

Notes for contributors

1. Author(s)

Authorship credit should be based on (1) substantially contributing to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; (2) drafting the paper or revising it critically and (3) final approval of the version to be published. Conditions 1, 2 and 3 must all be met. Acquisition of funding, the collection of data, or general supervision, do not, by themselves, justify authorship. All others who contributed to the work but are not authors should be named in the acknowledgements, and their contribution should be described.¹ All authors should sign the letter accompanying the manuscript submission.

2. Manuscripts

The *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care* publishes papers on all aspects of contraception and reproductive health. Papers may be reports of original quantitative or qualitative research, review manuscripts (including meta-analysis), consensus statements, case reports, short communications, special communications, commentaries or personal views. Papers relating to service delivery, education and training, public health or clinical governance, including audit are welcome. Papers submitted for publication to the Journal are assumed to be submitted exclusively unless it is clearly stated to the contrary. Papers must not have been, or be about to be, published elsewhere, either wholly or in part, with the exception of Cochrane Reviews. Papers submitted to the *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care* are peer reviewed.²

Electronic submission of manuscripts to journal@ffprhc.org.uk is preferred (see Note 11). The first page should contain a short, eye-catching title (which will be used on the contents page); a longer academic title to run at the top of the full paper; name(s) of the author(s) with up to two relevant qualifications and details of their appointments and the name and contact details for correspondence, including e-mail address (if desired). It is important that the Journal Administrator is kept notified of any change in the contact details of the corresponding author during the peer review and publishing process.

Manuscripts should, where possible, be arranged in the order of: structured abstract, between three and five key message points, the body of the paper ideally with the same headings as in the structured abstract (see Note 3), acknowledgements and statements on funding and competing interests and references. Where this is inappropriate papers should be broken up with suitable subheadings to help the reader follow the author's train of thought. Randomised controlled trials (RCTs) should be reported following the CONSORT Statement revised recommendations 2001.³

3. Structured abstract

All reports of original data, reviews, meta-analysis and consensus statements should be submitted with a structured format of no more than 250 words for full papers and 150 words for observational manuscripts, short communications and case reports.

Original data abstracts should be structured under the following headings (if applicable): context, objective(s), design, setting, participants, interventions, main outcome measures, results, discussion and conclusions.

Review and meta-analysis structured abstracts should be structured under the following headings: objective(s), data sources, study selection, data extraction, data synthesis, discussion and conclusions.

Consensus statements should be structured under the following headings: objective(s), participants, evidence, consensus process discussion and conclusions.

Abstracts of observational manuscripts should be described under the following headings (if appropriate): context, observations, discussion and conclusions.

The abstract should emphasise new and important information that the study or investigation brings to the topic area.

4. Discussion

The discussion should focus on the topic of the paper only and should mention strengths and weaknesses and, if appropriate, consider future developments.

5. Tables and figures

Tables and figures should be restricted to those needed to explain or support the argument of the paper. Each table and figure should appear on a separate sheet, numbered in the order in which they are cited in the text and accompanied by explanatory headings/captions as appropriate. An indication of the positioning of figures or tables within the text should be given. The final position of the table or figure is at the discretion of the Managing Editor and is dependent on the final page layout for printing. Where figures have been published elsewhere, the previous publisher's and author's written consent to republication must accompany the manuscript.

6. Illustrations

Illustrations should be in black ink on white paper. Any lettering to be inserted by the typesetter should be indicated on a transparent overlay or photocopy, not on the original. Photographic transparencies or prints should be of good quality. Black and white photographs should be in sharp focus and have a gloss finish. Full colour illustrations should be capable of being reproduced in black and white. Illustrations or photographs should be no larger than 25.5 cm x 20.5 cm. The orientation of illustrations should be indicated in cases where this is not self-evident. A list of figure captions should be included at the end of the main article. Written permission to publish photographs must be obtained from any individual (their parent/guardian if under 16, or their next of kin if deceased) in the photograph regardless of whether they can or cannot be identified. Photographs will be returned to the corresponding author following publication.

7. Statistics

Authors should describe clearly the design of their investigation and source of the data. All statistical methods should be specified so that it is clear which was used where. Unusual analyses should be described and/or referenced. General-use computer programmes should be specified. Where applicable, a statement regarding a pre-sample size calculation should be given. Authors should supply enough information to allow the research to be repeated by someone else. Wherever possible it is important to quantify findings and present data with appropriate indicators or measurement of error or uncertainty such as confidence intervals. Confidence intervals should be given for the main results. Statistical terms, abbreviations and symbols should be defined.

