



TABLE OF CONTENTS

●	Description	p.1
●	Audience	p.2
●	Impact Factor	p.2
●	Abstracting and Indexing	p.2
●	Editorial Board	p.2
●	Guide for Authors	p.4



ISSN: 0020-7489

DESCRIPTION

The *International Journal of Nursing Studies* (IJNS) provides a forum for original research and scholarship about **health care** delivery, organisation, management, workforce, policy and research methods relevant to **nursing, midwifery** and other health related professions. The *IJNS* aims to support evidence informed policy and practice by publishing research, systematic and other scholarly reviews, critical discussion, and commentary of the highest standard.

The journal particularly welcomes studies that aim to evaluate and understand complex health care interventions and health policies and which employ the most rigorous designs and methods appropriate for the research question of interest. The journal also seeks to advance the quality of research by publishing methodological papers introducing or elaborating on analytic techniques, measures, and research methods.

The journal has been publishing original peer-reviewed articles of interest to the international health care community since 1963, making it one of the longest standing repositories of scholarship in this field. The IJNS offers authors the benefits of:

- A highly respected journal in its field with consistently high impact
- Indexed in major databases: PubMed, Medline, Thomson Reuters - Science Citation Index, Scopus, Thomson Reuters - Social Science Citation Index, CINAHL and the BNI (British Nursing Index).
- A truly global readership
- Highly efficient editorial processes: average time from [submission](#) to first decision of 4 weeks
- Rapid initial screening for suitability and editorial interest
- Excellent peer reviewers drawn from a range of health service research disciplines
- Final online publication as soon as 2 weeks post-acceptance.

The IJNS endorses the Equator Network (<http://www.equator-network.org/>) an international initiative that seeks to improve reliability and value of research literature in health care by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of studies. We ask our authors to make use of appropriate

reporting guidelines to ensure excellence in scientific reporting. Guidelines for authors can be accessed at <http://ees.elsevier.com/ijns>.

AUDIENCE

Nurses, midwives, educators, administrators and researchers in all areas of nursing and caring sciences.

IMPACT FACTOR

2018: 3.570 © Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Reports 2019

ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING

Social Sciences Citation Index
Science Citation Index Expanded
EMCARE
Current Contents - Social & Behavioral Sciences
Psychology Abstracts
PubMed/Medline
CINAHL
ASSIA
Scopus
British Nursing Index
CISTI
CIRRIE

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief

Ian Norman, King's College London Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery, London, SE1 8WA, UK (Senior Editorial Assistant: Stephanie Waller; Editorial Assistant Isabell Mayr)

Executive Editor

Peter Griffiths, University of Southampton Faculty of Health Sciences, Southampton, United Kingdom

Honorary Editors

Rosemary Crow, Guildford, UK

Jenifer Wilson-Barnett, London, United Kingdom

Statistical Editors

Jason Beckstead, Tampa, FL, United States

Trevor Murrells, London, United Kingdom

Associate Editors

Chiara Dall'ora, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom

Patricia Davidson, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, Baltimore, MD, USA

Jonathan Drennan, University College Cork National University of Ireland, Cork, Ireland

Christine Duffield, University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Broadway, NSW, Australia

Donna Haiduven, University of South Florida, Tampa, United States

Ruth Harris, King's College London, London, United Kingdom

Jan Kottner, Charite University Hospital Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Sharon McKinley, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Christopher McLean, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom

Nancy Nivison Menzel, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas, United States

Chizu Mimura, Himorogi Psychiatric Institute, Tokyo, Japan

Micah David James Peters, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia

Lusine Poghosyan, Columbia University, New York, United States

Roberta Sammut, University of Malta Faculty of Health Sciences, Msida, Malta

Lisette Schoonhoven, University Medical Centre, Utrecht, Netherlands

Michael Simon, University of Basel Institute of Nursing Science, Basel, Switzerland

Rhayun Song, Chungnam National University, Daejeon, Korea, Republic of
Allison Squires, New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing, New York, United States
Alison While, King's College London, London, United Kingdom
Lisa Whitehead, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia
Olga Yakusheva, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, United States
Franziska Zuniga, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland

