Writing for publication or a research abstract

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Overview

• The importance of publication
  – Dissemination of new knowledge
• Writing is a skill that can be learnt
• Personal experience of writing and publishing
• The publishing process
  – Target audience
  – Choosing the journal
• Strategies to support writing
Writing for publication

• The same applies to writing and publishing or presenting the findings of your Quality Improvement (QI) or research activities
• The project is not over until the findings have been written up and published
  – Or the cake has been cooked!
Writing

• Writing evolved ~ 5,000 years ago
• Writing was/is a method of recording and communicating different types of information
Writing for publication

• Writing for publication is essential for the dissemination of knowledge and practice
• Barriers to writing because of:
  – Lack of confidence
  – Lack of knowledge of the process
  – Insufficient time to write
  – Fear of criticism
• Sound familiar?
Learning to write for publication

• Reading the literature
• Identify a mentor or buddy who can support your writing efforts
• Identify someone you trust
  – Ask for feedback and constructive criticism
• Attend a writing for publication workshop
  – Offered by many academic teaching hospitals
Writing for publication

• What to write about:
  – Research findings
  – Findings of a QI activity
  – Clinical experience – e.g. case study
  – Opinion piece
The publishing process

• Target audience
  – Who do you want to read your work?
  – Why should they read your work?
  – Who needs to read your work?
  – What are the main points for that audience?
The publishing process

• Choosing a journal
  – During the literature search pay attention to where the “useful” articles have been published
  – What is the focus of your work?
  – Match your focus with a journal
Choosing a journal

- http://jane.biosemantics.org/
- https://www.journalguide.com/
- http://journalfinder.elsevier.com
Choosing a journal

• Impact Factor (IF)
  – Is a measure of how often articles in a journal have been cited in a year
  – Used to evaluate the importance of a journal within its field
  – It is a ratio between citations and recent citable items published
The publishing process

- Write the manuscript then choose the journal  
  OR  
- Choose the journal then write the manuscript
Strategies to support writing

• Weekly facilitated writing sessions designed to help researchers get their writing done
• 25 min of “shut up and write”, or edit, read or analyse
• After 25 minutes, there's a break - chat, cuppa or a quick walk.
• Then another 25 min of writing
• Repeat for 2 hours
Writing your abstract

• Brown’s methodology – write for 30 min on the subject of your journal article...
  – Who are the intended readers ... list 3-5 names
  – What did you do? (50 words)
  – Why did you do it? (50 words)
  – What happened? (50 words)
  – What do the result mean in theory? (50 words)
  – What do the results mean in practice? (50 words)
  – What is the key benefit for readers? (25 words)
  – What remains unresolved?
Writing your abstract

- Brown’s methodology
  - Answer as many questions as you can in 30 min
  - If you get stuck, move to the next question
  - Stick to the word limits
  - Discuss your answers and emerging abstract with others
Conference presentations

• Abstracts are usually peer-reviewed
• Sometimes the abstracts are published in conference proceedings
  – But no other data is generally available
• Presenting your work at a conference is a starting point
  – I think in PowerPoint so a conference presentation is often the outline of a manuscript
The publishing process

• Always read the author guidelines for the chosen journal
  – Pay attention to the word limit, referencing style and format
• Once the manuscript has been edited ...
The publishing process

- Peer review
  - Editors will send your manuscript to 2-3 peer reviewers
    - Reviewers may be blinded to the authors to prevent bias
    - Reviewer is sent the abstract to determine whether they wish to do the review
  - Peer reviewers are asked to review the manuscript either:
    - Formally – answering questions with option for free text
    - Informally
The publishing process

• Things reviewers are considering (Wiley):
  – What is the question addressed by the research? Is it relevant and interesting?
  – How original is the topic? What does it add to the subject area?
  – Is the paper well written? Is it easy to read?
  – Are the conclusions consistent with the evidence presented?
  – If the author is disagreeing with the current consensus, do they have a substantial case?
  – Are the tables or figures in the manuscript add to the paper? Or are they superfluous?
The publishing process

• Address the reviewer’s comments
  – If you disagree, provide evidence that supports your perspective
The publishing process

• There is a home for every manuscript

• You just have to find it ...
Summary

• Publication is an important step of the research process
  – If you don’t publish was there any point in doing all that work?
• Conference presentations are an important first step in dissemination
  – Often help to clarify your thinking
• There are many barriers to writing and publishing
  – Peer support is really important
References

• Brown R. Write right the first time. Literati Newsline 1994-95; Special Issue, 1-8.
• Williams B. Support for nurses in writing for publication. Nursing Times 2015; 111:9, 15-17