WG08
GETTING YOUR VIGNETTE PUBLISHED IN JGIM AND OTHER JOURNALS: A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

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Summary:
Clinical vignettes highlight important aspects of teaching, patient care, and sometimes research opportunities. Publication of such cases is a measure of scholarly activity. During the manuscript preparation, one can develop and practice skills such as conceptualization of an idea, communication, synthesis of information, and scientific writing. The interactive workshop will provide hands on experience during the small group exercise. JGIM Clinical Vignette Deputy Editors will participate and guide the discussion. The outcome of the workshop is to identify essential elements of clinical vignette, overcome common obstacles, and assist attendees prepare an outline of their first draft for publication. We will provide resource materials and a list of relevant journals accepting case reports.

Learning Objectives:
1. List essential elements of a Case Report or Clinical Vignette manuscript
2. List strategies and practical suggestions for preparing such manuscripts to enhance the likelihood for publication
3. Identify resources to assist in the writing
4. Identify barriers for publication

Agenda:
1. Introduction, goals, and objectives (5 min)
2. Presentation (15 min): Overview of the writing process, resources, vignette manuscript requirements, and target journal. A concise presentation on these topics to illustrate key points
3. Small group exercise (40 minutes): Each small group will use abstracts of submitted clinical vignettes, from enrolled participants or the JGIM Meeting Supplement. Attendees will work with few clinical vignette submissions, will prepare an outline, and will provide suggestions on the case
4. Discussion and summary (20 min): Small groups will present their outline using overheads and will obtain feedback from the faculty presenters and the audience. The presentations will be limited
5. Conclusions (5 min)
6. Evaluation of workshop (5 min)
## Get Organized

- Your Case Report, pull
  - Case history, labs, Xrays, path, etc.
  - Abstract submitted
  - Presentations made (slides, posters)
  - Any notes you may have (from discussions, feedback during presentations, etc.)
  - References

- Do another literature search
  - Include target journals

- Your target journal(s), pull
  - Find 3-4 “suitable” journals
    - Audience
    - Field: General vs specialty
    - Impact factor (more “prestigious” journal have higher #, NEJM=30, SMJ=0.65)
    - Likelihood for publication
      - Browse examples
      - Call journal Editor
  - “Sample” of published studies
  - Instructions for Authors (or Uniform Requirements, see in resources), pay attention to Authorship requirements/forms
Journals Publishing Case Reports/ Clinical Vignettes

**General Internal Medicine** (Impact Factor)
  - “Images in Clinical Medicine”
  - Letters
  - “Short Communication”
  - Letters
  - “Clinical Observations”: case series
  - Sample: [http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/164/21/2383](http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/164/21/2383)
- BMJ (6.6)
  - “Clinical Review”: few case reports
  - Sample:
  - Letters
- Journal of Internal Medicine (2.9):
- Mayo Clinic Proceedings (2.9): [http://www.mayo.edu/proceedings/](http://www.mayo.edu/proceedings/)
  - “Medical Images”
  - “Clinical Vistas”: Images
  - “Auscultations”: short case reports
  - “Case Reports”: short case reports
- Southern Medical Journal (0.7): [http://www.smajournalonline.com/](http://www.smajournalonline.com/)
- Patient Care (NA): [http://www.patientcareonline.com/patcare](http://www.patientcareonline.com/patcare) (and get paid for it!!)
  - “Brief Report”: case reports
  - “Puzzles in practice”, “Pearls in Dermatology”: short case reports/ pictures/ few/ year

**Specialty Journals (based on your case)**
Get Started

- Your first draft: Just Do It!!
  - Use your abstract, slides, or posters and copy into a word document
    - Background, Learning object, Case, Discussion, Take home points
  - Congratulations! First draft done!

Outline for Case Reports

- Title
  - Informative
  - Facilitate retrieval with electronic searching

- Introduction/ Background
  - Is case unique? Not previously reported
  - Does case describe 2 disorders/ previously unsuspected causal relationship?
  - Does case represent a new pattern?
  - Does case have an unusual diagnosis, prognosis, therapy or harm?
  - Describe how case contributes to scientific knowledge, is worth reading
  - Describe teaching points that add value to this case. Learning points?
  - Other Case reports: Uncommon features, atypical/ unusual, new adverse events,…

- Methods and Results
  - Detailed description: history, exam, investigations.
  - Describe the treatments adequately. Have all available therapeutic options been considered? Are outcomes related to treatments?

