Quality Assurance in Health Care
The Official Journal of the International Society of Quality Assurance in Health Care

Instructions for Authors

Aims and Scope
The purpose of this journal is to make more widely available the results of quality assessment studies and quality assurance activities. The journal publishes papers in all disciplines related to the quality of health care, including health services research, health care evaluation, technology assessment, health economics, utilization review, cost containment and nursing care research, as well as aspects of clinical research related to quality of care.

This peer-reviewed journal is truly interdisciplinary and includes contributions from representatives of all health professions, such as administrators, doctors, nurses, politicians, quality assurance professionals, social workers and therapists.

Original articles describing studies and their outcome should be addressed to one of the Editors. Copies of any closely related manuscripts should be submitted along with the manuscript that is to be considered by the journal. All papers submitted will be evaluated on the basis of scientific merit and for their contribution to an increased understanding of the quality of health care. Descriptions of the organization and process of health care quality evaluation and improvements are also published, as are editorials and letters dealing with the principles, ethics and philosophy of health care evaluation.

The journal also welcomes meeting reports of up to 1000 words.

Manuscript Submission
Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief or to one of the Regional Editors whose addresses are shown on the inside front cover of this journal.

Manuscripts should be accompanied by adhesive labels with the name and address of the author to whom correspondence should be sent. Authors should retain an additional copy of the manuscript and figures for their own files.

Upon acceptance of a manuscript for publication, a copyright transfer form will be sent to the author(s). This transfer form must be signed and dated by all authors and returned to the publisher.

Manuscript Preparation
Use double spacing throughout, including the reference section. The author's name should not appear within the body of the manuscript or on the figures so that author anonymity may be maintained during the review process where this is considered necessary. Organize the manuscript in the order indicated below, with each component beginning on a separate page and with a page number typed in the upper righthand corner of each page.

Title Page
Page 1 should include: (a) the title of the article (80 spaces maximum); (b) the authors' names; (c) affiliations (the name of the department, if any, institution, city and state or country where the work was done) indicating which authors are associated with which affiliations; (d) the name and address of the author to whom proofs and reprint requests are to be sent; and (e) running title (not more than 30 spaces).

Abstract
Page 2 should include the title of the article followed by the abstract which should have no more than 150 words. The abstract should state the purpose of the study, basic procedures, most important findings and principal conclusions, with an emphasis on the new aspects of the study. All non-standard abbreviations should be spelled out in the abstract and the first time they are mentioned. Key words for indexing should be given at the end of the abstract.

Text
Papers describing studies of quality should be organized in the following format: Introduction, Materials (or patients) and Methods, Results and Discussion. In review papers (usually by invitation) and in papers describing the structure and process of quality assurance, other descriptive headings and sub-headings may be used if appropriate. Every effort should be made to avoid jargon, to spell out all non-standard abbreviations the first time they are mentioned and to present the contents of the study as clearly and as concisely as possible.

Be sure that all references are cited in numerical order in the text and that all tables and figures cited in the text are numbered according to the order in which they appear. Data appearing in tables or figures should be summarized, not duplicated, in the text. All data cited in the text should be checked carefully against the data in the tables to ensure that they correspond, and all the names cited in the text should be checked carefully against the references to ensure that the spelling is correct. Any ambiguous symbols (e.g. the letter 'O' versus the numeral '0', the letter 'I' versus the numeral '1') should be identified. Acknowledgements of grant support and of individuals who were of direct help in the preparation of the study should be included at the end of the text.

References
Type references double spaced and number them consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text, not alphabetically. Identify references in the text, tables and legends by Arabic numerals. References cited only in tables or figure legends should be numbered in accordance with a sequence established by the first mention in the text of a particular table or figure.

The authors are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the references. References should be presented in the Vancouver style. For journal articles the
following information should be included: (a) all author names (surnames followed by initials), (b) title of the article, (c) the journal title which may be abbreviated according to the rules set out in Index Medicus, (d) the volume number, (e) the first page number and (f) the year of publication. If the article is published in a language other than English the title should be translated into English and followed by the original language in brackets, for instance "(in Swedish)". For books, be sure to include the chapter title, chapter authors, editors of the book, title of the book (including volume and edition number), appropriate page numbers, publisher's name and location, and year of publication. Examples of the correct format are as follows:


'Unpublished observations' and 'personal communications' should not appear in the references. These should be inserted in parentheses in the text, and letters of permission from all individuals cited in this way should accompany the manuscript. Information obtained from manuscripts that have been submitted for publication but not yet accepted should be cited in the references: include authors and manuscript title followed by 'submitted for publication'. Manuscripts that have been accepted for publication but have not yet been published may appear in the references: include the authors, manuscript title, and name of the journal followed by '(in press)'.

Tables

The total number of tables and figures should not exceed 8. If a table must exceed one typewritten page, duplicate all headings on the second sheet. Number tables in the order in which they are cited in the text. Every column in the table should have an abbreviated heading. Define all abbreviations and indicate the units of measurement for all values. Explain all empty spaces or dashes. Indicate footnotes to the table with the superscript symbols (*, †, ‡, §) cited in order as you read the table horizontally.

Figures

Figures should be professionally drawn and photographed and should be submitted as glossy, high-contrast (black-and-white) photographs between 8 and 16 cm in width. Letters, numbers and symbols should be clear throughout and should be large enough to remain legible when reduced for publication. Be sure that all spelling is correct, that there are no broken letters or uneven type, and that abbreviations used are consistent with those in the text.

Use a label on the back of each figure to indicate the article's running title and the top of the figure. Do not write directly on the back of the photographs. Do not trim, mount, clip or staple the illustrations.

Submit photomicrographs in the final desired size. Four-colour illustrations will be considered for publication but the author will be required to bear the costs. The colour transparency or negative should be supplied, in addition to colour prints.

Figure legends

Legends should be typed double spaced and numbered with Arabic numerals corresponding to the illustrations. When symbols, arrows, numbers or letters are used to identify parts of the illustrations, each should be explained clearly in the legend. The legends should permit the figures to be understood with reference to the text. If the figure has been published previously a credit line should be included.

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The original manuscript and figures will be discarded one month after publication unless the publisher is requested to return original material to the author.