Editorial Board

Linda Aiken, University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, Philadelphia, United States
Wendy P. Chaboyer, Griffith University, Faculty of Nursing and Health, Research Centre for Clinical Practice Innovation, Gold Coast, Australia
Sean Clarke, New York University, New York, United States
John Cutcliffe, University of Maine, Orono, United States
Linda Franck, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, USA
Ingalill Rahm Hallberg, Lund University, Lund, Sweden
Hongsoo Kim, Seoul National University (SNU), Seoul, Korea, Republic of
Elizabeth Manias, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia
Carl May, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
Martin McKee, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, United Kingdom
Hugh McKenna, Ulster University, Inst. of Nursing and Health Research, Newtownabbey, United Kingdom
Eui Geum Oh, Yonsei University, Graduate School of Nursing College of Nursing, Seoul, Korea, Republic of
Anne Marie Rafferty, King's College London, London, United Kingdom
Maritta Välimäki, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

1. Introduction

The *International Journal of Nursing Studies* (IJNS) provides a forum for original research and scholarship about **health care** delivery, organisation, management, workforce, policy and research methods relevant to **nursing, midwifery** and other health related professions. The IJNS aims to support evidence informed policy and practice by publishing research, systematic and other scholarly reviews, critical discussion, and commentary of the highest standard.

Papers should address issues of international interest and concern and present the study in the context of the existing international research base on the topic. Studies that focus on a single country should identify how the material presented might be relevant to a wider audience and how it contributes to the international knowledge base.

1.1 Types of papers and word limits

The IJNS publishes original research, reviews, and discussion papers. Full papers can be a maximum of 7000 words in length (excluding references and text in tables or figures), although shorter papers are preferred. In addition we publish shorter editorials and letters, which comment on current or recent journal content.

1.1.1 Research Papers – 2,000–7,000 words

IJNS publishes original research that matches the aims and scope of the journal. Research papers should adhere to recognised standards for reporting (see guidance below and the [Author Checklist](#)). Instrument development or validation papers are only considered if accompanied by a copy of the full instrument, included as a supplementary file at submission stage so it can be published as an appendix online if accepted.

1.1.2 Reviews and Discussion Papers – 2,000–7,000 words

We publish systematic reviews (addressing focused research questions) and broader literature reviews (such as scoping reviews). We also publish discussion papers, which are scholarly articles of a debating or discursive nature. In all cases, there must be engagement with and critical analysis of a substantive body of research or other scholarship. Systematic reviews should adhere to recognised standards for reporting (see guidance below and the [Author Checklist](#)).

1.1.3 Letters to the editor – up to 1000 words

Designed to stimulate academic debate and discussion, the Editor invites readers to submit letters that refer to and comment on recent content in the journal, introduce new comment and discussion of clear and direct relevance to the journal's aim and scope or briefly report data or research findings that may not warrant a full paper. Letters are restricted to a maximum of 10 references, from up to 5 authors

1.1.4 Editorials – 1,000–2,000 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 current/forthcoming content in the journal, should contact the Editor in Chief (ijns@kcl.ac.uk).

1.2 General guidance and preferred article types

Selection of papers for publication is based on their scientific excellence, distinctive contribution to knowledge (including methodological development) and their importance to contemporary nursing, midwifery or related professions. We strongly recommend prospective authors to consult our editorial on common reasons papers are rejected, which outlines avoidable pitfalls as well as the types of articles we prefer <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2016.03.017>.

We are unlikely to publish studies of new instruments unless the instrument is useful for directly guiding clinical practice (e.g. diagnostic/ screening instruments) and there is validation against a robust criterion. Preliminary instrument development studies indicating the need for further development, translations from one language to another and other pilot studies are unlikely to be accepted. We do not publish studies undertaken on animals.

1.3 Submission system

Submission to this journal is online at <https://ees.elsevier.com/ijns/>.

1.4 Elsevier Researcher Academy

Researcher Academy is a free e-learning platform designed to support early and mid-career researchers throughout their research journey. The "Learn" environment at Researcher Academy offers several interactive modules, webinars, downloadable guides and resources to guide you through the process of writing for research and going through peer review. Feel free to use these free resources to improve your submission and navigate the publication process with ease.

2. Before You Begin

2.1 Ethics in publishing

The IJNS is a supporter of the Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals, issued by the International Committee for Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), and to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) code of conduct for editors. Our guidelines should be read in conjunction with this broader guidance. The ICMJE requirements can be found at <http://www.icmje.org/> and the COPE's guidelines at <http://publicationethics.org>.

The work to be described in your article must have been carried out in accordance with The Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association for experiments involving humans (Declaration of Helsinki) and research on health databases (Declaration of Taipei) <https://www.wma.net/what-we-do/medical-ethics/>. Further information on Ethics in Publishing and Ethical guidelines for journal publication can be found at: <https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/policies-and-ethics>

2.2 Reporting guidelines

The editors require that manuscripts adhere to recognized reporting guidelines relevant to the research design used and require authors to submit a checklist verifying that essential elements have been reported for all primary research and systematic reviews. We suggest that you consult the guidelines at an early stage of preparing your manuscript. You can search for the correct guideline for your study using the tools provided by the EQUATOR network: <http://www.equator-network.org/> The guideline used must be indicated in the journal's **Author Checklist**, which is to be submitted with every paper.

