

Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh **Notes for authors (revised April 2011)**

General information

The Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (JRCPE) is a peer-reviewed journal with a circulation of 8,000. Its aim is to publish a range of clinical, educational and historical material of cross-specialty interest to the College's international membership. The JRCPE welcomes submissions from a wide range of authors (and not just Fellows and Members of the College), provided the article has relevance to a general medical audience.

Submitted papers should not have been submitted simultaneously to another journal, should not have been accepted for publication elsewhere and should not have been published already. All papers are subject to peer review (see below). The Editors reserve the right to make the final decision regarding publication and to make textual amendments where considered necessary. We aim to reach a decision on submitted papers within eight to ten weeks. On acceptance, papers are published in the earliest possible print and online editions of the JRCPE.

Preparation of submissions

Papers should be submitted in electronic form, either by email to editorial@rcpe.ac.uk or on a CD-ROM to the editorial office. Text should ideally be in Microsoft Word; see below for information on submitting images.

Please write as concisely as possible and include a word count. Appropriate subheadings should be used to divide the text. A separate title page should be provided, to include:

- The title (concise but informative)
- Authors' names, job titles and places of employment
- The name and contact details (address, email, tel. no.) of the corresponding author
- A structured abstract of no more than 150 words stating background, method, results and conclusion (giving specific data and their statistical significance, if possible). The abstract should emphasise new and important aspects of the study or observations for clinical practice.
- Up to six key words relevant to the article's content

Authors should prepare their papers in line with the JRCPE section guidelines in order for prompt consideration for the relevant section.

All submitted papers are routinely checked for plagiarism. The Editors will not accept articles shown to have been compiled from previously published works of the same or other authors and reserve the right to report evidence of significant plagiarism as a research governance matter to the relevant authority.

Clinical section

Papers

We would be pleased to consider submissions based on original clinical research, including pilot studies, research performed by junior doctors under consultant supervision, and clinical audits where the 'loop has been closed' and a demonstrable clinical benefit has resulted.

Any reasonable topic will be considered and the focus can be either clinical or laboratory-based material. A relevance to a general medical audience is all that is required. Subspeciality material

may be considered, but authors are advised that very small activity audits with no independent comparator and no statistical assessment will generally not be considered.

Clinical papers should not be more than 5,000 words in length, with accompanying data and images as appropriate.

Cases of the Quarter

The JRCPE receives a considerable number of submissions for this section. Submissions across the range of internal medicine are encouraged, but authors should understand that we are not able to publish isolated case reports on the basis of routine presentations of rare illnesses that are already documented in the literature. Authors should appreciate that relevant medical literature for many rare diseases extends well before contemporary digital search systems and are encouraged to research carefully before suggesting a clinical presentation is not previously documented.

It is the policy of the Editorial Board to be selective in the acceptance of case reports on the basis of quality and the message contained for the readership. The Clinical Section Editor welcomes the submission of case reports on topics of important educational content, significant clinical relevance and interest to the JRCPE's readers. These articles should consist of:

- An abstract
- Up to six key words
- Case report (or preferably a case series)
- Discussion
- Conclusion, including the take-home message of the case series

The main text should not be no more than 1,200 words. The essential criteria governing possible review and/or acceptance for this section is that clinical manuscripts or case series have some defined learning point. This should either be previously unreported (preferred), widely unrecognised (which should be justified) or that any new clinical comment is suitably justified by the observed case management on the basis of the detailed information presented. Ideally all submissions should end with a clear take-home message that adds to the importance of highlighting the clinical case. The case report should ideally be accompanied by high-quality, relevant images, which should enhance its educational value.

Please note we require patients' written consent (or a clear explanation of why this was not possible) for the publication of all Cases of the Quarter (see page 4 for more information). Figure legends are required for all images and should summarise the total nature of the problem so that the main impact of the paper can be understood by reading the figure legends.

Education Section

This section of the JRCPE contains mostly commissioned material, including:

- CME papers and questions (commissioned initially for the College's online CME programme, then republished in the JRCPE)
- Reviews and reports from College symposia
- Controversies in medicine debates

Authors interested in writing any of these types of articles should get in touch with the Editor, via editorial@rcpe.ac.uk, with their suggestions.

History Section

The JRCPE welcomes papers on every aspect of medical history – including the social history of medicine, the history of medical practice, the history of the medical sciences, medical biography and medical memoirs. Submissions should normally be up to 5,000 words in length; accompanying, relevant images are welcomed provided copyright clearance has been obtained by authors (see below for more information).

