

JHCPU

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

The *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* publishes research papers, brief communications, literature reviews, commentaries, reports from the field, and columns regarding the health of low-income and other underserved people. We welcome manuscripts. Though our concerns—health, health policy, and health care for the underserved—are universal, our focus is on populations in North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and southern Africa. We also consider papers concerning internally dispossessed Indigenous populations worldwide. Questions about the suitability of a topic should be sent to JournalAdministration@mmc.edu. Our mailing address is:

Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved
Meharry Medical College
1005 D. B. Todd Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37208

The *Journals* editorial policy is mission driven. The papers we publish all serve to advance social justice and, specifically, the well-being of underserved populations.

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

SUBMISSION WEBSITE

- Visit our submission website at Scholar One/Manuscript Central:
<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/JHCPU>.
- Register as an author and follow instructions for manuscript submission.

COVER LETTER

- Include a cover letter addressed to the editor with your submission. The cover letter must state that the research has received institutional review board (IRB) approval, when suitable, and that the paper is
 - neither presently under consideration at another publication,
 - nor will be while it is under consideration with *JHCPU*,
 - nor has already appeared elsewhere, in print or online.

It also must state that all co-authors have both contributed substantially to the paper and have approved the version being submitted.

- As part of our check-in process, we run manuscripts through an artificial intelligence (AI) scanner to monitor the use of AI. Positive results can sometimes occur when all or part of the work has appeared elsewhere or when the authors use a grammar tool such as Grammarly. Please let us know in your cover letter whether your team used AI in the preparation of the manuscript and, if they did, how. Thank you for your understanding as we attempt to engage responsibly with new technology.

AUTHOR CONTACT LIST

- Include as a separate file a list of all authors (in the order of precedence used on the title page) with their degree abbreviations and complete contact information. No more than 15 authors are allowed, although one or more of the 15 may be a group (with members identified in a footnote).

TITLE PAGE

- Please include the following on the title page (as a separate document from the blinded manuscript):

- The category for which the paper is intended (Research Paper, Brief Communication...)
- The title (no more than 20 major words)
- A list of author names, including degree abbreviations
- Statements of affiliation for each author
- Running head: A short title (no more than five major words) to run as a header with the article
- The address to which correspondence should be sent
- The address(es) to be published with author information in the article
- The number of tables, figures, boxes, and references
- A list of abbreviations used in the article.

ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

- Please retain the abstract and key words in the blinded copy of the manuscript (as well as loading them into the Manuscript Central system when prompted to do so). If possible, use terms from the Medical Subject Headings from *Index Medicus* for the key words. Abstracts must not exceed 150 words. Summaries (for Reports from the Field) must not exceed 50 words.

WRITING STYLE AND FORMAT

- Please submit all documents as Word files (rather than as pdfs).
- Double-space throughout.
- Do not use proportional spacing or justified margins.
- Editing will follow the more detailed guidance regarding grammar, style, and usage found in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- For guidance on formatting references, see the end of this document. (Please do NOT use programs that embed references with hyperlinks in the paper you submit.)

NAMES OF POPULATION GROUPS: SPELLING

This journal spells the names of all racial, ethnic, and racial/ethnic population groups with initial capital letters (Black, White, Latino, Asian, American Indian, Indigenous, Native, and so on for other groups). We spell them this way to call attention to the complex meanings associated with these terms, in contrast with their lower-case relatives used as adjectives describing other things (*black cat, wildlife native to the area...*). The spelling is also consistent with conventional spellings of the names of religious and nationality groups (Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and so on for other religious population groups; Canadian, Nigerian, and so on for nationality groups).

Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity

The *Journal* uses the following terminology for sex, gender, and sexual identity groups:

Sex

Female
Male
Intersex

Gender

Cisgender woman/girl
Cisgender man/boy
Transgender woman/girl
Transgender man/boy
Non-binary
Queer

Note: Depending on the population studied, authors may choose to use the shorter terms, *woman, man, girl, boy, and transgender*.

