

Albanian Medical Journal – Instructions to authors

Scope of the Albanian Medical Journal

Albanian Medical Journal is an open access international peer reviewed journal open to scientists of all fields of health sciences. Contributions that enhance or illuminate public health disciplines are particularly welcome. Furthermore, our special interest lies in public health and medical developments in transitional countries of the Western Balkans. From this point of view, we aim to provide a medium for reporting scientific findings to researchers from Southeast Europe, particularly Albania and Kosovo, who otherwise would face enormous difficulties in publishing their articles elsewhere.

Adherence to ICMJE guidelines

The Albanian Medical Journal conforms to the “Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals”, as specified by the statements of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (<http://www.icmje.org/>).

Manuscript Types

The Albanian Medical Journal publishes five types of manuscripts:

- original research reports;
- reviews;
- brief communications;
- case reports, and;
- book reviews.

1. Original research reports have a maximum of 3000 words (excluding abstract, tables/figures and

references), a maximum of 4 tables/figures, a structured abstract of no more than 250 words, and up to 50 references. Such full-length manuscripts typically describe investigations related to different aspects of the health field. These may include randomized trials, intervention studies, cohort studies, case-control studies, epidemiologic assessments, other observational studies, cost-effectiveness analyses and decision analyses, and studies of screening and diagnostic tests. Each manuscript should clearly state an objective or hypothesis; the design and methods (including the study setting and dates, patients or participants with inclusion and exclusion criteria and/or participation or response rates, or data sources, and how these were selected for the study); the essential features of any interventions; the main outcome measures; the main results of the study; a comment section placing the results in context with the published literature and addressing study limitations; and the conclusions. Criteria include relevance of research question, quality of design, sound implementation procedures, thorough outcome analysis of research findings, and implications for practice and policy.

2. Reviews are usually solicited by the editors, but we will also consider unsolicited material. Please contact the editorial office before writing a review article for the Albanian Medical Journal in order to use the preferred review format. All review articles undergo the same peer-review and editorial process as original research reports. They should

include up to 50 references and have 2000-2500 words (excluding abstract, tables/figures and references) providing a clear, up to date account of the topic in the field being covered. The abstract for reviews should be unstructured and should contain no more than 200 words. The review should include a broad update of recent developments (from the past 3-5 years) and their likely clinical applications in primary and secondary care. It should stimulate readers to read further and should indicate other sources of information, including web based information. The article should also try to highlight the bridge between primary and secondary care and offer specific information on what public health specialist or general practitioners should know about certain diseases or conditions.

3. Brief communications are reports of no more than 1500 words, 10 references and 2 tables/figures. Brief Communications begin with a brief unstructured abstract of no more than 100 words.

4. Case reports should be drawn from an actual patient encounter, rather than a composite or fictionalized description. Case reports have a maximum of 1200 words and should include: introduction, aim, case description, discussion/conclusion and up to 10 references.

5. Book reviews (up to 1000 words) provide reviews of current books and other publications of interest to individuals involved in public health and medicine. Only reviews of recently published books will be considered. Book reviews are solicited by invitation; however, persons interested in doing a review may contact the editors.

Manuscript Preparation

Manuscripts should meet the general requirements agreed upon by the International Committee of the Medical Journal Editors, available at www.icmje.org.

Contributions should be organized in the following sequence: title page, abstract, text (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion), source of funding, acknowledgments, conflict of interest statement, authors' contributions, references, tables, figures.

Title page

The title page should contain the following information:

- The article title (concise, yet comprehensive);
- Full names (first, middle [if applicable] and last names) of all authors;
- Names of the department(s) and institution(s) to which the work should be attributed. If authors belong to several different institutions, superscript digits should be used to relate the authors' names to respective institutions. Identical number(s) in superscript should follow the authors' names and precede the institution names;
- A short running head of not more than 100 characters (count letters and spaces);
- The name and mailing address of the corresponding author, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail.

Abstract

The abstract for full-length articles (original research reports) should contain no more than 250 words structured in four headings: Aims, Methods, Results, and Conclusion. The Abstract should be followed by 3 to 5 keywords.

Text

Introduction: In the Introduction section, the contributors should briefly introduce the problem, particularly emphasizing the level of knowledge about the problem at the beginning of the investigation. At the end, authors should provide a short description of the aim of the study, specific objectives and study hypotheses.

Methods: In the Methods section, details regarding the material, samples, methods and equipment used in the study should be included, so that another individual could repeat the work. The selection of the observational or experimental participants (patients or laboratory animals, including controls) should be stated clearly, including eligibility and exclusion criteria and a description of the source population.

Subsequently, the period of research and the institution where it was conducted should be clearly mentioned. Papers covering research on human or animal subjects should contain a statement indicating patient permission and clearance by the institute research or ethics committee or animal experimentation committee.

The methods and procedures should be given in sufficient detail to allow reproduction of the results. Give references to established methods, including statistical methods; provide references and brief descriptions for methods that have been published but are not well known; describe new or substantially modified methods, give reasons for using them, and evaluate their limitations. Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic name(s), dose(s), and route(s) of administration.

Results: In this section author should describe the main findings in the text as well as the particular statistical significance of the data, and refer the reader to the tables and figures, implying that details are shown there. Information on significance and other statistical data should preferably be given in the tables and figures. Do not combine the Results and Discussion sections for full-length papers.

