DESCRIPTION

*Australian Critical Care* is the official journal of the Australian College of Critical Care Nurses (ACCCN). It is a bi-monthly peer-reviewed journal, providing clinically relevant research, reviews and articles of interest to the critical care community. *Australian Critical Care* publishes peer-reviewed scholarly papers that report research findings, research-based reviews, discussion papers and commentaries which are of interest to an international readership of critical care practitioners, educators, administrators and researchers. Interprofessional articles are welcomed.

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ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING

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GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

Australian Critical Care is the official journal of the Australian College of Critical Care Nurses and publishes peer-reviewed scholarly papers that report research findings, research-based reviews, discussion papers and commentaries which are of interest to an international readership of critical care practitioners, educators, administrators and researchers.

Papers should address issues of interest to critical care clinicians and present the paper in the context of the existing international research base on the topic. Selection of papers for publication is based on their scientific excellence, distinctive contribution to knowledge (including methodological development) and their importance to contemporary critical care practice.

The journal does not accept manuscripts containing animal experimentation.

Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

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• Please upload a copy of the relevant reporting guideline used when developing your manuscript.

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Further considerations
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• A statement of competing interests is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
• Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Australian Critical Care is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (http://publicationethics.org) and abides by its Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Editors, Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers, and Cooperation between research institutions and journals on research integrity cases: guidance from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). It is expected that all authors will abide by the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing.

Submitted material will be handled in confidence except for the purposes of review and in order to investigate possible misconduct, including but not limited to concurrent submissions to multiple journals, high percentage of text matching and concerns around research validity, conduct and reporting.

Submitted papers should be relevant to critical care practice. As Australian Critical Care has a global readership, authors should place their paper within the international context. Details of national practices, policies, law, etc. should be in the paper to provide information for all readers. If possible, authors should consult a recent issue of the journal to assess style and presentation of manuscripts published. The journal is widely distributed internationally, and for many readers English is a second language, therefore authors are requested to write in plain English and use terminology which is internationally acceptable. While Australian Critical Care accepts manuscripts from a range of health professionals, it is important to recognise that nurses are the primary readers of this journal.

CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO TYPES OF RESEARCH DESIGNS

The editors require that manuscripts adhere to recognised reporting guidelines relevant to the research design used. These identify matters that should be addressed in your paper. These are not quality assessment frameworks and your study need not meet all the criteria implied in the reporting guideline to be worthy of publication in the journal. The checklists do identify essential matters that should be considered and reported. For example, a controlled trial may or may not be blinded but it is important that the paper identifies whether or not participants, clinicians and outcome assessors were aware of treatment assignments.

You are required to submit a checklist from the appropriate reporting guideline together with your paper as a guide to the editors and reviewers of your paper. The relevant reporting guideline must be uploaded with the submitted manuscript.

Common reporting guidelines are listed below:

- Observational cohort, case-control and cross-sectional studies - STROBE - Strengthening the Reporting Of Observational Studies in Epidemiology http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/strobe/
- Randomised (and quasi-randomised) controlled trial - CONSORT - Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/consort/

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Synthesis of Qualitative Research - ENTREQ - Enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/entreq


Intervention description and replication - TIDiER http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/tidier/

Standards for Reporting Implementation Studies (StaRI) Statement https://www.bmj.com/content/356/bmj.i6795


**Types of article**

*Australian Critical Care* publishes original research, reviews, case studies and discussion papers. In addition, we publish letters, editorials and commentaries on existing content with the journal. Where a case is made, we will also publish study protocols.

**Word limits** - Our experience suggests that all things being equal, readers find shorter papers more useful than longer ones. Given this, and competition for space in the Journal, papers of between 2,000 and 3,500 words are preferred. Word limits are exclusive of figures, table and references. Additional information to enhance the manuscript, such as copies of developed tools or additional data, can be made available as supplementary files.

