

The Art of Medical Writing: **Roadmap to Publication**

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1. Identify a problem or need
2. Consider your expertise
3. Consider your audience
4. Narrow your topic
5. Choose your outlet
6. Perform the research
7. Write a thesis statement
8. Plan, then write
9. Revise
10. Finishing Touches

JAAPA Guidelines/Article Types

CME Review articles (2,000 to 3,500 words): These articles offer either a concise critical assessment of the current state of knowledge about a disease or condition encountered by PAs or a how-to approach to diagnosing and/or managing a specific problem. The author should avoid writing a standard academic literature review, which is systematic, comprehensive, and heavily referenced, in favor of a selective review and update that emphasizes what is practical, current, and evidence-based. These articles are intended above all to be useful. Once PAs read the article, they should be able to put the information it provides immediately into practice.

Special Article (1,200 to 2,400 words): These articles are original works and analyses of issues related to the PA workforce, including economics, ethics, law, practice policy or patterns, healthcare delivery, or other topics of interest to the PA profession. Articles may include arguments proposed by the authors but should primarily be based on evidence or logical analysis of original source material (such as policy, law, ethical guidelines, expert consensus, or panel recommendation).

Case Reports (1,500 to 2,000 words): A Case Report should recount an interesting or unusual experience with a patient, discuss the intervention and the reasons it was chosen, and provide the outcome. The manuscript must be written in two main sections: CASE and DISCUSSION. In the DISCUSSION section, review the pertinent literature briefly. Note that a Case Report is not the venue for a complete review of the literature on a topic.

Original Research (2,000 to 3,500 words) and **Brief Reports** (800 to 1,600 words) should be reports of original research conducted by the author(s). JAAPA welcomes original research on workforce and related topics that are of particular relevance to practicing PAs. Submissions might include studies and pilot trials that speak to quality of care delivered by PAs, assess the effectiveness of unique models for PA-directed care, provide models for enhancing productivity within clinics or hospitals, describe innovative ways to enhance PA performance, or explore PA demographics.

Brief Reports are a special type of original research that generally involve smaller studies or pilot trials, such as quality improvement or descriptive reports, that offer important insights but lack the generalizability of a larger research project or multisite study.

Becoming a PA: This department is JAAPA's online only medical humanities section for PA students. Student authors may submit creative works about how they experience, explore, and make sense of becoming a PA. The types of submissions welcomed include stories of encounters with patients during clinical rotation, personal illness narratives, reflective essays, poems, visual works (photographs, drawings, paintings, graphic narratives, etc.), videos, and music. Length is flexible.

Commentary (600 to 700 words): A commentary is a comment on a newly published article or other topic of interest to the PA profession.

Diagnostic Imaging Review (800 to 1,600 words): Manuscripts for this department provide a very brief case description leading up to the ordering of imaging studies

A Difficult Diagnosis (700 words): This department highlights focused patient cases that demonstrate a common presentation of an uncommon diagnosis or an uncommon presentation of a common diagnosis.

Mindful Practice: This department is *JAAPA's* online-only medical humanities section. Submissions do not appear in print. Authors may submit stories from practice, personal illness narratives, reflective essays, poems, photographs, drawings, and other creative works that are about how PAs experience, explore, and make sense of the human side of medicine. Length is flexible.

Pharmacology Consult (700 words): This department is for authors interested in writing about medications or pharmaceuticals devices, pharmacology principles, or prescribing pearls. An ideal topic is one that a PA has (or might) pose to a drug therapy professional related to care delivery. The article then addresses that question in an evidence-based, practical way.

Quick Recertification Series (650 words maximum excluding the questions and answers): This department is a brief review of topics covered on the NCCPA certification and recertification examinations, and topics are taken directly from the NCCPA content blueprint. QRS is written in an outline format using the following headings: General features, clinical assessment, diagnosis, treatment. Information under each heading should be concise and bulleted.

Special Topics in ... (1,600 words): This department describes a clinical topic specific to a medical or surgical specialty with succinct, evidence-based information applicable to PAs. Unlike a CME or Review Article, this department focuses on a specific topic or aspect of care, which may represent a new or evolving clinical guidance, an emerging clinical or health issue, or an issue that is less commonly encountered than topics covered in a CME or Review Article.

What's New in (1,600 words): This department describes recent advances that have significantly changed practice standards in various medical specialties, based on review of important new studies, guidelines, or models of care.

5. Letters to the Editor (300 words): Letters to the Editor must be written in response to articles published in *JAAPA*. Authors of the published article will be given the opportunity to respond to the letter.