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COMMUNICATIONS Instructions for authors are given at the back of each issue. Authors are asked to note particularly the requirements for structured abstracts, accuracy of references, and keywords. Three copies should be submitted to the Editor, *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, Department of Public Health and Epidemiology, Medical School, Manchester M13 9PT, United Kingdom (tel: 061 275 7111; fax: 061 275 7110; email: jech@man.ac.uk).

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Second class postage paid at Rahway NJ. Postmaster: send address changes to Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd Inc, 2323 Randolph Avenue, Avenel, NJ 07001, USA.

ISSN 0143 005X

Published by
BMJ Publishing Group,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square, London
WC1H 9JR and
printed in England by
Latimer Trend &
Company Ltd,
Plsmouth

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Authors submitting papers for publication should adhere to the format described below. Failure to do so may result in the return of the paper for revision before assessment, with inevitable delay in publication.

General

The journal is published six times per year and covers the field of epidemiology and community health relating to a total defined and numerically rated population. Papers are accepted on their scientific originality and general interest. Ethical considerations will be taken into account. All papers are refereed by independent assessors. Only original material will be considered for publications.

Submission of manuscripts

Papers submitted for publication should be addressed to The Editor, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, Department of Public Health and Epidemiology, Medical School, Manchester M13 9PT, United Kingdom (tel: 061 275 7111; fax: 061 275 7110; email: jech@man.ac.uk). The accompanying letter should include a statement that the material has not been published in, or submitted to, another journal. Authors should submit the names and addresses of four experts whom they consider competent and suitable to review their work. All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship (see *BMJ* 1988;296:401-5). Three copies of text, references, figures, and tables should be submitted together with a word count. Papers will not be returned, so a copy must be retained by the author. If requested, authors must produce the data on which the manuscript is based for examination by the Editor.

Format for original articles

TITLE PAGE

The title page should contain the title of the paper, a short running head, the names of all the authors, and the authors' institutions (only one affiliation per author). A telephone and fax number (if available) should also be given on the title page.

ABSTRACT

Abstracts must be structured and use the following headings: **Study objective; Design; Setting; Patients (or Participants); Main results; Conclusions.** It is very important that the abstract is properly prepared in accordance with the guidelines for structured abstracts published in *Annals of Internal Medicine* 1987;106:596-604.

KEY WORDS FOR INDEX

Authors are asked to include up to three **keywords** which will be used to create the annual index (see *J Epidemiol Community Health* 1983;48:1).

REMAINDER OF THE PAPER

The rest of the paper should be laid out along standard lines: Introductions, Methods, Results, Discussion, References.

References

References must be in the Vancouver style, numbered in the text in numerical order of first citation and listed in number order in the reference list. Journal abbreviations should follow those in *Index Medicus*.

The following styles are used:

Journal article:

- 1 Ben-Shlomo Y, White I, McKeigue PM. Prediction of general practice workload from census based social deprivation scores. *J Epidemiol Community Health* 1992;46:532-6.
- 2 Armitage P, Berry G. *Statistical methods in medical research*. Oxford; Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1987: 194.
- 3 Wisniewski HM, Sturman JA. Neurotoxicity of aluminum. In: Gielmad IJ, ed. *Aluminum and health. A critical review*. New York: Marcel Decker, 1989; 125-6.

Thesis:

- 4 Brooke OG. *Malnutrition and body temperature in Jamaican children*. London: University of London, 1973, MD Thesis.

Do not use *et al* unless there are seven or more authors, in which case list the first three. Always give last page number. If there is only one page, state if the article is an abstract. It is an important responsibility of the author to ensure that the references are entirely correct.

Units

All units must be *Système International* except blood pressure values, which continue to be reported as mm Hg.

Statistics

Standard deviations and standard errors are given in parentheses after the values they qualify; & is not used. In statistical evaluation, it is desirable to quote 95% confidence intervals. A full description of the statistical methods used must be provided in the methods section.

Abbreviations

On the whole the journal does not use abbreviations. There are very few exceptions so if in doubt always give the names or terms in full.

Spelling

English spelling is used. American English spelling will be changed.

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures and tables should be labelled in arabic numerals. Figures should be accompanied by legends on a separate sheet. Line drawings and diagrams may be submitted as good quality photocopies. Glossy prints are not required except in the case of half tone photographs or photomicrographs. Colour figures can be published at the author's cost. Tables should be typed on separate sheets and adhere to the journal style (refer to the tables in a current issue).

Format for short reports

The Journal welcomes the submission of short reports which can fit on one page or less, and can therefore be assured of a much shorter time from submission to publication. Short reports should be up to 600 words in length. They should not have an abstract, but may have section headings, one table or illustration, and no more than five references.

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Letters to the Editor may be submitted and may refer either to material recently published in the Journal, or be short communications containing data on topical subjects.

Ethical aspects

All research on human subjects must have been approved by the appropriate ethics committee and must have conformed to the principles embodied in the Declaration of Helsinki. An appropriate statement to this effect must be included in the methods section of the paper.

