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Certified Professional Course in Writing Skills in Medical English

# Writing for Medical Journals

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## Writing for Medical Journals Glossary

### A

**Abstract:** A brief summary of a research article or study that provides an overview of the main findings, methodology, and conclusions. Abstracts are typically used to help readers quickly understand the key points of a paper before deciding whether to read the full article.

**Authorship:** The process of identifying and acknowledging the individuals who have contributed to a research study or article. Authorship criteria may vary between journals, but generally include those who have made substantial contributions to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the study.

### B

**Blinding:** A technique used in research studies to prevent bias by keeping participants, researchers, or assessors unaware of certain information, such as treatment assignments or study outcomes. Blinding can help ensure that results are not influenced by preconceived notions or expectations.

### C

**Conflict of Interest:** A situation in which an individual's professional or personal interests could potentially influence their objectivity in a research study or publication. Authors are typically required to disclose any conflicts of interest to ensure transparency and credibility.

**Cover Letter:** A brief letter that accompanies a manuscript submission to a journal and provides additional context or information about the study. Cover letters may also include a brief explanation of why the study is important and why it is a good fit for the journal.

### D

**Data Analysis:** The process of examining and interpreting data to identify patterns, trends, or relationships that can inform the conclusions of a research study. Data analysis methods may vary depending on the type of data collected and the research questions being addressed.

**Discussion:** The section of a research article that interprets the results, highlights the significance of the findings, and compares the study's results with existing literature. The discussion section often includes implications for clinical practice or future research.

### E

**Editorial Board:** A group of experts in a particular field who are responsible for overseeing the review

process, making editorial decisions, and setting policies for a journal. Editorial boards play a key role in maintaining the quality and integrity of a journal.

**Ethics Committee:** A group of individuals responsible for reviewing and approving research studies to ensure that they meet ethical standards and protect the rights and welfare of participants. Ethics committees may also provide guidance on ethical issues that arise during the course of a study.

## F

**Figure:** A visual representation, such as a chart, graph, or image, that is used to present data or illustrate key findings in a research article. Figures are often used to enhance the reader's understanding of the study results.

**Follow-up Study:** A subsequent study conducted to further investigate or validate the findings of an initial research study. Follow-up studies are often used to build on existing knowledge and provide additional evidence to support or refute the original conclusions.

## G

**Grant:** Financial support provided to researchers to conduct a study or project. Grants may be awarded by government agencies, foundations, or other organizations and are typically used to cover research expenses such as equipment, personnel, and data collection.

**Guidelines:** Recommendations or standards of practice established by professional organizations or governing bodies to ensure that research studies are conducted ethically and adhere to best practices. Guidelines may cover various aspects of research, including study design, data collection, and reporting.

## H

**Hypothesis:** A testable statement or prediction that is formulated before conducting a research study. Hypotheses are used to guide the research process and help researchers determine the expected outcomes of their study.

**Impact Factor:** A measure of the influence and prestige of a journal within a particular field, calculated based on the number of citations received by articles published in the journal. Journals with higher impact factors are generally considered more influential and reputable.

## I

**Introduction:** The opening section of a research article that provides background information on the study topic, outlines the research question or hypothesis, and explains the significance of the study. The introduction sets the stage for the rest of the paper and helps readers understand the context of the research.

**IRB (Institutional Review Board):** A committee responsible for reviewing and approving research studies involving human participants to ensure that they meet ethical standards and protect the rights and welfare

of participants. IRBs are typically required for all studies involving human subjects.

## J

**Journal:** A periodical publication that publishes research articles, reviews, and other scholarly content related to a specific field or discipline. Journals play a key role in disseminating new research findings and advancing knowledge within a particular area of study.

## K

**Keywords:** Terms or phrases that are used to index and search for a research article in databases and search engines. Keywords are typically selected based on the main topics or themes of the study and help readers find relevant articles on a particular subject.

## L

**Limitations:** Factors or constraints that may have impacted the results or interpretation of a research study. Limitations are typically discussed in the discussion section of a paper to provide transparency and context for readers.

## M

**Manuscript:** The written document that presents the findings, methodology, and conclusions of a research study. Manuscripts are typically submitted to journals for publication and undergo peer review before being accepted for publication.

**Meta-analysis:** A statistical technique used to combine and analyze the results of multiple independent studies on a particular topic. Meta-analyses are used to identify patterns, trends, or relationships that may not be apparent in individual studies.

## N

**Null Hypothesis:** A statement that suggests there is no significant difference or relationship between variables in a research study. The null hypothesis is typically tested against an alternative hypothesis to determine if there is evidence to reject it.

## O

**Open Access:** A publishing model that provides free, immediate, and unrestricted access to research articles online. Open access journals make research more widely available and can increase the visibility and impact of published work.

**Outcome Measure:** A specific variable or indicator used to assess the effectiveness or impact of an intervention in a research study. Outcome measures are typically selected based on the research question and may include clinical, behavioral, or patient-reported outcomes.

## P

**Peer Review:** The process by which research articles are evaluated by experts in the field before being accepted for publication in a journal. Peer review helps ensure the quality, validity, and reliability of research studies and provides feedback to authors for improvement.

**Plagiarism:** The act of using someone else's work, ideas, or words without proper attribution or permission. Plagiarism is considered a serious ethical violation in academic writing and can lead to retraction of a published article or other disciplinary actions.

## Q

**Qualitative Research:** A research approach that focuses on understanding human behavior, experiences, or perceptions through methods such as interviews, observations, or focus groups. Qualitative research aims to provide rich, in-depth insights into complex phenomena.

**Quantitative Research:** A research approach that uses numerical data and statistical analysis to investigate relationships, patterns, or trends. Quantitative research aims to provide objective, measurable results that can be generalized to a larger population.

## R

**Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT):** A research study design in which participants are randomly assigned to different treatment groups to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention. RCTs are considered the gold standard for assessing the efficacy of medical treatments.

**References:** A list of sources cited in a research article to provide evidence, support claims, or give credit to the original authors. References are typically formatted according to a specific citation style, such as APA or MLA.

## S

**Statistical Analysis:** The process of analyzing and interpreting data using statistical methods to identify patterns, relationships, or associations. Statistical analysis is used to draw meaningful conclusions from research findings and assess the validity of study results.

**Study Design:** The overall plan or strategy for conducting a research study, including the research question, study population, data collection methods, and analysis plan. Study design plays a critical role in determining the validity and reliability of study results.

## T

**Title:** The main heading of a research article that provides a concise and descriptive summary of the study topic. Titles should be informative, engaging, and accurately reflect the content of the paper to attract readers.

**Tables:** A visual presentation of data in rows and columns that is used to organize and summarize information in a research article. Tables are often used to present numerical data, comparisons, or other

complex information in a clear and concise format.

## U

**Univariate Analysis:** A statistical analysis that examines the relationship between one independent variable and a dependent variable. Univariate analysis is used to describe the distribution of data and identify patterns or trends within a single variable.

## V

**Validity:** The extent to which a research study measures what it claims to measure and produces accurate and reliable results. Validity is a key consideration in research design and is assessed through various methods, such as content validity, construct validity, and internal validity.

## W

**Word Limit:** The maximum number of words allowed for a research article or manuscript submission to a journal. Word limits are typically set by journals to ensure that articles are concise, focused, and adhere to the journal's formatting requirements.

**Writing Style:** The specific format, tone, and structure used to communicate research findings in a clear and effective manner. Writing style may vary depending on the target audience, journal guidelines, and the nature of the research study.