2.3 Study Registration

We encourage the prospective registration of studies and require it for clinical trials (as defined by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors). Registration should occur by the time of patient enrolment. Where a study has been registered, please give the registration number within at the end of the abstract and in the body of the paper. Authors seeking to publish a prospective intervention study (other than clinical trials) that has not been registered in advance are encouraged to register at the earliest opportunity before submitting for publication.

2.4 Informed consent and ethical approval

Informed consent must be sought from participants who are able to give it and this should be documented in the paper. Where informed consent is not obtained, consistent with recognised ethical principles and local legal frameworks this must also be documented in your paper. Ethical approval must be stated at an appropriate point in the article. The approving body and approval number should be identified in the manuscript. If the study was exempt from such approval the basis of such exemption and the regulatory framework must be described.

2.5 Patient details

The personal details of any patient included in any part of the article and in any supplementary materials (including all illustrations and videos) must be removed before submission. Where an author wishes to include case details or other personal information or images of patients or any other individuals in an Elsevier publication, appropriate consents, permissions and releases must be obtained by the author. Written consents must be retained by the author but copies should not be provided to the journal unless specifically requested.

For more information, please review the Elsevier Policy on the Use of Images or Personal Information of Patients or other Individuals (see <https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/patient-consent>)

2.6 Copyright

If excerpts from other copyrighted works are to be included, the author(s) must obtain written permission from the copyright owners and credit the source(s) in the article. This includes permission to translate scales where a third party holds the copyright.

2.7 Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract), a published lecture or academic thesis that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder.

To aid editorial decisions about distinctiveness and to avoid redundant or duplicate publication, we ask that you provide full references of any publications drawing on the same data in the journal's [Author Checklist](#). If the sources are not readily available, please upload a copy of the manuscript as supplementary material for editors to consider. If other publications are under review or in preparation this should be mentioned in your letter to the Editor. If the sources are not readily available, please upload a copy of the manuscript as supplementary material for editors to consider.

Relevant results from the wider study must be referred to in the paper and the relationship between this and other publications from the same study must be made clear. It is not sufficient to simply cite a prior publication, rather text must clearly state that results are from the same study.

2.8 Preprints

Preprints can be shared anywhere at any time, in line with Elsevier's [sharing policy](#). Sharing your preprints e.g. on a preprint server will not count as prior publication (see 'Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication' for more information).

2.9 Authorship, contributors and acknowledgements

All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted. Everyone who meets these criteria should be listed as an author. You will be asked to confirm this on submission. Other individuals who made substantial contributions (e.g., collecting data, providing language help, writing assistance or proofreading the article, etc.) should not be listed as authors but should be acknowledged in the paper. Those who meet some but not all of the criteria for authors can be identified as 'contributors' at the end of the manuscript with their contribution specified. For papers with ten or more authors, we ask that you give a collective name for the research group (e.g. ATLAS Research Group) to appear at the front of the article and list all authors at the end of the paper.

2.10 Changes to authorship

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors **before** submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. It is important that all authors agree this. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only **before** the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor will require from the **corresponding author**: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the change. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed.

2.11 Conflict of interest

All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could influence their work. Potential conflicts of interest do not necessarily preclude publication and authors are advised to err on the side of transparency and openness in declaring any relevant relationships. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Details must be included at the end of your manuscript and in a file that must be uploaded on submission. We recommend you use the ICMJE standard form to help you prepare this declaration. If there are no conflicts of interest then please state this: 'Conflicts of interest: none'. See also <https://www.elsevier.com/conflictsofinterest>.

2.12. Role of the funding source

You are requested to identify who provided financial support for the conduct of the research and/or preparation of the article and to briefly describe the role of the sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the article for publication. If the funding source(s) had no such involvement then this should be stated. If you received no external funding (i.e. other than your main employer) please state 'no external funding'. Please see <https://www.elsevier.com/funding>.

3. Manuscript Preparation

3.1. Documents required for submission (overview).

Author Checklist - a brief checklist to ensure that you have provided all essential information. The [Author Checklist](#) is available as a word file.

Declaration of interests statement - detailing any actual or potential competing interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. Please complete and upload the [Declaration of Interest template](#) is available as a word file.

