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 https://www.editorialmanager.com/NS/default.aspx.

Authors are also welcome to submit to IJNS’s open access companion title, International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances, which welcomes excellent original research, reviews and discussion relevant to nursing, midwifery and other health related professions around the globe.

AUDIENCE

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

IMPACT FACTOR

2020: 5.837 © Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Reports 2021

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, SE1 8WA, 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 of America
Trevor Murrells, London, United Kingdom

Associate Editors
Samantha Coster, Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom
Chiara Dall’ora, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
Jonathan Drennan, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland
Christine Duffield, University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Broadway, NSW, Australia
Joanna Hope, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
Jan Kottner, Charite University Hospital Berlin, Berlin, Germany
Mary C Leamy, King's College London, London, United Kingdom
Sharon McKinley, NSW, Australia
Christopher McLean, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
Nancy Nivison Menzel, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas, United States of America
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 of America
Roberta Sammut, University of Malta Faculty of Health Sciences, Msida, Malta
Michael Simon, University of Basel Institute of Nursing Science, Basel, Switzerland
Rhayun Song, Chungnam National University, Daejeon, South Korea
Allison Squires, New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing, New York, United States of America
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 of America
Franziska Zuniga, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland

Editorial Board
Linda Aiken, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, United States of America
Wendy P. Chaboyer, Griffith University, Faculty of Nursing and Health, Research Centre for Clinical Practice Innovation, Gold Coast, Australia
Sean Clarke, NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing, New York, United States of America
John Cutcliffe, The University of Maine, Orono, United States of America
Patricia Davidson, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia
Linda Franck, University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, USA
Ingaliill Rahm Hallberg, Lund University, Lund, Sweden
Ruth Harris, King's College London, London, United Kingdom
Hongsso Kim, Seoul National University (SNU), Seoul, South Korea
Elizabeth Manias, Deakin University School of Nursing and Midwifery, , Australia
Carl May, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology, London, United Kingdom
Martin McKee, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, United Kingdom
Hugh McKenna, Ulster University, Ist. of Nursing and Health Research, Newtownabbey, United Kingdom
Eui Geum Oh, Yonsei University, Seoul, South Korea
Anne Marie Rafferty, King's College London, London, United Kingdom
Lisette Schoonhoven, University Medical Centre, Utrecht, Netherlands
Maritta Välimäki, University of Turku, Turku, Finland
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 1 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.

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.

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). We welcome papers that introduce or elaborate on novel or under used methods, or approaches to analysis with substantial significance for the discipline. Such papers can be submitted as a review or discussion paper as appropriate and should represent significant advances and / or be authoritative accounts of the ‘state of the art’.

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.

Editorials — up to 1000 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.

Our criteria for publication is based on significant contribution to science, reducing important uncertainty and / or raising new questions. Provided studies are properly designed and adequately powered, statistically significant results are not a criteria for publication decisions.
The journal welcomes replication studies that seek to verify important results where replication is designed to reduce genuine uncertainty or confirm an important new finding. Prospective authors of such studies can submit the background and methods, describing why and how studies were conducted, for a preliminary review prior to submitting a full paper. 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.

Authors are also welcome to submit to IJNS’s open access companion title, International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances, which welcomes excellent original research, reviews and discussion relevant to nursing, midwifery and other health related professions around the globe. We do not publish studies undertaken on animals.

1.3 Submission system
Submission to this journal is online at https://www.editorialmanager.com/ns/default.aspx.

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 endorses 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 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 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. 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.

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. Please see https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2008.07.003 for more detailed guidance.

2.3 Reporting guidelines
Manuscripts must adhere to recognized reporting guidelines relevant to the research design used. Authors must submit a checklist verifying that essential elements have been reported for all primary research and 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. The journal will ask reviewers to verify authors' adherence to the appropriate reporting guidelines.

Please note: While we require authors to use reporting guidelines to structure their report and ask them to submit the relevant checklist, there is no need to refer to the guidance used in the paper itself. If the guidance is cited it should never be cited as a source for methods as opposed to guidance on reporting.

2.4 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 in 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. Authors should state whether study registration includes registration of an analysis plan. Details of registration will be reviewed to ensure the manuscript is consistent with the registered study.

2.5 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.

2.6 Patient details
The personal details of any patient included in any part of the article and in any supplementary materials (including 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).

2.7 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.
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 language of the version used in the study and (where relevant) an English translation as supplementary material to be published online. Authors may retain copyright of such scales 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/).

2.8 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 that fall short of the criteria for authorship (e.g., collecting data, providing language help, writing assistance or proofreading the article) should not be listed as authors but should be acknowledged 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.
For transparency, we encourage authors to submit a file outlining individual contributions to the paper for all authors and named contributors 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.

Statements should be formatted with the names first and CRedit role(s) following. More details and an example.