- Discussion
  - Report a literature review of other similar cases. Describe how is this case different/ unique and adds to past published literature. Review of past published relevant cases
  - Explain the rationale for reporting the case. What is unusual about the case? Does it challenge prevailing wisdom?
  - Possible alternative explanations. Is the cause of the patient's illness clear-cut?
  - Learning points?
  - In the future, could things be done differently in a similar case? Implications for subsequent developments in clinical practice, teaching, or research.

Adapted from:
### Revise Your Manuscript

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revise your 1st to “n” draft (not ∞)</th>
<th>Avoid writers’ block:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order to work on: Case, Introduction/Background, Learning object, Discussion, Take home points, Abstract, Title</td>
<td>♦ Get ideas down; free-write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set a deadline for submission</td>
<td>♦ Brainstorm with co-authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save each draft</td>
<td>♦ Draw pictures/ flowgrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t delete paragraphs (copy them at the end; you may need them later)</td>
<td>♦ Type with screen off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find what suits you best</td>
<td>♦ Type and don’t read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ 30’ – 60’ qd</td>
<td>♦ Don’t revise while you type initial drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Blocks of time</td>
<td>♦ Avoid perfection (initially)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Early vs. late</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Get Feedback</th>
<th>Revise for…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Involve co-authors</td>
<td>♦ Essence, content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Authorship Guidelines: define up front</td>
<td>♦ Order and flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Order: first, last</td>
<td>♦ Consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Who should be in? out?</td>
<td>♦ Grammar, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Browner, Chapter 10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International journals, Criteria: <a href="http://www.icmje.org/#author">http://www.icmje.org/#author</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be specific about what you need or formatted (Red pen? Revise electronic manuscript with/without “tracking” changes feature on MS Word? General vs. specific?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be specific about timelines</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### JGIM “Editor’s Pearl’s” – Audience: Academic General Internists

| • Good English is a must. Great cases poorly written make the editors work VERY difficult | |
| • Make teaching point clear | |
| • Avoid jargon | |
| • Must have proof of diagnosis without a doubt | |
| • Brainstorm/ Discuss with peers, authors, experts. Helps identify unique teaching points and determine if case worth publishing | |
| • Type of cases | |
| o Great cases are VERY GOOD !! (assists clinicians make a diagn – patient do well) | |
| o Interesting cases are Ok (nice reminders for clinicians) | |
| o “The only case described of the most unusual manifestation of a rare disorder” (NO!) | |
General Resources, Case Reports


Steps to publishing a case report
1. A patient with an interesting condition presents to your practice.
2. Identify a "take-home" message or teaching point from the case. Why is this case important?
3. Choose a journal appropriate for publishing the case report.
4. Obtain the journal's "guidelines for authors."
5. Enlist a medical student, resident, or colleague to help spread the work load.
6. Perform a literature search of journals, textbooks, and electronic media.
7. Compile all source articles in a file.
8. Assign a reference number to each source in the order obtained and write this number in the right upper corner of each article's front page.
9. Write up the case and discussion in the required format using assigned reference numbers to identify sources of information.
10. When the article is finalized, renumber sources in order as they appear in the paper.
11. Mail to the journal your manuscript with cover letter providing correspondence address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address.
12. If the article is not accepted by the journal, obtain reviewers' comments.
13. Revise paper using reviewers' comments and the guidelines for authors of another appropriate journal.
14. Submit article to the second journal.

- Sorinola et al. Instructions to authors for case reporting are limited: A review of a core journal list. BMC Medical Education 2004, 4:4 http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6920/4/4

General Resources, Others

- BMJ short publications, tips for publishing:
  - What types of publications should you aim for? BMJ 2002;324:S133 http://careerfocus.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/324/7344/S133
  - How to target your paper at an appropriate journal, BMJ 2002;324:S165 http://careerfocus.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/324/7348/S165
  - How to maximise your chances to publish as a trainee. BMJ 2002;324:S84 http://careerfocus.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/324/7338/S84
- Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: http://www.icmje.org
- Journal Impact Factor, need to access “ISI Journal Citation Reports” through “Web of Science”. Requires personal or institutional subscription, ex: http://isi01.isiknowledge.com/portal.cgi?DestApp=JCR&Func=Frame
- Organising a research project from scratch. Feldman M, Casey K. BMJ Career Focus 2002; 325: S97a. [Full text]
General Suggestons for Research Papers

How to Write/Publish Papers – Medical Sciences

1. Message: important question clearly answered. Is it worth writing? So what?
   Format: shortest
   Audience: who cares? Journal