Title page (with author details) - This should include the title, authors' names and affiliations, and a complete address for the corresponding author including telephone and e-mail address. Twitter handles for one, or all, authors may also be included on the Title Page if they wish for these to be published. A [template word file](#) to help guide you is available.

Blinded manuscript (no author details) - The main body of the paper including where relevant the abstract, contribution statements, references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements. This should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or affiliations. Please ensure that the manuscript includes page numbers for ease of reference during the review process. A [template word file](#) to help guide you is available.

Covering letter - to the Editor (optional) in which you address any matters you may wish the editors to consider (for example requests for exceptions to policy or the relationship of this work to other studies, elaboration on potential conflicts of interest).

Additionally, the following are required for all full papers (excluding letters and editorials)

Reporting guideline checklist - Additional reporting guidelines checklist for the relevant research design. For discussion papers and non-systematic reviews, where no checklist applies, upload a file with 'reporting guideline not applicable'

3.2. Title page

The title page should include the following. It will not be seen by reviewers. **Title.** The title should be concise and informative. The journal requires titles for research and review papers to be in the format Topic (or question): method (e.g. Nurse staffing in intensive care units: a systematic review). The country in which the study was conducted should not normally be named in the title unless it is an essential element (for example a national survey). **Author names.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. **Affiliations.** Give the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and the e-mail address of each author. **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication. This responsibility includes answering queries about the research that may arise after publication. **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main affiliation address. Use superscript Arabic numerals for such footnotes.

3.3. Blinded manuscript

It is the authors' responsibility to ensure that the manuscript file contains no details that readily identify them to prospective reviewers. However, we recognise that on occasion essential information or the nature of the work itself may make it impossible to guarantee anonymity to authors. Authors may exercise discretion in relation to redacting details of prior research.

Authors who reveal their identity in the manuscript will be deemed to have declined anonymity and the review will be single blind (i.e. authors do not know reviewers' identities).

You can choose to submit your manuscript as a single file to be used in the refereeing process. It should contain high enough quality figures for refereeing. If you prefer to do so, you may still provide all or some of the source files for tables and figures at the initial submission. Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be uploaded separately.

The blinded manuscript must include the following essential elements (except as noted above):

3.3.1. Abstract

All submissions (except letters and editorials) should include an abstract of 400 words or less.

In general, the following detail is required: Background, Objectives, Design, Settings (including geographical location if important), Participants; Methods; Results; and Conclusions, which should relate to study aims and hypotheses. Abstracts for Discussion Papers should provide a concise summary of the line of argument pursued and conclusions.

When reporting quantitative results in the abstract report parameter estimates and confidence intervals in preference to p-values (e.g. "risk of death was reduced [Odds ratio 0.9, 95% confidence interval 0.87-0.92]" rather than "risk of death was significantly reduced [p=0.001]")

Study registration details (e,g, ISRCTN number) should be included at the end of the abstract.

Abstracts should not include references or abbreviations other than standard system international (SI) units. Abstracts of research papers must be structured and should adopt the headings suggested by the relevant reporting guidelines.

3.3.2. Tweetable abstract

Optionally authors may add a 'tweetable abstract' to the end of the abstract as a final section. The tweetable abstract should be 140 characters or fewer (to allow people using it to add additional hashtags, links to the article and other twitter handles). Tweetable abstracts should provide the main conclusions or the key message of a paper in a way that is easily understood.

3.3.3. Contribution of the Paper

All submissions (with the exception of Letters and Editorials) should include "Contribution of the Paper" statements comprising a series of short single sentence bullet points under the headings "**What is already known about the topic?**" (2 or 3 bullets) and "**What this paper adds**" (2 or 3 bullets). The statements should be placed in the manuscript file between the Abstract and the main body of text, as well as supplied as a separate standalone file at submission.

'What is already known' should identify existing research knowledge relating to the specific research question / topic, rather than general background detail.

'What the paper adds' should summarise new knowledge (outcomes) as opposed to offering process statements of what the paper does. eg. "*This review demonstrates that nurse-led intermediate care reduces hospital stay but increases total inpatient stay*" (outcome) NOT "*This review considers the impact of nurse-led intermediate care on acute stay and total inpatient stay*" (process).

3.3.4. Keywords

Provide between four and ten key words that accurately identify the paper's subject, purpose, method and focus. Use the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) thesaurus (see <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/meshhome.html>) or Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL) headings where possible. Give keywords in alphabetical order.