Letters to the editor

Letters should be submitted, preferably by email, within six weeks of receipt of the previous issue of the JRCPE in order to be considered for publication in the following issue. Letters may be up to 350 words in length, with no more than five references, and should relate directly to articles published in the JRCPE or to issues affecting the College.

References

References should appear in the text, tables and legends as Arabic numerals within square brackets after punctuation, numbered in order of appearance. Please do not use the Footnotes/Endnotes tool in Word. References cited only in tables or in legends to figures should be numbered in accordance with the sequence established by the first mention in the text of the particular table or figure.

References should give the names of up to three authors, followed by 'et al.'. The JRCPE uses the Vancouver style of referencing. Examples are shown below, but for further instances consult the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' (ICMJE) relevant webpage: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html

Standard journal article citation:

Parkin DM, Clayton D, Black RJ et al. Childhood leukaemia in Europe after Chernobyl: 5 year follow-up. *Br J Cancer* 1996; 73:1006–12.

Standard book citation:

Ringsven MK, Bond D. *Gerontology and leadership skills for nurses*. 2nd ed. Albany (NY): Delmar Publishers; 1996.

Chapter in a book:

Phillips SJ, Whisnant JP. Hypertension and stroke. In: Laragh JH, Brenner BM, editors. *Hypertension: pathophysiology, diagnosis, and management*. 2nd ed. New York: Raven Press; 1995. p. 465–78.

Tables

Please bear in mind the following points when submitting tables with papers:

- Number tables consecutively in the order of their first citation in the text, and supply a brief title for each one. Give each table column a short or abbreviated heading.
- Place explanatory matter in table footnotes, not in the heading. Explain in footnotes any non-standard abbreviations that are used in each table.
- Identify statistical measures of variation such as standard deviation and standard error of the mean.
- If you use data from another published or unpublished source, permission from the original publisher or author must be obtained and the source must be fully acknowledged.

Images

We welcome high-quality, relevant images to accompany submissions, whether these are photographs, figures or other illustrations. Please bear in mind the following points:

- Print-quality images must be of a high resolution, which means it is unlikely that images found on the internet will be usable. Photographs should be supplied at a minimum of 300 dots per inch (dpi) at a width of 8 cm; line drawings and other illustrations at 600 dpi.
- Please supply all images as electronic files, preferably in JPEG, TIFF or EPS formats. We cannot accept images embedded in Word or PowerPoint files.
- Number each image consecutively according to the order in which it is first cited in the text.
- Please provide a legend for each image, explaining its content and crediting the source.
- If an image has already been published, authors must satisfy the editorial team that they have received permission from the copyright holder to reproduce the material. Due to budget limitations we are unable to pay for permissions clearance or commercial licences to use images. Copyright for images lasts in the UK until 70 years after the death of the creator.
- If photographs of patients are used, they must either be non-identifiable or have permission granted by the individual (see below for more information).

Patient consent

Patient consent is necessary for any case details or images where the specific information about a condition and the patient's age, gender and treating hospital make it impossible to guarantee anonymity. The JRCPE requires patients' written consent for the publication of any potentially identifiable medical information, including all Cases of the Quarter.

If a submitted paper contains any potentially identifiable medical information, authors are required to supply a signed statement that they have obtained the patient's written consent to publish this material. If authors have not obtained this written consent already, the editorial office can supply a JRCPE patient consent form (for the author's and patient's use only – not to be sent back to the editorial office).

Peer review

All submitted manuscripts are subject to peer review, but the Editors reserve the right to make the final decision regarding publication and to make textual amendments where necessary. Manuscripts should not be submitted simultaneously to another journal, should not have been accepted for publication elsewhere and must not have been published already.

Declarations of interest

All authors are required to declare relevant interests (including potential or actual personal, financial or political interests) and this information is published in the JRCPE. All peer reviewers and editors of the JRCPE are also required to declare relevant interests. This information is held centrally and can be made available upon request.

Copyright

Authors can choose to assign copyright to the JRCPE or grant it a licence to publish, if wishing to retain copyright.

Ethics

The editors of the JRCPE view alleged, or suspected, medical or biomedical research misconduct (including plagiarism and duplicate publication) as a serious offence and will not hesitate to refer suspected cases of misconduct to the appropriate bodies.

When reporting experiments on humans, authors should state whether their procedures were in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible institutional and national committee

and with the Declaration of Helsinki. If in doubt whether the research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration, authors must explain the reasons for their approach and show that their institutional review body explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of their study. When reporting experiments on animals, authors should state whether the institutional and national guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.

The editors of the JRCPE have endorsed, in principle, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: writing and editing for biomedical publications (updated April 2010; available from: <http://www.icmje.org>).

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