2. Preparing
   - Authorship
   - Journal requirements
   - Data
   - Typing (use coded references)

3. Argument:
   - Introduction: why research was started: gap of knowledge justifying research (weaknesses that deserve another study)
   - Objective: statement of the problem
   - Materials & methods: evidence
   - Results: validity/credibility, old to new
   - Discussion: possible implication of evidence not wholly rejected
     • Opening: answer to research question
     • Supporting evidence
     • Counter evidence
     • Generalizability
     • Limitations
   - Conclusion

4. Draft
   - Title: condensed version of the full text: informative/indicative
   - Outline: major points/topics for each section (may use the abstract)
   - Write from outline
   - Each draft a separate file

5. Content and structure: say no more, say all you should, sequence clear
   - Title: accurate, succinct, and effective
   - Abstract: represents the major points
   - Introduction: set the stage, question and Ho clear
   - Main: sequence, anything to D/C?, anything to add?, data agrees with tables, any references needed or D/C?, D/C tables?

6. Prose structure and style:
   - Fluency: write at the side a note of the point
   - Clarity, economy, accuracy, grace
   - Paragraph length (25-26), connections, structure: internal sequence going to a point
   - Sentence: length (< 20 words, verb early on)
   - Elements of sentences: clarity < 2 modifiers, avoid modified phrases, misplaced modifiers, ambiguous antecedents (referring to whom)
   - Accuracy: using right definition or words
   - Spelling
   - Economy
   - Avoid weak verbs, connections: to be, to have, there is
   - Replace abstract nouns: “-ion” write “-ing” instead (the classification, classifying), delete empty phrases or words (pg 129), dehumanizing words, pomposity
   - Check all “-ion”, very, of

7. Tables/graphs: < 1 table/1000 words

Adapted from Huth, E. How to Write and Publish Papers in the Medical Sciences. 2nd Ed. Williams-Wilkins. 1990.
Case Report Outline (Overhead)

Title:

Authors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction / Background</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unique?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contribute, worth reading, teaching points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuspected?</td>
<td></td>
<td>What would be the challenge of presenting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommon?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Most marketable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual? New Pattern?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How will you develop the discussion?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods / Results (Case Description)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td>Treatments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Diagnosis must be proven without doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td>After Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Literature review</td>
<td>• Future: do differently?</td>
<td>• Is it worth publishing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unique?</td>
<td>• Learning Points</td>
<td>• Tentative Journals:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rationale for reporting</td>
<td>• Implications: Teaching, Practice, Research</td>
<td>• If no, what new twist/message to emphasize?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BEFORE

COMPLETE THIS PAGE PRIOR TO THE WORKSHOP

We are interested in your experience and opinion regarding Case Report / Vignette. We would appreciate if you could answer the following questions. This survey was created to assess the effectiveness of this workshop.

I am a:  □ Student (1)  □ Resident (2)  □ Fellow (3)  □ CMR (4)  □ Faculty (5)  □ Other (6)

Regarding Case Vignette or Case Reports at regional or national meetings, HAVE YOU EVER:
If yes, how many:
1) Submitted any for presentation?  □ No (0)  □ Yes (1)  □ 1-5 (1)  □ >5 (2)
2) Presented any at any meeting?  □ No (0)  □ Yes (1)  □ 1-5 (1)  □ >5 (2)

Regarding publication of Case Vignette or Case Reports in medical journals, HAVE YOU EVER:
(Consider any type, such as manuscripts, brief reports, letters to the Editor, observations, medical images, etc. Do not include abstracts published at meetings)
1) Submitted any for publication?  □ No (0)  □ Yes (1)  □ 1-5 (1)  □ >5 (2)
2) Published one or had one accepted?  □ No (0)  □ Yes (1)  □ 1-5 (1)  □ >5 (2)

In the next 6-12 months, How likely are you to submit or HELP submit a Case Vignette / Case Report for…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>presentation at a meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publication in a medical journal?</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</table>

Please rate your level COMPETENCE for How to write a Case Vignette / Case Report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence level</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Med</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Do you agree that Case Vignette / Case Report helps your professional career when…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>presented at a meeting?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>published in a medical journal?</td>
<td>1</td>
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During the workshop I LEARNED:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Learned</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Much</th>
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<td>5</td>
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In the next 6-12m, we would like to contact you and ask if you have submitted / presented a Case Vignette / Case Report

☐ I prefer NOT to be contacted (0)

Name: ___________________ e-mail: _________________________ State: ______ Date: _________

Which description best characterizes your current professional affiliation?

☐ Community-based (1) ☐ University-based (2) ☐ Government / Public Health (3) ☐ Military (4) ☐ Other (5)

THANKS !!