3.3.5. Main manuscript text

Structure: For most papers the basic structure: Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion should be used. Authors should consult the relevant reporting guidelines for their methods and complete the relevant checklist to ensure essential detail is included (see our [Author Checklist](#) and the equator Network: <http://www.equator-network.org/>)

As part of the discussion, authors should describe limitations of the work. A sub-heading before the final conclusions is recommended.

Word limits: Full papers up to 7000 words (excluding tables, figures, and references, editorials up to 2000 words and letters up to 1000 words. Shorter papers are preferred

Tables and figures: Up to 5 in total. The corresponding caption should be placed directly below the figure or table. Additional tables / figures (including large tables) can be included as supplementary material.

Ethical approval and informed consent: details must be given in the methods as specified above

Abbreviations: No abbreviations should be used other than as specified below in our general notes on style.

3.3.6. References

There are no strict requirements on reference formatting at submission. References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent and references are complete and accurate. Where applicable, author(s) name(s), journal title/book title, chapter title/article title, year of publication, volume number/book chapter and the article number or pagination must be present.

Use of DOI is highly encouraged. The reference style used by the journal will be applied to the accepted article by Elsevier at the proof stage.

3.4. Revised submissions

At revision stage the following documentation is required: a separate "**Response to Reviewers**" file, which responds point by point to the reviewers' and editors' comments and highlights the changes made. **a revised blinded manuscript** with changes clearly highlighted. Unless revisions are minor do not simply use your word processor's 'track changes' - your aim is to help reviewers identify revised sections AND to read / review the revised manuscript.

If you provided low-resolution artwork for review, you should also add files suitable for publication at this stage (see below):

4. Style and specific requirements

4.1. Language (usage and editing services)

Please write your text in good English (American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these). Authors who feel their English language manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors and to conform to correct scientific English may wish to use the [English Language Editing service](#) available from Elsevier's WebShop.

4.1.1. Use of inclusive language

Articles should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader, should contain nothing that might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of ethnic background, sex, culture or any other characteristic, and should use inclusive language throughout. We ask authors to consider that the term 'race' is closely associated with ideologies of scientific racism and has no clearly defined scientific meaning.

We recognise that the recipients of healthcare are firstly people. In many cases, it is not appropriate to refer to them as "patients". For example, "people with diabetes" is preferable to "diabetes patients" although recipients of health care in general might be referred to as patients in some circumstances. Never refer to people as 'sufferers' or 'victims' of a condition.

Authors should ensure that writing is free from gender bias, for instance by using 'he or she', 'his/her' instead of 'she' or 'her', and by making use of job titles that are gender neutral (e.g. 'chairperson' instead of 'chairman' and 'flight attendant' instead of 'stewardess'). Nurse is a gender neutral term.

4.1.2. Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

The International Journal of Nursing Studies does not permit the use of abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms (abbreviations for brevity). We make a limited number of exceptions but we do not allow the use of any abbreviations that are not widely recognised.

The limited exceptions include cases where the abbreviated form has near universal recognition (e.g. USA), statistical terms and tests (e.g. df, t, ANOVA) and instruments and products that are generally identified by their initials or an abbreviation (e.g. SF36, SPSS). For additional guidance, [see the editorial policy/style on abbreviations, initialisms and acronyms](#).

Any abbreviations which the authors intend to use in the body of your paper should be written out in full, followed by the letters in brackets the first time they appear. Thereafter only the letters should be used. Please note that SPSS is the full name of the product, not an abbreviation. Abbreviations used in tables need to be fully defined at the foot of each table where the abbreviation is used.

4.2. Tables

Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Tables can be placed next to the relevant text in the article. Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables (maximum 5 tables and figures in the body text) and ensure that the data presented in them do not simply duplicate results described elsewhere in the article. Additional tables can be submitted as online supplemental material but these must be referred to in the text (supplemental material table X etc.). Please avoid using vertical rules. Abbreviations used in tables need to be fully defined at the foot of each table where the abbreviation is used.

4.3. Footnotes

Do not use footnotes other than where abbreviations or other symbols have been used in a table, in which case the notes should be below the table, not the foot of the page.

4.4. Statistics

Standard methods of presenting statistical material should be used. Where methods used are not widely recognised explanation and full reference to widely accessible sources must be given. Identify the statistical package used (including version).

Wherever possible give both point estimates and 95% confidence intervals for all parameters estimated by the study (e.g. group differences, frequency of characteristics). Exact p values should be given to no more than three decimal places. Do not interpret non-significant results as evidence that there is no difference / relationship. Please refer to the journal's position paper on reporting statistical significance and p-values <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2019.07.001>

4.5. Citations and references

In text citations and reference lists will be reformatted to journal style if the article is accepted. The journal uses an author (date) citation style. Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). When copying references, please be careful as they may already contain errors. Use of the DOI is highly encouraged.

