



# Journal of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Respiratory Care

## A guide to writing a literature review

Literature reviews are often conducted as a precursor to experimental studies to highlight where the 'gap' is, that can then be filled with the experimental study. Alternatively you may wish to conduct a literature review in order to identify and summarize a large amount of studies about a particular topic in a systematic way. A literature review is particularly important when studies show conflicting results and direct comparisons can highlight the potential reasons for this.

A systematic review should be reported using the PRISMA checklist <http://www.prisma-statement.org/2.1.2%20-%20PRISMA%202009%20Checklist.pdf> . A narrative review should be written using the following guide. The introduction to both types of review should include a justification of the chosen method.

Articles should normally be no longer than 2500 words.

### Title

Identify the topic and scope of the review. The title should clearly state that it is a literature review (or narrative review)

e.g. A literature review into the effect of inspiratory muscle training on exercise capacity in people with neurodegenerative conditions

### Abstract

This section should include a brief overview including:

- Background and justification for review
- Specific objectives of the review
- Search criteria
- Study appraisal and synthesis method
- Results
- Limitations
- Conclusions

### Introduction

This section should include a rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. The specific question being addressed should be stated in terms of Participant, Interventions, Comparisons, Outcome measures and Study designs (PICOS).

A clear search strategy must be provided which includes:



- Sources of information e.g. databases used and dates covered by search
- Key search terms in relation to PICOS
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria for studies
- Method of study appraisal e.g. Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP <http://www.casp-uk.net/>) and number of appraisers

### **Review**

The narrative review should be presented as an analysis and synthesis of the data found based on the search strategy. The review may be divided into sub sections which clearly link to the question and provide clarity for the reader.

### **Conclusion**

This section should provide a conclusion based on the search strategy and the analysis and synthesis of the studies found. Recommendations for further study should be included.

### **Key points**

Three key points should provide the reader with the value of the review

### **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgements should be provided for anyone who was not an author but helped in the preparation of the article.

### **Funding**

Funding of the study needs to be acknowledged preferably worded as follows. Either: 'This work was supported by [name of funder] grant number [xxx]' or 'This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors'. You must ensure that the full, correct details of your funder(s) and any relevant grant numbers are included.

### **Ethical and R&D approval**

Approval for use of an individual's data must be gained from relevant sources. If your manuscript contains any individual person's data in any form (including individual details, images or videos), consent for publication must be obtained from that person, or in the case of children, their parent or legal guardian.

Trust/Health Board R&D approval and if necessary NHS research ethics approval must be documented. If the study was part of an academic award, confirmation of University ethical approval is also required.



If your manuscript does not contain data from any individual person, please state “Not applicable” in this section.

## References

These should be referenced using the Harvard system. You are responsible for accurate referencing.

In the text, use the name and year system e.g. As Black and White (1987) have shown..., as already reported (Black and White, 1987)... For three or more authors print the first author’s name followed by et al e.g. as Black et al (1987) have shown...

When several references are cited simultaneously, the order should be chronological e.g. Black et al 1997, White and Smith 1987.

In the reference list arrange references alphabetically by first author’s surname. Print the names and initials of all authors for references with six or fewer authors; for seven or more authors print the first three and add ‘et al’.

The sequence **for a journal article** is: author(s); year; title; journal; volume; first and last page numbers. The layout and punctuation are e.g.

Gosselink, R. 2004 Breathing techniques in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). *Chronic Respiratory Disease* 1(3): pp163-172.

**For online journals** i.e. those that are only available on-line or those in press and available online:

Merchant, A.T. 2007. Diet, physical activity, and adiposity in children in poor and rich neighbourhoods: a cross-sectional comparison. *Nutrition Journal* [Online] 6. Available at: <http://www.nutritionj.com/content/pdf/1475-2891-6-1.pdf> [Accessed:10 May 2013].

The sequence, layout and punctuation **for books** are:

West, J.B. 2012 *Respiratory Physiology* 9<sup>th</sup> Edition Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

**For a chapter** within an edited book:

Samuels, B. 1979 Pulmonary complications of AIDS. In: Rand, A. and Long, B. eds. *Management of AIDS*. London: Butterworth, pp 387-95

The total number of references should not exceed 20.



## **General formatting of the document for submission**

### **Font and spacing**

All text is Calibri and fully justified.

Title: bold 16pt, 1.5 spacing

Authors, keywords and correspondence: 12pt, all headings bold

Abstract:

- Sub-headings: 14pt, bold, italic
- Text: 12pt, single spaced, italic

Main body of article:

- Headings: bold 14pt,
- Text: 12pt, double spacing
- Any further subheadings within sections: italic

Fig and table titles: 12pt

Note for insert figure/table: bold, italic, capital, red 12pt.

All pages must be numbered

### **Title page**

All submissions should include a title page as the first page of the document. This page must include the following information:

- Title of the article
- The names and initials of each author & institutional affiliation of each author.
- Name, e-mail address and telephone number of the author responsible for correspondence.
- Please provide up to 5 keywords that summarise the major themes of your article.
- Word count (excluding abstract)

### **Abbreviations and units**

Abbreviations should be defined at their first mention. SI units should always be used.

For numbers: all numbers under 10 should be written as words except when describing a quantity e.g. PaO<sub>2</sub> 8.5Kpa. Numbers greater than 10 should be written as digits, except at the start of a sentence.



## Tables and Illustrations

Tables and illustrations should be sent in separate files. Do not paste figures and tables into the text. Photography and images should be in black and white. Supply images at highest resolution obtainable from source. Do not reduce the file size.

If previously published, acknowledge the original source. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that permission is received from the copyright holder for the reproduction of figures and tables before submission (search for 'permissions' on the publisher's website).

References, explanatory matter and definitions of abbreviations should be explained in a key below the table.

Ensure that each table and figure are cited in the text.

Describe where the table should sit within the text e.g.

**\*\*\*\*\*TABLE 1 NEAR HERE\*\*\*\*\***

or

**\*\*\*\*\*FIGURE 2 NEAR HERE\*\*\*\*\***

## Submission

Word documents should be submitted online at

[http://www.acprc.org.uk/publications/acprc\\_journal.asp](http://www.acprc.org.uk/publications/acprc_journal.asp)

or emailed to [journaleditor@acprc.org.uk](mailto:journaleditor@acprc.org.uk) with the files named as follows:

- Main document: Author, date of submission, title of paper e.g. Smith011206Bronchiectasis
- Tables: Author, date of submission, title of Table e.g. Smith011206Table1
- Figures: Author, date of submission, title of figure e.g. Smith011206Figure1