Sexual identity groups

Homosexual/gay man

Lesbian

Heterosexual

Bisexual

Queer

Other

Sources of *Journal* Editing Conventions

When in doubt about grammar, spelling, style or usage, you may consult the following:

- Chicago Manual of Style*
- JAMA Network's Inclusive Language for Reporting Demographic and Clinical Characteristics
- GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 11th ed. Glossary of Terms.
- CDC Communication: Preferred Terms for Select Population Groups & Communities
<https://www.cdc.gov/health-communication/php/toolkit/preferred-terms.html>

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF PAPERS

The *Journal* publishes several types of paper, including these primary types:

- **Research Papers and Brief Communications:** These are empirical research papers, differing in length. Some policy papers also fit into these categories.
- **Literature Reviews:** These are scholarly reviews of the literature on a given topic; they should be *systematic* or *scoping* reviews rather than narrative reviews.
- **Commentaries:** These are opinion pieces, strongly grounded in the scholarly literature. Some policy papers fit in this category.
- **Reports from the Field:** These are brief descriptive accounts of innovative policies, clinical practices, and programs, situated as needed in literature on comparable programs and the background to the general issue being addressed.

Guidelines for writing papers of these types, as well as the columns that we publish and book reviews, follow. *More detailed guidance—which applies to all paper types—appears after these specific guidelines.*

1. RESEARCH PAPERS

Empirical research papers, health policy papers, evaluations of innovative or otherwise noteworthy health and health care programs; 2,501-10,000 words of text. N.B.: While we allow research papers and literature reviews as many as 10,000 words of text, rarely does a paper merit that length. If your paper is very long, please edit it as carefully as possible, eliminating redundancy, unnecessarily protracted presentation of background material, and excessive verbiage.

Text

- Clearly state the problem or issue at hand, describe past efforts to address it, and specify how the manuscript represents a new contribution to the field.
 - Note and discuss policy implications, as appropriate.
 - Include brief section headings. Research reports should contain the following sections: **Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion.** Omit the ***Introduction*** section heading.
 - For any subheadings, use the following format:
 - 1st level subheading: **Boldface heading (with initial cap only) followed by period and run into text.**
 - 2nd level subheading: *Italicized heading (with initial cap only) followed by period and run into text.*In cases where the primary heading, a 1st subheading, and a 2nd subheading all occur in immediate succession, simply follow the same pattern.
 - 3rd level subheading: Underlined heading (with initial cap only) followed by a period and run into the following text.
- For example,

Methods

Population studied. The population studied was ...
Demographic characteristics. The sample's demographic...
Age categories. We over-sampled adolescent and young adults (18-24 years)...

2. BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

Shorter empirical research papers, health policy papers, evaluations of innovative or otherwise noteworthy health and health care programs; up to 2,500 words of text.

- Above sections on cover letter, abstract and key words, tables, figures, permissions, submission, copyright, and proofs and reprints apply.

3. LITERATURE REVIEWS

Literature reviews: The Journal publishes *systematic* and *scoping* reviews (as appropriate given the range of available literature). *N.B.*: While we allow research papers and literature reviews as many as 10,000 words of text, rarely does a paper merit that length. If your paper is very long, please edit it as carefully as possible, eliminating redundancy, unnecessarily protracted presentation of background material, and excessive verbiage.

Some of the databases researchers might draw on to search the scholarly literature and gray literature (select among these and others, based on topic area):

Academic Search Premier
BioMed Central databases
CCTR: Cochrane Controlled Trials Register, or [Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials](#)
Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
CINAHL: Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health
DARE: International Social Science Directory
EMBASE: Biomedical answers (Medline + 5 million other records, emphasis on evidence-based medicine)
ERIC: Education Resources Information Center
GOOGLE Scholar
Health Source Nursing/Academic Edition
PsychARTICLES
PsychINFO
PubMed/MedLine
Science Direct
Sociological Abstracts
SPORTDiscus
Web of Knowledge

4. COMMENTARIES

Commentary on timely issues, firmly grounded in the relevant scholarly literature; 1,000-4,000 words of text.