**Exceptions** - Authors of any manuscripts that do not comply with these restrictions should make preliminary enquiry to the Editor-in-Chief before submitting the manuscript.

**Editorials** - 1,000–1,500 words

Authors who have ideas for editorials which address issues of substantive concern to the discipline, particularly those of a controversial nature or linked directly to forthcoming content in the journal, should contact the Editor-in-Chief (editor.acc@acccn.com.au).

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Full papers reporting original research can be a maximum of 3,500 words in length, although shorter papers are preferred. In some instances, qualitative and mixed-methods papers may be up to 5,000 words in length, where appropriate. Research papers should adhere to recognised standards for reporting (see above guidance and Author Checklist).

All research papers reporting the development of scales must include a copy of the full scale so it can be published as supplementary online material; *Australian Critical Care* does not accept scale development papers which are not accompanied by a copy of the full scale.
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If the scale is in a language other than English, then it must be accompanied by an English translation. If the newly developed scale is a translation of an existing scale then Australian Critical Care requires author(s) to submit written permission from the copyright owner of the original scale to publish the translated version with full credit given also to the original scale (an English translation is also required). Established processes for quality of translation should be adhered to, including the use of back translation.

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Australian Critical Care accepts brief research reports which follow the same rigour, format and guidelines as original research studies but are designed for small-scale research or research in the early stages of development. These may include preliminary studies that use a simple research design or small sample size and that have produced limited pilot data and initial findings that suggest the need for further investigation. Brief research reports are not intended to be used for research that would otherwise qualify for a full original research manuscript or for publishing research that lacks significance or is not rigorous.

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Case reports are valuable to the journal, and should report on a unique clinical situation which is not already well described in the literature. Due to their nature, patients featured in the reports may be highly identifiable. The journal requires that proper consent for publication has been obtained and that the individual(s) being reported on, or their proxy, is aware of the possible consequences of that reporting, including the possibility that the individual(s) could be identified.

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**Letters** - 300-400 words
Letters to the Editor specific to papers published in the Journal are welcome and should focus on work previously published in the journal. Letters are not to be used to report small scale studies. Letters to the editor should be submitted through the online submission process.

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Contributions that are of general interest, stimulating and meet the standards of scholarship associated with the Journal may be selected for publication in a commentary section or as a standalone contribution. Contributions should be submitted online in the usual way.

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Authors should make a case to the Editor-in-Chief for publication of the protocol. Study protocols that include an intervention are required to be registered should include the trial registration number and when the findings are due to be reported.

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If the work involves human subjects, the author should ensure that the work described has been carried out in accordance with The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association (Declaration of Helsinki) for experiments involving humans and adheres to the uniform Requirements for manuscripts submitted to Biomedical journals. Authors should include a statement in the methods section of the manuscript that informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects. The privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed.

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**Other/multiple and parallel publications**
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Review process
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All contributions will be initially assessed by the Editor-in-Chief for suitability for the journal. Papers deemed suitable are then sent to a minimum of two independent expert reviewers to assess the scientific quality of the paper. Letters to the Editor, Editorials and Research Translation features will have one peer review conducted by a member of the Editorial Committee. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of articles. The Editor-in-Chief’s decision is final.

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 Occasionally a paper will be returned to the author with requests for revisions in order to assist the editors in deciding whether or not to send it out for review. Authors can expect a decision from this stage of the review process within 2-3 weeks of submission.

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In submitted revisions of the original manuscript you will need to provide clear evidence of the changes within the manuscript by either highlighting the changes or changing the text to a coloured font. Please do not use track changes. Response to reviewer comments should also be included in table format specifying the nature of change or reasoning as to why this change was not undertaken.

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It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier: https://www.elsevier.com/guidepublication). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors, you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION
Manuscripts must be accompanied by the following files for submission:

Covering letter - in which you detail matters you wish the editors to consider.

Reporting Guideline Checklist - if applicable

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