

## Submissions to the APCP Journal

The APCP Journal aims to disseminate original research, facilitate continuing medical education and to provide an opportunity to debate controversial issues in paediatric physiotherapy. Listed below are the different types of submissions that will be considered for publication in the APCP Journal with guidance on how to write and format your work to maximise the chances of your submission being successful. The Editorial Board also welcome pre-submission questions and will be happy to advise further. Please contact the Journal Editor – [journal@apcp.org.uk](mailto:journal@apcp.org.uk) for guidance or pre-submission advice.

### Original Research Reports

Original research in many formats, including quantitative and qualitative research, case series and case reports. These articles should be 4,500 words or less, excluding the references and abstract. All submissions in this category will be subject to anonymous peer review by two reviewers.

### Research Papers

Research papers should generally follow the 'IMRD' pattern (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion). When writing your paper, it is usually best to start with the most important parts, the methods and results, before writing the discussion, introduction and conclusion.

The methods section should include sufficient information to enable other clinicians to reproduce your work. Any work involving human or animal subjects must have appropriate ethical approval from the relevant Research Ethics Committee. In addition, written permission from children, parents or guardians to publish photographs of individuals must be submitted. The methods section should also include details of statistical methods if they are used and state which software, if any, was used to obtain the results. Any apparatus used in the study should be reported in terms of manufacturer and location (city, county, country).

The results section should be clear and easily understood. Rather than presenting the reader with masses of data, it often helps to construct your results

to tell a story, taking the reader step by step through your findings. Do not present data twice in both text and tables/figures, and do not include material that belongs in the discussion, i.e. present results only, not interpretation. Consider how statistical data is presented, ensure that descriptive and inferential statistics are used appropriately to provide meaning to the data collected.

Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively as they are referred to in the text, and placed after the references on a new sheet. Abbreviations should be explained in a footnote and only horizontal lines should be used. Table and figure captions/legends should be included on a separate sheet.

The discussion will allow you to succinctly summarise the major findings of your work and explain its relevance in terms of the available literature and current practice. It is helpful if the first paragraph briefly summarises the major findings. The discussion will also allow you to address any potential weaknesses in the methodology and justify why the research was performed in a particular way. It is important to keep the discussion relevant to the results obtained.

Ideally the introduction should be short and engage the reader, explaining why the paper is relevant to clinical practice. Often a brief summary of the existing literature highlighting the need for this particular research is useful, as it leads directly to the research question being asked.

Finally the title and abstract can be written. The abstract should be structured (limited to 300 words) consisting of 'Background and Purpose' (why the research was done), 'Method' (what was done), 'Results' (what was found) and 'Conclusion' (what was concluded). The title itself should describe the contents of the paper succinctly and accurately.

### Scholarly Papers

Discursive papers sharing ideas or experiences in specific areas of practice can be structured more freely but should still include an 'Introduction', 'Discussion',

and 'Conclusions'. Scholarly papers should be no longer than 4,500 words.

### **Case Studies and Case Series**

The format for case studies and case series differs from that given above and should start with an 'Introduction', followed by 'Case Report' (history, investigations, treatments, outcome), 'Discussion' and 'Conclusion'. Case reports may be notable because they either focus on a rare condition or on a new method of treatment. The use of false names in case reports is encouraged but if a child is recognisable in the report (due to the condition or the specific nature of the treatment given), then written consent for publication should be obtained. Case reports should be no longer than 2,500 words.

### **Audit Reports**

Reports of clinical audit should include an 'Introduction', 'Standard Setting' (with appropriate reference to the available literature), 'Method', 'Results', 'Discussion', and 'Conclusion'. These should be no longer than 3,000 words.

### **Review Papers**

Systematic reviews undertake specific methodology and focus on a specific question, perform a thorough literature search and critical appraisal of individual studies using strict criteria. Less formal review articles will summarise the current literature on a particular topic. The Cochrane Collaboration has published a handbook on conducting systematic reviews (<http://www.cochrane-handbook.org/>) and you should structure your review in terms of 'Introduction', 'Objectives', 'Methods', 'Results', 'Discussion', and 'Conclusion'.

There are published criteria that should be applied to the analysis of randomised controlled trials:

- the Delphi criteria  
(<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10086815>)
- the PEDro scale  
([http://www.pedro.org.au/scale\\_item.html](http://www.pedro.org.au/scale_item.html))
- the MOOSE guide- lines should be applied to the analysis of observational studies  
([http://www.consortstatement.org/mod\\_product/uploads/MOOSE%20Statement%202000.pdf](http://www.consortstatement.org/mod_product/uploads/MOOSE%20Statement%202000.pdf)).

Review papers should be no more than 4,500 words.

### **Technical Evaluation**

Technical evaluations describe mechanical or technical devices used in clinical practice or education and should include an 'Introduction', 'Method' including the specifications of the equipment used and the means of the evaluation, the 'Evaluation', 'Discussion' and 'Conclusion'. Technical evaluations should be no longer than 2,500 words.

### **Service Development Report**

A service development report should describe changes in service delivery/management. The structure of the report can be less formal but should include an introduction', description of the service change(s), outcome and discussion on the implications for future practice. Service development reports should be no longer than 2,500 words.

### **Abstracts of Theses and Dissertations**

Abstracts of research projects, audits and presentations from undergraduate and postgraduate degrees should be no more than 300 words in length and structured as a standard abstract ('Introduction', 'Method', 'Results', 'Conclusion'). The Editorial Board would, however, strongly encourage those considering such a submission to formulate their work instead as one of the above peer reviewed articles. In such cases, a pre-submission enquiry to the editor may be helpful.

### **Other types of editorial material**

The Journal will also consider the following submissions:

- *Letters to the editor*

Letters to the editor can be on any issue pertinent to paediatric physiotherapy or to APCP. Letters should be no more than 500 words long.

- *Book reviews*

Book reviews should be no more than 750 words long.

### **Referencing**

All work submitted for peer review should be referenced in the Harvard style:

*In text*, cite only the author(s) surname(s) followed by the date of publication, e.g. (Robinson, 1994) or Robinson (1994). 'a', 'b', etc., is used to indicate more than one publication by the same author(s) in the same year, e.g. 1992a,b). For three or more authors of

a cited paper, name the first followed by et al, e.g. (Smith et al, 1990).

*In the reference list*, include articles in journals and books alphabetically by author. For citations from journals, give the names and initials of all authors (year of publication), title of the article, full name of the journal, volume number, issue number and first and last page numbers, e.g. *Brown A, Green B and Gold C (2001). 'The value of exercise', Physiotherapy, 87, 1, 77-79*. Referring to books, give the names and initials of all authors/editors (year of publication), title, publisher, place of publication, and the chapter number or the page number of the citation or both, e.g. *Gardner, M (2001). The Annotated Alice, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Chap 10, page 210*.

### **The submission process**

Email your submission in the first place in Word format to [journal@apcp.org.uk](mailto:journal@apcp.org.uk) clearly indicating the nature of the submission e.g. case series, research project.

Ensure that your copy includes information about the author (full name, qualifications, email address). Once your submission has been received you will receive feedback from the reviewers indicating whether the copy has been accepted for publication.

There are a number of levels of acceptance:

- acceptance: no amendments required;
- acceptance: minor amendments required;
- acceptance major amendments required;
- rejection: not suitable for publication in the APCP Journal.