Unpublished results and personal communications are not to be included the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.

Web references. As a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

Data references. This journal encourages you to cite underlying or relevant datasets in your manuscript by citing them in your text and including a data reference in your Reference List. Data references should include the following elements: author name(s), dataset title, data repository,

version (where available), year, and global persistent identifier. Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. The [dataset] identifier will not appear in your published article.

4.5.1. Use of reference management software

This journal has standard templates available in key reference management packages:

Mendeley Desktop: <http://open.mendeley.com/use-citation-style/international-journal-of-nursing-studies>

EndNote (<http://www.endnote.com/support/enstyles.asp>)

Using plug-ins to word processing packages, authors only need to select the appropriate journal template when preparing their article. The list of references and citations to these will be formatted according to the journal style.

4.6. Funding sources

List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements for example:

"This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa]"

It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding. If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence: "This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors."

4.7. Supplementary material

Supplementary material such as applications, images and sound clips, can be published with your article to enhance it. Please submit your material together with the article and supply a concise, descriptive caption for each supplementary file. Submitted supplementary items are published exactly as they are received (Excel or PowerPoint files will appear as such online). If you wish to make changes to supplementary material during any stage of the process, please make sure to provide an updated file. Do not annotate any corrections on a previous version. Please switch off the 'Track Changes' option in Microsoft Office files.

For papers reporting the development of scales, measures, questionnaires or other instruments we will only publish if authors are willing and able to provide a copy of the scale in the original language and (where relevant) in English. Authors may retain copyright and if they wish to do so should include a copyright line. They can also give details on permissions and restrictions for use and / or add a creative commons license (see <https://creativecommons.org/>).

Where authors do not own the copyright, they are responsible for gaining permission from the copyright holder and giving full acknowledgement. This includes permission to translate scales where a third party holds the copyright.

If accepted for publication, the any additional material to be made available online should include a reference to the International Journal of Nursing Studies paper and we ask that you add a preliminary reference to your article with "to be published in the International Journal of Nursing Studies" at the point of submission, updating later if needed.

4.8. Appendices

Normally there should be no appendices although in the case of papers reporting tool development or the use of novel questionnaires authors may include a copy of the tool as an appendix as an alternative to providing it as supplementary material if it is short.

4.9 Use of word processing software

Regardless of the file format of the original submission, at revision you must provide us with an editable file of the entire article. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). 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.

4.10 Artwork

4.10.1 General points

Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork. Preferred fonts: Arial (or Helvetica), Times New Roman (or Times), Symbol, Courier. Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text. Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files. Indicate per figure if it is a single, 1.5 or 2-column fitting image. For Word submissions only, you may still provide figures and their captions, and tables within a single file at the revision stage. Please note that individual figure files larger than 10 MB must be provided in separate source files.

Regardless of the application used, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below): EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings. Embed the font or save the text as 'graphics'. TIFF (or JPG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones): always use a minimum of 300 dpi. TIFF (or JPG): Bitmapped line drawings: use a minimum of 1000 dpi. TIFF (or JPG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale): a minimum of 500 dpi is required. A detailed [guide on electronic artwork](#) is available.

4.10.2 Figure captions

Ensure that each illustration has a caption. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

4.10.3. Colour artwork

If, together with your accepted article, you submit usable colour figures then Elsevier will ensure, at no additional charge, that these figures will appear in colour online (e.g., ScienceDirect and other sites) regardless of whether or not these illustrations are reproduced in colour in the printed version.

For colour reproduction in print, you will receive information regarding the costs from Elsevier after receipt of your accepted article. Please indicate your preference for colour: in print or online only. Because of technical complications that can arise by converting colour figures to 'gray scale' (for the printed version should you not opt for colour in print) please submit in addition usable black and white versions of all the colour illustrations.

For further information on the preparation of electronic artwork, please see <https://www.elsevier.com/artworkinstructions>.

4.10.4. Illustration services

[Elsevier's WebShop](#) offers Illustration Services to authors preparing to submit a manuscript but concerned about the quality of the images accompanying their article. Elsevier's expert illustrators can produce scientific, technical and medical-style images, as well as a full range of charts, tables and graphs. Image 'polishing' is also available, where our illustrators take your image(s) and improve them to a professional standard. Please visit the website to find out more.

4.11. Data visualization

Include interactive data visualizations in your publication and let your readers interact and engage more closely with your research. Follow the instructions [here](#) to find out about available data visualization options and how to include them with your article.

