

About ACSM Contemporary Issues Statements

Definition:

An ACSM Contemporary Issues document is an official pronouncement developed using a specified evidence-informed methodology. Contemporary issues documents address emerging and “hot topics” in exercise science and sports medicine. These are statements on a prominent or evolving issue of interest to College members and the public at large. Contemporary Issues papers are meant to be quick turn-around documents that allow the College to comment in a timely manner.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Contemporary Issues document is to provide a mechanism by which the College can comment on relevant prominent, emerging, or newsworthy topics in a timelier manner than via a Position Stand, Umbrella Review, or Expert Consensus Statement. Often, these topics will not reach the level of prominence worthy of those documents. Rather, they are topics that necessitate a well-timed, evidence-informed, very brief summary of the current state of knowledge and identification of research gaps. The Contemporary Issues paper is designed to: 1) answer a specific scientific and/or clinical question, 2) present a brief synopsis of the literature, and 3) provide the “bottom line” (the answer to the question).

How Topic is Identified:

Topics for Contemporary Issues papers may be identified by the ACSM leadership and/or nominated by members of the College. Some topics will be strategically identified and developed to address the College's on-going priorities and initiatives. Other topics, however, may be identified more spontaneously in response to an identified need or demanding issue. The Administrative Council/Board of Trustees has ultimate approval of topics.

Protocol for Paper Development:

ACSM Contemporary Issues documents are developed according to a protocol developed by the Pronouncements Committee and approved by the Administrative Council/Board of Trustees. This document is designed to be brief (not to exceed 3000 words), will answer a scientific/clinical question, provide a brief synopsis of the literature, and present the “bottom line” (the answer to the question). The paper will include literature from the previous 5 years and will include indicators of level of evidence. This paper will not be based on a

systematic review of the literature or grading of evidence. Thus it will be a combination of research evidence and expert opinion. Additional specifics regarding writing group composition, etc. can be found in the Pronouncements Committee protocol document. The goal is for the paper to take no longer than 6 months from approval to publication.

Review and Approvals:

Contemporary Issues papers are meant to be “timely”. Thus, the review process for these papers is expedited. Each paper is first reviewed internally by the Pronouncements Committee and authors are expected to address the committees’ comments and revise the document as appropriate. The Pronouncements Committee then identifies a group of content experts to review the Contemporary Issues paper. The Pronouncements Committee will evaluate and discuss the comments and recommendations from the external review group and will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees regarding approval of the document. The Board of Trustees has the final decision regarding approval of the Contemporary Issues paper.

Normally published/communicated:

Contemporary Issues papers cover a variety of topics but do not reach the authoritative or influential level of a Position Stand. As such, this document will be published in an ACSM journal but, not necessary *MSSE*. On a case-by-case basis, the appropriate journal for publication (i.e., *MSSE*, *ESSR*, *CSMR*, *FIT*, *TJACSM*) will be determined by the ACSM journal Editor-in-Chiefs. In addition, they are also promoted and disseminated via additional channels such as Sports Medicine Bulletin, social media, acsm.org and media outreach.