2.9 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 is at the discretion of the editor and must be requested before the manuscript has been accepted. 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.

2.10 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.

2.11 Role of the funding source
You must 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' https://www.elsevier.com/funding.

3. Manuscript Preparation
A MS word template is available to help guide your manuscript preparation.

3.1. Documents required for submission (overview).
Information included in the title page can be extracted to populate the submission system reducing the need for you to rekey important information. Follow the detailed guidance in our MS word template to aid successful extraction.

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. The page should also include the abstract and keywords. A template word file to help guide you is available.

Author Checklist is available as a word file. (not applicable to letters and editorials)

Reporting guideline checklist: Please upload a completed reporting guidelines checklist for the relevant research design detailing where the areas covered by the guideline are addressed in the manuscript. For discussion papers and non-systematic reviews, letter or editorials, where no checklist applies, upload a file with 'reporting guideline not applicable'. There is no need to refer to the guidance used in the paper itself. Reporting guidelines should never be cited as a source for methods.

Blinded manuscript: (no author details) - The main body of the paper including contribution statements, references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements. This should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or affiliations although any study registration details should not be redacted so registration and protocols can be considered at review (see review below). 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.
Declaration of potential conflict / competing interests: A 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 which is available as a word file.

Data availability statement: To foster transparency, we require you to state the availability of your data in your submission. Where possible we encourage authors to share data by default using a publicly available archive. If your data is unavailable to access or unsuitable to post, you will have the opportunity to indicate why during the submission process. The statement will appear with your published article on ScienceDirect. For more information, visit the Data Sharing page. For more information see below (Sharing research materials and data).

Supplementary material: Papers whose primary function is to report the development of scales, measures, questionnaires or other instruments must include a copy of the scale (and where relevant an English translation) as supplementary material. Other supplementary material can also be submitted (for example additional tables and figures) but must be cited in the manuscript.

CRediT contributions statement: For transparency, we encourage authors to submit a file outlining individual contributions to the paper for all authors and named contributors using the relevant CRediT roles (see. https://www.elsevier.com/authors/policies-and-guidelines/credit-author-statement).

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).

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 immediately after the author’s name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full detail of each affiliation, including the country name.
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.
Abstract: All submissions (except letters and editorials) should include an abstract of 400 words or fewer. Abstracts of research and review papers must be structured and should adopt the headings suggested by the relevant reporting guidelines. Abstracts for Discussion Papers should provide a concise summary of the line of argument pursued and conclusions. Abstracts should not include references or abbreviations other than standard system international (SI) units and common statistical terms (e.g. t-test, ANOVA).
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) and registration date should be included at the end of the abstract.
Tweetable abstract: Optionally authors may add a 'tweetable abstract' to the end of the abstract. The tweetable abstract should be 140 characters (not words) 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.
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. Blinded manuscript

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.

Anonymity: The manuscript file should contain no details that readily identify authors 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. While the journal endeavors to maintain a double blind-review process as far as possible, we give priority to transparent reporting and prospective registration. As it is important that reviewers are able to verify that reporting is complete and consistent with protocols to avoid (for example) selective outcome reporting or undocumented protocol changes, authors are not permitted to redact registration numbers for review. Authors may exercise discretion in relation to redacting details of prior research.

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

**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" (2 or 3 bullets) and "What this paper adds" (2 or 3 bullets). The statements should be placed at the beginning of the manuscript file.

'What is already known' should identify existing research knowledge relating to the specific research question / topic, rather than general background detail. 'What this paper adds' should summarise new knowledge (outcomes) as opposed to offering process statements of what the paper does.

"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).

**Main manuscript text:** 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/).

Details of ethical approval and study registration must be included in the methods section. 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 1000 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, which must be cited in the text (e.g. see supplementary material table X).

**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. 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. Supplementary material must be cited in the text with a reference to the file and, if necessary, tables / figures within it (e.g. see supplementary file 1, table 6).

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.

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.
4.2. Abbreviations
We do not permit the use of abbreviations, (including acronyms and initialisms). Limited exceptions include SI units, 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). Abbreviations may be used in tables if needed but need to be fully defined in a footnote for each table where the abbreviation is used. For additional guidance, see the editorial policy/style on abbreviations, initialisms and acronyms.

4.3. 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. Its use as a simple description / categorisation of people should be avoided.
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. We recognise that the recipients of healthcare are firstly people and should be referred to as such. For example, "people with diabetes" is preferable to "diabetes patients" or "diabetics" 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.

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. 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. The term 'statistically significant' (not just 'significant') should be used to refer to the result of tests and the term clinically important should be preferred to the term clinically significant.
Always consider the importance of difference / strength of relationships. Do not use statistical significance as a proxy for such measures. 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 and guidance for reporting statistical tests http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2014.09.006
Always identify the statistical package used (including version). Please note that the package SPSS is NOT short for 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 'or 'Statistical Product and Service Solution' (these names were abandoned in the 1990s!)