4.12. Research data

This journal encourages and enables you to share data that supports your research publication where appropriate, and enables you to interlink the data with your published articles. Research data refers to the results of observations or experimentation that validate research findings. To facilitate reproducibility and data reuse, this journal also encourages you to share your software, code, models, algorithms, protocols, methods and other useful materials related to the project. Below are a number of ways in which you can associate data with your article or make a statement about the availability of your data when submitting your manuscript. If you are sharing data in one of these ways, you are encouraged to cite the data in your manuscript and reference list. Please refer to the "References" section for more information about data citation. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the [research data](#) page.

4.12.1 Mendeley Data

This journal supports Mendeley Data, enabling you to deposit any research data (including raw and processed data, video, code, software, algorithms, protocols, and methods) associated with your manuscript in a free-to-use, open access repository. During the submission process, after uploading your manuscript, you will have the opportunity to upload your relevant datasets directly to Mendeley Data. The datasets will be listed and directly accessible to readers next to your published article online. For more information, visit the [Mendeley Data for journals page](#).

4.12.2 Data linking

If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset. Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories, giving readers access to underlying data that gives them a better understanding of the research described.

There are different ways to link your datasets to your article. When available, you can directly link your dataset to your article by providing the relevant information in the submission system. For more information, visit the [database linking page](#).

For supported data repositories a repository banner will automatically appear next to your published article on ScienceDirect.

In addition, you can link to relevant data or entities through identifiers within the text of your manuscript, using the following format: Database: xxxx (e.g., TAIR: AT1G01020; CCDC: 734053; PDB: 1XFN).

4.12.3. Data statement

To foster transparency, we encourage you to state the availability of your data in your submission. This may be a requirement of your funding body or institution. If your data is unavailable to access or unsuitable to post, you will have the opportunity to indicate why during the submission process, for example by stating that the research data is confidential. The statement will appear with your published article on ScienceDirect. For more information, visit the [Data Statement page](#).

5 Submission and review

Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

5.1. Submit your article

Please submit your article via <http://ees.elsevier.com/ijns>.

5.2. Review process

The decision to publish a paper is based on an editorial assessment and peer review. Initially all papers are assessed by an editorial committee consisting of members of the editorial team. The prime purpose is to decide whether to send a paper for peer review and to give a rapid decision on those that are not.

Editorials and Letters may be accepted at this stage but in all other cases the decision is to reject the paper or to send it for peer review. Papers which do not meet basic standards or are unlikely to be published irrespective of a positive peer review, for example because their novel contribution is insufficient or the relevance to the discipline is unclear, may be rejected at this point in order to avoid delays to authors who may wish to seek publication elsewhere.

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

Manuscripts going forward to the review process are reviewed by members of an international expert panel. This journal uses double-blind review, which means that both the reviewer and author name(s) are not allowed to be revealed to one another for a manuscript under review. The identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. For more information please refer to <https://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/peer-review>.

We take every reasonable step to ensure author identity is concealed during the review process but it is up to authors to ensure that their details of prior publications etc. do not reveal their identity.

The decision to publish is made by the senior editor with advice from one or more associate editors and the reviewers. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to the final decision regarding acceptance and, on occasion, we may choose not to publish despite recommendations from reviewers (or vice versa).

5.3. Referees

During submission, authors may suggest the names and institutional e-mail addresses of three potential referees. This can be helpful in facilitating timely and high quality peer review.

Note that the Editor retains the sole right to decide whether or not the suggested reviewers are used. Suggested reviewers should not be from the same institution as any of the authors and authors should avoid suggesting reviewers who might be seen to have a conflict of interest, for example because of ongoing close collaboration with the author.

5.4. Queries

We aim to complete the review process within 8 weeks of the decision to review although occasionally delays do happen and authors should allow at least 12 weeks from submissions before contacting the journal.

For questions about the editorial process (including the status of manuscripts under review) please contact the editorial office ijns@kcl.ac.uk. For technical support on submissions please contact <https://service.elsevier.com/app/home/supporthub/publishing/>

6. After Acceptance

6.1. Publishing agreement

Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' (for more information on this and copyright, see <https://www.elsevier.com/copyright>). An e-mail will be sent to the corresponding author confirming receipt of the manuscript together with a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' form or a link to the online version of this agreement.

For open access articles: Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete an 'Exclusive License Agreement' (for more information see <https://www.elsevier.com/OAauthoragreement>).

Permitted third party reuse of open access articles is determined by the author's choice of user license (see <https://www.elsevier.com/openaccesslicenses>).