Discussion: This section should not repeat results. The discussion section should discuss study findings, and interpret them in the context of other trials reported in the literature providing evidence

or counterevidence. In this way the validity of the results and the significance of the conclusions for the application in further research are assessed, with respect to the hypothesis, relevance of methods, and significance of differences observed.

References

The Albanian Medical Journal employs the ICMJE recommendations for reference formatting (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html), with sequential numbering in the text, and respective ordering within the list. References cited in the manuscript are listed in a separate section immediately following the text. The authors should verify all references. Consult Index Medicus or PubMed (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/>) for standard journal abbreviations.

Each reference should be numbered, ordered sequentially as they appear in the text, methods, tables, figure, and legends. When cited in the text, reference numbers are in parenthesis. Only one publication can be listed for each number. Only articles that have been published or submitted to a named publication should be in the reference list. Published conference abstracts, numbered patents and preprints on recognized servers are not encouraged to be included in reference lists.

All authors should be included in reference lists unless there are more than seven, in which case only the first six authors should be given followed by 'et al.'

Examples of proper referencing:

Citing a journal article:

1. Roshi E, Pulluqi P, Rrumbullaku L, Bejtja G, Bregu A, Ylli A. Trends of smoking in Albania during 2000-2010. *Croat Med J* 2003;12:639-42.
2. Smith AT, Haiden S, Seman RE, et al. Public health challenges in a transitional country in Southeast Europe. *Eur J Public Health* 2008;38:938-46.

Citing a book:

Trimi G, ed. *Albania: Facts and figures*. Tirana, AL: Albanian Society of Medical Doctors; 2010.

Book chapter:

Trimi G, ed. Albania: Facts and figures. Tirana, AL: Albanian Society of Medical Doctors; 2010:948-59.

Online Journals:

Larva A, Keci M. Diabetes and lifestyle patterns in transitional Kosovo. *BMJ* 2011;339:737.

<http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/339/7596/737>. Accessed September 10, 2012.

Tables

Tables should bear Arabic numerals. Each table should be put on a separate page. Tables should be self-explanatory, with an adequate title (clearly suggesting the contents), and logical presentation of data. The title should preferably include the main results shown in the Table. For footnotes use the following symbols, in this sequence: *, †, ‡, §, II, ¶, **,.....

Figures

Figures should be numbered in sequence with Arabic numerals. The legend of a figure should contain the following information:

- the word “Figure”, followed by its respective number;
- the word “Figure”, followed by its respective number;
- figure title containing major findings presented in the figure.

Figures created in a MS Office application (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) should be sent in the native document format. In case other applications are used, the images should be saved or converted to the following formats (note the resolution requirements given below):

- EPS or PDF: Vector graphics, embed all used fonts.
- TIFF or JPEG: At least 300 dpi for color or grayscale photographs (halftones).
- TIFF or JPEG: At least 1000 dpi for bitmapped (black & white pixels) line drawings.
- TIFF or JPEG: At least 500 dpi for combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale).

Writing Style

• Articles should be written in English (spellings as in the Oxford English Dictionary), Times new Roman, size 12, double spaced, using left alignment.

- Set all margins to 2,54 cm.
- Format for A4 paper.
- Type all copy upper and lower case – do not use all capitals or small capitals.
- Do not use footnotes

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Adherence to ethical guidelines

The Albanian Medical Journal adheres to the basic principles of the Declaration of Helsinki of the World Medical Association. If human participants are involved, a statement of approval by an institutional review board (IRB) and the participants’ informed consent should be provided. If IRB approval was not obtained or sought, a short explanation is desirable.

Informed consent

Patients have a right to privacy that should not be infringed without informed consent. Identifying information, including patients’ names, or initial should not be published in written descriptions,

photographs, and pedigrees unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or parent or guardian) gives written informed consent for publication. Informed consent for this

purpose requires that a patient who is identifiable be shown the manuscript to be published (ICMJE).

Acceptance Criteria and Conditions of Publication

Authors are encouraged to write in a manner that is maximally communicative, interesting, and informative. Manuscripts should be submitted solely to the Albanian Medical Journal and should not be considered for publication elsewhere, nor should they have been previously published. Consideration for publication can be given to material that has previously had limited circulation elsewhere. If an article has appeared previously in any form, authors must clearly indicate this in their cover letter. Include copies of potentially duplicative material that has been previously published and provide links to duplicative material on the Internet.

Peer review

All original research reports, brief communications and case reports are evaluated by two external

reviewers, who are asked to advice on the importance, relevance, originality and validity of the manuscripts.

Conflicts of interest

Authors of all manuscripts should reveal any conflicts of interest they may have. The conflicts of interest will be communicated in a statement in all the published papers.

Manuscript Submission

All manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail at: submissionamj@gmail.com

The submission should be accompanied with a Letter to the Editors (a separate Word document) stating the following:

- Manuscript type (original research; review; brief communication; case report; book review).
- Major findings of the research work.
- Novelty and relevance of the manuscript.

All manuscripts submitted to the Albanian Medical Journal will be regularly analyzed by plagiarism detection software. In-house decision will be within 7-10 working days. If manuscripts are sent for external peer-review, authors will be notified about editorial decision no later than 8 weeks after the date of manuscript submission.

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