- Above sections on cover letter, abstract and key words, permissions, submission, copyright, and proofs and reprints apply.

5. REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

This section of the Journal is intended for brief, descriptive papers about innovative work. These papers may be about a host of different things that we believe will interest our readers — including but not only

- *Programs*
- *Interventions*

- *Clinical care*

Authors of Reports from the Field should take care to contextualize their work as much as possible – provide descriptive information about (for example) the demographic profile or history of the population, condition, region, neighborhood, program, or practice that is the topic of the Report. Similarly, be sure the submission is contextualized in the literature — we expect citation and brief discussion of related published material.

After the detailed description of the program/intervention/clinical care/other, the authors must discuss any completed, ongoing, or plans for evaluation. They should also include a section or text box on lessons learned.

While still hewing to the highest standards for timeliness and accuracy. Reports are not structured as research papers and do not contain statistical analyses (other than purely descriptive statistics). Word limit: 2,000 words of text.

- In place of an abstract, include a summary of the paper’s contents. The summary should be no longer than 50 words. Also include a list of key words. These should appear in the blinded manuscript as well as being loaded onto Manuscript Central in place of an abstract.
- Where applicable, the above sections describe policies and procedures for cover letter, tables, figures, permissions, submission, copyright, and proofs and reprints.

6. TRIBUTE COLUMNS

A column published in the Journal since 2005, Tribute (or, Heroes and Great Ideas) is a space for telling the stories of people and initiatives that have worked successfully to improve life in medically underserved communities. Styles adopted vary widely and include traditional biographical or historical accounts, essays, and narratives. We welcome submissions to this section, which is reviewed by members of the editorial staff and editorial board as well as external reviewers, as appropriate. Word limit: 2,000 words.

- Where applicable, the above sections describe policies and procedures for cover letter, tables, figures, permissions, submission, copyright, and proofs.

7. ACU COLUMNS

The ACU Column originates in the office of the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved. Interested authors should write to the ACU office, care of Amanda Pears Kelley apearskelley@clinicians.org.

8. BOOK REVIEWS AND OTHER REVIEWS

Critical summaries of books, reports, videotapes, educational materials, and other materials of interest to our readers; 500-1,500 words. See Scholar One/Manuscript Central site (<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/JHCPU>) for current list of books available from the Journal office for review.

- Above sections on cover letter, permissions, submission, copyright, and proofs and reprints apply. Authors receive a complimentary copy of the Journal issue in which their work appears.
- Assess the contributions of the material being reviewed to the broad field of health care for the poor and underserved.
- Summarize the salient features of the work; assess its accuracy, readability, completeness, biases, and important omissions; and suggest an audience that might find the work useful.

General Submission Requirements (All Paper Types)

- List any acknowledgments and grant support at the end of the text under a new section heading,

Acknowledgments.

- The list of references should follow a section heading, **References**.

Tables

- Type tables on pages separate from the text. Provide a title and consecutive Arabic numbering for each.
- Use the table formatting option in Microsoft Word®.
- Tables should be in black and white.
- List source for table, if called for.
- Please place tables at the end of the document rather than within the text stream, and please do NOT use anchored boxes.
- Tables should be in Word rather than Excel.
- The *Journal* uses boxes rather than tables for text-only graphics.

Figures

- Maps, diagrams, drawings, and figures (bar graphs, pie charts, etc.) must be rendered in sharp detail and appear in black and white.
- Include actual data. For figures that contain percentages, include raw numbers.
- List source for figure, if called for.
- Please refrain from using scanned figures, as we are unable to edit them.
- Please supply a native digital file for art (e.g., .jpg).