6.2. Author rights

As an author you (or your employer or institution) have certain rights to reuse your work. For more information see <https://www.elsevier.com/copyright>.

Elsevier supports responsible sharing. Find out how you can share your research published in Elsevier journals: <https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/sharing>

6.3. Open access

This journal offers authors a choice in publishing their research:

Subscription Articles are made available to subscribers as well as developing countries and patient groups through our [universal access programs](#). No open access publication fee payable by authors. The Author is entitled to post the [accepted manuscript](#) in their institution's repository and make this public after an embargo period (known as green Open Access). The [published journal article](#) cannot be shared publicly, for example on ResearchGate or Academia.edu, to ensure the sustainability of peer-reviewed research in journal publications. The embargo period for this journal can be found below.

Gold open access Articles are freely available to both subscribers and the wider public with permitted reuse. A gold open access publication fee is payable by authors or on their behalf, e.g. by their research funder or institution.

Regardless of how you choose to publish your article, the journal will apply the same peer review criteria and acceptance standards.

For gold open access articles, permitted third party (re)use is defined by the following Creative Commons user licenses:

After acceptance, open access papers will be published under a non-commercial license (CC BY-NC-ND)), which lets others distribute and copy the article, and to include in a collective work (such as an anthology), as long as they credit the author(s) and provided they do not alter or modify the article. For authors whose funders require a commercial CC BY license, you can apply after your manuscript is accepted for publication.

Learn more about Elsevier's pricing policy: <https://www.elsevier.com/openaccesspricing>.

6.3.1 Funding body agreements and policies

Elsevier has established a number of agreements with funding bodies which allow authors to comply with their funder's open access policies. Some funding bodies will reimburse the author for the gold open access publication fee. Details of [existing agreements](#) are available online.

6.3.2. Green open access

Authors can share their research in a variety of different ways and Elsevier has a number of green open access options available.

Authors can self-archive their accepted manuscripts immediately and enable public access from their institution's repository after an embargo period. The version that has been accepted for publication typically includes author-incorporated changes suggested during submission, peer review and in editor-author communications.

For subscription articles, this journal has an embargo period of 12 months. The embargo period begins from the date the article is formally published online in its final and fully citable form. We recommend authors see our [sharing policies](#) for further information.

Author contributions

For transparency, we encourage authors to submit an author statement file outlining their individual contributions to the paper using the relevant CRediT roles: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Roles/Writing - original draft; Writing - review & editing. Authorship statements should be formatted with the names of authors first and CRediT role(s) following. [More details and an example](#)

6.4. Online proof correction

Corresponding authors will receive an e-mail with a link to our online proofing system, allowing annotation and correction of proofs online. The environment is similar to MS Word: in addition to editing text, you can also comment on figures/tables and answer questions from the Copy Editor. Web-based proofing provides a faster and less error-prone process by allowing you to directly type your corrections, eliminating the potential introduction of errors.

If preferred, you can still choose to annotate and upload your edits on the PDF version. All instructions for proofing will be given in the e-mail we send to authors, including alternative methods to the online version and PDF.

We will do everything possible to get your article published quickly and accurately. Please use this proof only for checking the typesetting, editing, completeness and correctness of the text, tables and figures. Significant changes to the article as accepted for publication will only be considered at this stage with permission from the Editor. It is important to ensure that all corrections are sent back to us in one communication. Please check carefully before replying, as inclusion of any subsequent corrections cannot be guaranteed. Proofreading is solely your responsibility.

6.5. Offprints

The corresponding author will, at no cost, receive a customized Share Link providing 50 days free access to the final published version of the article on ScienceDirect. The Share Link can be used for sharing the article via any communication channel, including email and social media. For an extra charge, paper offprints can be ordered via the offprint order form which is sent once the article is accepted for publication. Both corresponding and co-authors may order offprints at any time via Elsevier's Webshop. Corresponding authors who have published their article gold open access do not receive a Share Link as their final published version of the article is available open access on ScienceDirect and can be shared through the article DOI link.

6.6. Author inquiries

Visit the [Elsevier Support Center](#) to find the answers you need. Here you will find everything from Frequently Asked Questions to ways to get in touch. You can also [check the status of your submitted article](#) or find out [when your accepted article will be published](#).

Open access

Please visit our Open Access page from the Journal Homepage for more information.

Use of word processing software

Regardless of the file format of the original submission, at revision you must provide us with an editable file of the entire article. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). 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.

© Copyright 2018 Elsevier | <https://www.elsevier.com>