4.5. 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.

4.6. 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.

4.7. Citations and references
The journal uses an author (date) citation style but authors can submit using any recognised format. In text citations and reference lists will be reformatted to journal style if the article is accepted. You should avoid making multiple citations to establish the same point. As a rule use no more than three or four illustrative examples (e.g. Many authors have found that sentences are unreadable if there are too many citations (e.g. Smith 2021, Jones 1980, Older 1888).
In formal literature reviews you may wish to exhaustively link all sources of evidence to a particular point but we urge caution as paragraphs containing large blocks of references can become difficult to read. We suggest you look to examples of published reviews for examples of approaches to such problems but adaptations to writing style and judicious use of tables can often avoid the issue. 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.

This journal has standard templates available in key reference management packages like Mendeley Desktop and EndNote.

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:** Where data has been made available you should 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 (e.g. doi). Add [dataset] immediately before the reference so we can properly identify it as a data reference. In your reference please include the names of the investigators who collected the data and date of access.

4.8. **Sharing research materials and data**

This journal supports transparency and openness of data and materials. Research materials used in the study (e.g. instructional materials, proprietary computer programmes, questionnaires, interview guides) should be made publicly available unless there are legal, ethical or physical reasons not to do so. Materials can be made available in a public repository or as supplementary material to the paper. The manuscript must include a citation to such material.

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. Giving readers access to underlying data gives them a better understanding of the research described and allows independent verification and reuse of data. We encourage authors to secure independent replication of all data analyses prior to publication. We strongly encourage authors to make data available in a repository and where data is made available in this fashion, it should be cited in the manuscript and reference list.

Elsevier collaborates with a number of repositories to link articles on ScienceDirect with relevant repositories. For more information on depositing, sharing and using research data and other relevant research materials, visit the research data page. If you have made your research data available in a data repository, you can link your article directly to the dataset.

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.

**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.

**Data sharing statement:** Regardless of whether or not data is made available, the journal requires all authors to include a data sharing statement in their manuscript, which states whether data will be made available, any conditions for access, where and how it can be accessed or if it is not available give a reason. See https://www.elsevier.com/authors/tools-and-resources/research-data/data-statement.

4.9. **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 xxx, yyyy]; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa]"

If funding sources are from commercial companies, please state "commercial interest" at the end of the funding statement.
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."

4.10. Artwork

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): Colour 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 (colour or grayscale): a minimum of 500 dpi is required. A detailed guide on electronic artwork is available.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Please submit your article via https://www.editorialmanager.com/ns/default.aspx.

5.1. Initial screening

The decision to publish a paper is based on an editorial assessment and peer review. Initially all papers are assessed by members of the editorial team. The aim is to determine if the paper is within scope, is likely to be of interest to the readership, is making a novel contribution and is of a high quality relative to other submissions to the journal. 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. 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.

5.2. Double Blind

The journal endeavors to maintain a double blind-review process as far as possible, which means that 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 we are unable to guarantee
anonymity to authors. It is up to authors to ensure that their details of prior publications etc. do not reveal their identity and that the main manuscript file is anonymous. However, we give priority to transparent reporting and prospective registration as it is important that reviewers are able to verify that reporting is complete and consistent with protocols to avoid (for example) selective outcome reporting or undocumented protocol changes. Therefore authors are not permitted to redact registration numbers for review. Authors may exercise discretion in relation to redacting details of prior research.

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. We seek to use those who are world leaders in the field of the research that is to be reviewed. 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. Suggestions should reflect the global reach of the journal and should be those that a global audience would recognise as world leading experts.

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/

5.5 Appeals
Initial appeals to editorial decisions should be directed to ijns@kcl.ac.uk. These will be considered by one of the senior editors in consultation with other editors not directly involved in the original decision. If initial assessment finds grounds for appeal (generally that the decision making is out of line with the general process and standards applied to other manuscripts) authors will be advised of the required steps to progress the appeal to more detailed consideration.

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).

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. 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. Open access
This journal offers authors a choice in publishing their research. Regardless of how you choose to publish your article, the journal will apply the same peer review criteria and acceptance standards. Authors can share their research in a variety of different ways and Elsevier has a number of open access options available. Please visit our Open Access page for more information. 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 - see below). The published journal article cannot be shared publicly, for example on ResearchGate or Academia.edu. We recommend authors see our sharing policies for further information. 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. 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 for gold open access: https://www.elsevier.com/openaccesspricing. **Green open access:** 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. **Pre prints:** Authors can share their preprint anywhere at any time. If accepted for publication, we encourage authors to link from the preprint to their formal publication via its Digital Object Identifier (DOI). Millions of researchers have access to the formal publications on ScienceDirect, and so links will help your users to find, access, cite, and use the best available version. **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.

**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

**6.3. 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.

**6.4. 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.

**6.5. 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.
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