Boxes

- Offset text boxes without numbers (including text arranged in columns). The *Journal* uses boxes rather than tables for text-only graphics.

Permissions

- Obtain written permission from the copyright holder to use published figures or tables or any other copyrighted material.

Submission

- Follow the instructions on Scholar One/Manuscript Central.

Review

- Authors are notified promptly when manuscripts are received. Manuscripts that pass an internal review are sent to external reviewers who are experts in the topic area addressed by the paper. Reviewers provide comments to the editor, who relays them to the primary author. Reviews are double-blind (*i.e.*, neither authors nor reviewers know each other's identity or institutional affiliation).

Copyright

- Accepted manuscripts become the permanent property of the *Journal* and are not published until all authors have signed a copyright transmittal form and returned to the editor. Authors who assign exclusive copyright to the *Journal* retain residual copyright to the words and data in their manuscripts. The *Journal* and publisher usually honor requests to reprint copyrighted material on a limited basis, providing that permission is also obtained from the author(s) and proper credit is given to the source.

Proofs and reprints

- After revisions are completed, primary authors receive galley proofs for review from the publisher, Johns Hopkins University Press. Galleys must be returned with any substantive corrections within the (brief) time frame established by the publisher. Primary authors receive two complimentary copies of the *Journal* issue in which their work appears and co-authors receive one copy each.

REFERENCES

- In the text, refer to each reference with an Arabic numeral (1, 2, 3...) in superscript, without parentheses. Number references consecutively and list the full citations at the end of the text (under the heading **References**).
- List all authors of cited works when there are three or fewer. Otherwise, list the first three, then *et al.*
- Use the following formats, based on *Index Medicus*/PubMed styles:
 - Journal article (GIVE COMPLETE PUBLICATION DATE PLUS VOLUME AND NUMBER. PubMed citations may be used as a guide):**
 1. Zuckerman B, Frank DA, Hingson R, et al. Effects of maternal marijuana and cocaine use on fetal growth. *N Engl J Med.* 1989 Mar 23;320(12):762-8.
 - Chapter in Book:**
 2. Morris JN. The last weeks of life: does hospice care make a difference? In: Mor V, Greer DS, Kastenbaum R, eds. *The hospice experiment.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1988.
 - Government report:**
 3. National Center for Health Statistics. *Health, United States, 1989.* (DHHS Pub. no. [PHS] 90-1232.) Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Public Health Service, 1990.
 - Published conference presentation:**
 4. Hinman AR. Progress over the last decade. In: *Proceedings of the 24th Immunization Conference, Orlando (FL), May 21-5, 1990:*17-20. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control, 1990.
 - Unpublished conference presentation:**
 5. McJamerson E, Pearson W Jr. The declining participation of African-American males in higher education: causes and consequences. Presented at: Mid-South Sociological Association Conference, Baton Rouge (LA), Oct 1989.
 - Material accepted for publication:**
 6. Hall LE, Callender CO, Yeager CL, et al. Organ donation in blacks. *Transpl Proc* (In press.)
 - Other unpublished material** (cite in the text but not in the references):
(B. Jones, personal communication, date)
- Please note: *JHCPU* accepts Internet urls only as supplementary information. All references must include specification of the published source in the format described above. After a period ending that print citation, a new sentence reading "Available at..." where "... is replaced by the Internet address, may be added. In cases where the printed version is inaccessible, provide a citation modeled on those for print citations (supply the information referred to by words in capital letters here):
 7. AUTHOR. TITLE of work being cited. LOCATION of organization/publication: ORGANIZATION/PUBLICATION posting the work being cited, YEAR posted. Available at...URL HERE.
- Please note: We prefer that authors do not embed references using automatic reference numbering programs. However, authors may want to use such a program while working on their papers (converting them to plain text only at the end and prior to submission). RefWorks (but *not* EndNote) includes the *JHCPU*/*Index Medicus*/PubMed citation style.

Thank you for your interest in the *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*