision of information about the nature and process of the research and the

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publishing of outcomes. Failure to acknowledge the contributions of others is regarded as unprofessional conduct.

6. Honesty

- a. The need for researchers to be honest is at the heart of all research endeavors, regardless of the discipline or institution. This need for honesty applies to the whole range of investigative work, including designing the research project, generating and analyzing data, publishing results, and acknowledging the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues, collaborators and others. LeadingAge researchers must not commit any act of scientific misconduct, including:
 - i. *Piracy*: Deliberate exploitation of ideas from others without acknowledgement.
 - ii. *Plagiarism*: Copying of ideas, data or text without permission or acknowledgement.
 - iii. *Fraud*: Deliberate deception, including the invention of data and the omission from analysis and publication of inconvenient data.

7. Allegations of Scientific Misconduct

- a. LeadingAge has procedures for dealing with allegations of scientific misconduct and ensures that these procedures are understood by the research staff. These procedures allow for even-handed treatment of both the person making an allegation of misconduct (the complainant) and the person against whom an allegation is made (the respondent). The public presumption of innocence is maintained until the investigation process is complete.

8. Independent Adjudication

- a. LeadingAge has provisions to appoint an independent third party, such as an ad-hoc body of scientific expertise, to act in cases of suspected scientific misconduct. Please see LeadingAge's research misconduct policy.

9. A Critical Approach to Research Results

- a. LeadingAge researchers are always prepared to question the outcomes of their research. LeadingAge acknowledges the pressures of time and resources under which researchers often work. However, LeadingAge expects research results to be checked for accuracy and consistency before

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they are made public. This review should be conducted by the individual researcher responsible for the results and by the team leader. Individual researchers and relevant research team members must be able to explain and justify how the results were reached.

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