

# Instructions to Authors

*British Journal of Healthcare Assistants (BJHCA)*



The BJHCA is the monthly journal that aims to support the professional development of healthcare assistants, assistant practitioners and those in similar roles.

The journal welcomes articles from HCAs and the nurses they work with on all aspects of HCAs' work, education and professional development:

- Articles on aspects of **fundamental nursing or clinical care undertaken by HCAs**, for example hydration and nutrition, tissue viability, infection control, pain management, and basic and advanced communication skills.
- **Continuing work-based education opportunities**, including specific training for S/NVQs.
- Updates on **how relevant legislation impacts on the delivery of healthcare**.
- **Evidence-based practice**: Articles should be either underpinned by evidence-based practice, or in the case of newly developing areas, informed professional opinion.

The journal also has an **open debate and forum** section and a comment column. Please contribute your opinions, questions and letters.

## Submitting articles

Most articles should be approximately 1,800-2,000 words in length, though both longer and shorter pieces can be accepted. Where possible, please include relevant references in a separate section at the end of the article.

Articles should either be emailed to the Editor, Joe Williams, on [bjhca@markallengroup.com](mailto:bjhca@markallengroup.com) or submitted online at <http://www.epress.ac.uk/bjhca/webforms/author.php> You can also contact Joe on 0207 50 16 787 or 0782 55 11 927.

- Articles should be typed double-spaced (including references), in a Microsoft Word compatible file.
- Please ensure that all pages are numbered.
- Author's identification should only appear on the title page.
- When you have submitted your article you will receive an acknowledgement. All articles submitted for publication in *BJHCA* are reviewed before publication. The review process will take approximately 4–8 weeks. When the review is complete, you will receive an email regarding the suitability of your article for publication in the journal and any suggestions for amendments. You will receive proofs for correction at a later date before the article is published.

**On publication, copyright transfers to MA Healthcare Ltd.**

## S/NVQ articles

For those writing articles for the S/NVQ section, please ensure that you specify the S/NVQ units to which the article is relevant. The S/NVQ article also needs to include 6 questions and answers, amounting to 600 words, to be included to help readers with self-directed learning. Although we would ideally like the total word count to be no more than 2,600 words (including Q&A), we are aware that this section can sometimes exceed this word limit because of the amount of information that needs to be covered. However, please try to keep this total to fewer than 3,000 words.

## 'A day in the life' articles

The format for these differs from a standard article in that the text does not need to be split up into sections with key points, diagrams and headings etc. The piece should be 750-800 words,

**with a portrait or action picture if possible.** Readers will be interested in the duties and responsibilities that the author faces on a daily basis.

### **Article Format**

The title page should carry:

Title of the article.

The names of the authors.

Institutional affiliation or workplace and job title of each author.

Name, address and contact telephone number of the author responsible for correspondence.

### **Standfirst**

This is typeset in bold at the beginning of the article and should be between 20 and 30 words in length. It is designed to develop the reader's interest in the article and tell them something about the content. Any important points can be emphasized.

### **Main introduction**

The main introduction should set the scene for the article. If describing research or a practice innovation for example, describe why the project was needed (e.g. policy changes, identification of a need, research question to be asked). It should also briefly outline the content of what is to follow.

### **Main text**

The main body of the text should aim to present the content in a logical, straightforward way, using plenty of headings to 'signpost' the text and make it easy to follow.

Wherever possible, keep different parts of the content separate, e.g. introduction, presentation, discussion, and conclusions—as this generally improves readability.

Your conclusions should be succinct and try to identify gaps in knowledge and suggest future initiatives.

Avoid unnecessary jargon.

### **Key points**

Please supply five to eight key point sentences that summarize the major themes of your article. These will appear at the end of the article.

### **Key words**

Please supply five suitable key words which give an overview of the article.

### **Figures and tables**

Figures (illustrations, graphs, bar charts and photographs) and tables (information listed in a boxed off row-and-column format) are popular with readers and are encouraged. Remember, your article has to compete with other articles in the journal to catch the eye of the reader. An interesting item can turn a browser into a reader. Please clearly indicate the number of the figure or table in the text of the article and also on the figure/table.

In the case of illustrations, our artists can transform rough drawings you provide into finished artwork. Graphs, bar charts etc must have all percentages/numbers clearly marked on them, as our artists also redraw these.

Photographs and slides can be supplied in hard copy or electronically. If supplied electronically,

please ensure that the images are high-resolution. It is preferable that they each be sent separately (i.e. not embedded in a Word document or Powerpoint presentation).

**You must have written consent to publish photographs of patients and/or their conditions. Please indicate that such consent has been obtained in your submission.**

Please ensure that all tables and figures are cited in the text and that permission has been granted to use them where necessary. If they are from another publication, seek the original publisher's permission.

### References

The Harvard system must be used. Provide full details of the **original source of the material used** (do not use 'cited in...').

1. Arrange references alphabetically by first author's name. Black B (1987)...  
Black B (1999)...

2. Give the surnames and initials of all authors for references with *six or less* authors.  
Black B, Green G (1995)...  
Black B, White W (1993)...  
Black B, White W, Green G, Brown B, Tan T (1993)... Black B, Green G, Tan T (2004)...  
Black B, Abel C, Tan T (1995)...

The last three references above are in chronological order as they are all cited as Black et al in the text.

For *seven or more* authors print the first three and add 'et al'—are arranged chronologically:

Black B, White W, Green G et al (2003)...  
Black B, Green G, Tan T et al (2004)... Black B, Brown B, Tan T et al (2005)...

3. The sequence for a standard journal article is: author(s) (year) Title. *Journal title* (abbreviated as in PubMed) **volume**(issue): first page–last page. E.g.:

Armstrong-Esther C, Hagen B, Sandilands M, Williams R, Smith C (2005) A longitudinal study of home care clients and their informal carers. *Br J Community Nurs* **10**(6): 284–91

4. The sequence, layout and punctuation for books are:

**Personal Author:**

Ellis H (1980) *Lecture Notes on Psychiatry*. 5th edn. Blackwell, Oxford

**Editor:** Scott H, Brown B, eds (1973) *Living with Parkinson's disease*. Vol 5. Raven Press, New York

**Chapter in Book:**

Samuels B (1979) Pulmonary complications of AIDS. In: Rand A, Long B, eds. *Management of AIDS*. Butterworths, London: 387–95

5. Articles that have been submitted for publication but not yet accepted are *not* acceptable as references. They should be cited in the text as 'unpublished observations'. (Smith XY, unpublished observations, with or without a date). Similarly, 'personal communication' should be inserted in the text in parentheses.

6. Articles that have been accepted for publication but not yet published may be included in the reference list: Abel HL (2002) The management of chronic asthma in the community. *Br J Community Nurs* (in press)

**Abbreviations and units**

Abbreviations should be defined at their first mention. SI units should always be used.

**Conflict of interest statement**

It is the journal's editorial policy to ask authors to declare any conflict of interest, including any possible interest, financial or otherwise, that may embarrass the author or the journal if revealed at a later date. If you believe that applies to you, please provide a statement at the end of the article.

**Human or animal subjects**

If the work involves the use of animal or human subjects, the author should ensure that the article contains a statement that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) has/ve approved them.