8. Acknowledgement statement

Authors should obtain written permission from all named individuals or companies named in an acknowledgement since readers may infer their endorsement of data and conclusions.

9. Statements on funding and competing interests

Statements on funding and competing interests will be published at the end of each paper. A form for all authors to complete and sign regarding competing interests will be sent to the corresponding author upon receipt of their paper.⁴

10. References

The form of references and abbreviations used should follow the Vancouver style.¹ References should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text. They should then be listed in this order, on a separate sheet at the end of the manuscript. Normally no more than three authors should be listed followed by 'et al.' if there are 4+ authors.

11. Submission of manuscripts

Electronic submission to the Journal Administrator via journal@ffprhc.org.uk is preferred. Four unfolded copies of the typed manuscript, plus accompanying illustrations, figures and tables, should also be sent together with a covering letter to the Journal Administrator (see Note 21). The manuscript should be typed on one side of A4 paper only, be double-spaced and have adequate margins. Pages should be numbered. It is a good idea to 'back-up' photographs and illustrations with stiff card to prevent damage in the post.

A disk, in addition to the hard copies, should be submitted for those papers that cannot be submitted electronically. Preferred software is Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format (RTF). The author should retain a duplicate copy of the disk.

12. Editorials

Editorials should be 1000–1500 words with a maximum of 10 references.

13. Short communications

A short communication should be limited to 1000 words maximum including the abstract of no more than 150 words, a maximum of five references and no more than two tables or figures. Ideally it should contain the same headings as for original articles, except to *omit the key messages*. It should end with statements on funding and competing interests. Short communications are ideal for audit reports, pilot studies or follow-up reports from previously published papers.

14. Case reports

A case report should be limited to 500–1000 words maximum including a brief descriptive abstract and a maximum of five references and no more than two illustrations or figures. It should contain an abstract, the case report and discussion. It should end with a statement on competing interests.

15. Personal views

A personal view should be limited to 500–1000 words including a maximum of five references. It should end with a statement on competing interests.

16. Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor are welcome and should not be longer than 600 words or have more than five references. If you are commenting on material published in the most recent Journal, correspondence should be received within 4 weeks of dispatch of that Journal to be in time for the next issue. **Research letters** containing original unpublished data are welcome; they will be peer reviewed. Correspondents should state their qualifications and address. A statement on competing interests should also be submitted for all letters.

17. Proofs

Proofs will be supplied to the designated author for the purpose of correction of typographical errors only. Non-reply within the given time period will be taken to indicate that no corrections are necessary. Proofs of Letters to the Editor are not normally sent.

18. Confidentiality

Information which may identify a patient or third party should not be given unless essential for scientific purposes. For all case reports (or similar client-specific information) the patient or third party should be shown the manuscript and give written consent to publication. This consent should be indicated in the article to be published.

19. Ethical approval

Ethical approval must be obtained for research and this approval should be indicated in the article to be published.

20. Editor's discretion

The Editor reserves the right to shorten or to make other alterations at his/her discretion to articles accepted for publication.

21. Address for inquiries and submissions

Manuscripts for the Journal should be submitted to the Editor-in Chief, *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care*, Faculty of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care, RCOG, 27 Sussex Place, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RG, UK. Fax: +44 (0) 20 7935 8613. E-mail: journal@ffprhc.org.uk

22. Complimentary copies of the Journal

All contributing authors (subject to a maximum of five authors per article) will receive a complimentary copy of the Journal upon publication in lieu of offprints.

References

- 1 International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. *JAMA* 1997; **277**: 927–934. Updated 2001 www.jama.ama-assn.org/info/aajust.html
- 2 O'Brien P, Wakley G. Peer review at the *British Journal of Family Planning*. *Br J Fam Plann* 2000; **26**(4): 191–193. Updated 2001 www.ffprhc.org.uk
- 3 Moher S, Schulz K, Altman D. The CONSORT Statement: revised recommendations for improving the quality of reports of parallel-group randomized trials. *Ann Intern Med* 2001; **134**: 657–662. www.consort-statement.org
- 4 Policy on the management of competing interest by the *British Journal of Family Planning*. *Br J Fam Plann* 2000; **26**(3):129. www.ffprhc.org.uk