



Journal of Healthcare Quality Research

AUTHORS INFORMATION PACK

GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

Journal of Healthcare Quality Research (JHQR) is the Journal of the Spanish Society of Quality Healthcare (Sociedad Española de Calidad Asistencial, SECA) and is a tool for the dissemination of knowledge and considerations about the quality management of health services.

JHQR publishes articles in Spanish and English associated with any aspect of research in the field of public health and health administration, including health education, epidemiology, medical statistics, health information, health economics, quality management, and health policies. The Journal publishes 6 issues, exclusively in electronic format. Articles are subjected to a rigorous, double-blind review process (peer review).

Types of article

1. Originals.

Empirical works related to any aspect of research in the field of Quality Healthcare in the areas of Nursing, Clinical Medicine, Public Health and Health Management/Administration (such as health promotion, health education, epidemiology, medical statistics, health economics, issues relating to quality management, research on health services, planning and health policies). The maximum length of the text shall be 3,000 words on font type Arial and font size 12. The body of the article shall comprise the following sections: introduction, material and methods, results and discussion. A structured abstract shall also be included in English and Spanish, along with 3-6 key words, a maximum of 6 authors, 30 bibliographical references and no more than six figures or tables. Controlled clinical trials must be submitted in accordance with the CONSORT guidelines. These may be consulted at the CONSORT standards, available under <http://www.consort-statement.org/>) Other methodological study designs should follow the corresponding publication guidelines, such as STROBE, PRISMA, CARE, etc., which can be found at <http://www.equator-network.org/>.

2. Brief originals.

These are works which, due to their reduced length, are not suitable for the originals section. The maximum length of the article body shall be 1,500-2000 words. A structured abstract shall be included in English and Spanish, along with 3-6 key words and 10-15 references, with a maximum of two tables⁵ or figures being permitted. The editors reserve the right to accept conventional originals in this format if the content and length is appropriate.

2.A Quality Improvement Initiative Report

Concise stories that describe and evaluate quality improvement interventions or initiatives that

aim to improve a process or system in healthcare. Includes novel approaches in any of the quality domain and explore how the initiative attempted to improve safety, effectiveness, patient-centeredness, timeliness, cost, efficiency, and/or equity of health care, empowerment of people/communities, etc.

Priority will be given to approaches that are transferrable and scalable to other settings and contexts.

The reports should contain impact evaluation of the initiatives, not only about satisfaction but also some structure, process or outcome measures. SQUIRE guidelines are highly recommended for this type of reports.

Structure and format:

Length is 600-900 words with up to 10 references.

Short title (max of 4 words) that clearly describes the nature of the quality improvement initiative or intervention

Introduction: describing the quality problem, a brief description of the context, the intervention or initiative and how it works and the aim of the solution.

Methods: Very brief description of the Quality improvement intervention or initiative, design, data collection, sample calculation and main outcomes or key performance indicators used to evaluate impact. Also include the setting, describing where the intervention was implemented and which stakeholders (healthcare providers, policymakers and patients are involved)

Results that convey the main findings without duplicating information in the table/figure(s)

Discussion concise text that puts the work into context, describes the main limitations, what factors others have to take into account to apply the intervention, what you have learned after the implementation process and suggests next steps for practice, policy, education or research.

Include no more than 2 tables and figures (total), focused on the main results.

Abstract: Up to 100 words with no headings. The abstract should convey the purpose, brief methods, main finding, and lesson learnt and implications.

Supplementary data: no supplementary data are allowed for this type of report.

3. Editorials.

Works of opinion written on behalf of the Editorial Board. Their length must not exceed 1,000 words, with a maximum of 10 bibliographical references. The subject will be related to the original works published in the journal or to topics of general interest. Figures or tables shall not be included, except in special cases where they are necessary to improve the understanding of the text.

4. Letters to the Editor.

This section features formally accepted scientific observations on the topics included in the journal, as well as comments or responses to published works or opinions on the same. They shall be started with the phrase: "Dear Editor,". They should be written in a formal register, and

may not include pejorative or discourteous statements. The maximum length shall be 1,500 words, with one table or figure and up to 10 bibliographical references.

5. Other sections.

The journal also includes the following sections: Opinion articles, special articles, review articles, book reviews, professional information, bibliographic information, scientific activities, etc. The papers in these sections may be commissioned by the Editorial Team. The texts should be written in an impersonal manner and the use of discriminatory language regarding gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnic and racial identity, disability, etc. is not permitted.

Contact details for submission

You can send your manuscript at

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/jhqr>

Language

This journal publishes articles in Spanish or English language.

Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

Ensure that the following items are present:

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details (e-mail address, full postal address)

All necessary files have been uploaded:

Manuscript:

- Include keywords (3 to 5)
- All figures (include relevant captions)
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided

Indicate clearly if colour should be used for any figures in print

1. *Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files* (where applicable)
2. *Supplemental files* (where applicable)

Further considerations

- The manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- **Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)**
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
- Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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Studies in humans and animals

If the work involves the use of human subjects, the author should ensure that the work described has been carried out in accordance with [The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association](#) (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans. The manuscript should be in line with the [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#) and aim for the inclusion of representative human populations (sex, age and ethnicity) as per those recommendations. The terms [sex and gender](#) should be used correctly.

Authors should include a statement in the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

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Declaration of interest

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Authorship

All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

Changes to authorship

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors **before** submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only **before** the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the **corresponding author**: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or

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Clinical trial results

In line with the position of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, the journal will not consider results posted in the same clinical trials registry in which primary registration resides to be prior publication if the results posted are presented in the form of a brief structured (less than 500 words) abstract or table. However, divulging results in other circumstances (e.g., investors' meetings) is discouraged and may jeopardise consideration of the manuscript. Authors should fully disclose all posting in registries of results of the same or closely related work.

Reporting clinical trials

Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrollment, randomization, withdrawal and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure. The [CONSORT checklist and template flow diagram](#) are available online.

Registration of clinical trials

Registration in a public trials registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal in accordance with [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#) recommendations. Trials must register at or before the onset of patient enrolment. The clinical trial registration number should be included at the end of the abstract of the article. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Health-related interventions include any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome (for example drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, dietary interventions, and process-of-care changes). Health outcomes include any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants, including pharmacokinetic measures and adverse events. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

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PREPARATION

Peer review

This journal operates a double anonymized review process. All contributions will be initially assessed by the editor for suitability for the journal. Papers deemed suitable are then typically

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This journal uses double-anonymized review, which means the identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. [More information](#) is available on our website. To facilitate this, please include the following separately:

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Anonymized manuscript (no author details): The main body of the paper (including the references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements) should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or affiliations.

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It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

Article structure

Subdivision - unnumbered sections

Divide your article into clearly defined sections. Each subsection is given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line. Subsections should be used as much as possible when cross-referencing text: refer to the subsection by heading as opposed to simply 'the text'.

Introduction

State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

Material and methods

Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized, and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the

source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described.

Results

Results should be clear and concise.

Discussion

This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section, which may stand alone or form a subsection of a Discussion or Results and Discussion section.

Appendices

If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

Essential title page information

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
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Highlights are optional yet highly encouraged for this journal, as they increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: [example Highlights](#).

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85

characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

Structured abstract

A structured abstract, by means of appropriate headings, should provide the context or background for the research and should state its purpose, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.

The headings will consist of: «Introduction and Objectives», «Patients or Materials and Methods», «Results» y «Conclusions».

Graphical abstract

Although a graphical abstract is optional, its use is encouraged as it draws more attention to the online article. The graphical abstract should summarize the contents of the article in a concise, pictorial form designed to capture the attention of a wide readership. Graphical abstracts should be submitted as a separate file in the online submission system. Image size: Please provide an image with a minimum of 531 × 1328 pixels (h × w) or proportionally more. The image should be readable at a size of 5 × 13 cm using a regular screen resolution of 96 dpi. Preferred file types: TIFF, EPS, PDF or MS Office files. You can view [Example Graphical Abstracts](#) on our information site.

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Immediately after the abstract, provide 3 to 5 keywords, using British spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

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Define abbreviations that are not standard in this field in a footnote to be placed on the first page of the article. Such abbreviations that are unavoidable in the abstract must be defined at their first mention there, as well as in the footnote. Ensure consistency of abbreviations throughout the article.

Acknowledgements

Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).

Formatting of funding sources

List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding.

If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence:

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Units

Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions: use the international system of units (SI). If other units are mentioned, please give their equivalent in SI.

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- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
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- Provide captions to illustrations separately.
- Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version.
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- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
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References

Citation in text

Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Any references cited in the abstract must be given in full. Unpublished results and personal communications are not recommended in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. If these references are included in the reference list they should follow the standard

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Text: Indicate references by superscript numbers in the text. The actual authors can be referred to, but the reference number(s) must always be given.

List: Number the references in the list in the order in which they appear in the text.

Examples:

Reference to a journal publication:

1. Van der Geer J, Hanraads JAJ, Lupton RA. The art of writing a scientific article. *J Sci Commun* 2010;**163**:51-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.Sc.2010.00372>.

Reference to a journal publication with an article number:

2. Van der Geer J, Hanraads JAJ, Lupton RA. The art of writing a scientific article. *Heliyon*. 2018;**19**:e00205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2018.e00205>.

Reference to a book:

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