

## **Submitting an Original Research Article to the TSMJ**

To select a study topic for original research, you may wish to consider research involvement from your own experiences:

- Special study modules
- Summer elective research experience
- Research at Trinity or other academic institutions (e.g. clinical research in areas such as psychiatry, obstetrics, gynaecology, paediatrics, community health and general practice)

You may also wish to conduct a basic research study in other areas of personal interest, for which you originate and develop an original research study, with a clinical goal in mind.

It may be helpful to consult previous editions of the TSMJ or other publications to familiarise yourself with the structure/content of an original research article!

### **Text Format:**

Please download our [template](#)

### **Title:**

- The title should correctly represent the content and breadth of the study reported and should not be misleading.

*For example: "A comparative evaluation of Propofol-Ketamine and Propofol-Fentanyl in minor surgery".*

- On reading the above title, we are unable to identify the content and breadth of the study – whether dosage, duration, efficiency or sequelae of two groups are studied; whether they are studied only as induction agents or as sole anaesthetic agents; in what group of patients they are tested. We should be able to determine this kind of relevant information from the title of a research article.
- The title should be clear, concise and informative. It should contain key words that capture the attention of the reader. No abbreviations are used in the title. The decision to read an article often rests on the appeal of its title.

*A more appropriate title may be: "A comparative evaluation of the efficiency of Propofol-Ketamine and Propofol-Fentanyl combinations as sole anaesthetic agents in patients undergoing minor ambulatory gynaecological operations".*

### **Author:**

- Designation, degree, affiliation and address of all authors are to be clearly indicated, with additional details such as telephone number and/or email address of the corresponding author.

### **Abstract:**

- The abstract should cover each and every component of the study in no more than 200 words. It should state the purpose of the study or investigation, basic procedures (e.g. selection of study subjects, methodology, statistical analysis), study results (e.g. main findings, statistical significance), and the principal conclusions and implications.
- Should contain precise information and should not contain abbreviations.
- The implications and benefits should be commensurate with the results obtained, and are to be highlighted.
- A hint is to write the abstract last!

### **Introduction:**

- The goal or purpose of the study is to be clearly stated, with detailed information about the problem studied and the specific research question/hypothesis.
- Four or five pertinent publications related to the problem should be presented and critiqued. Do not review the literature extensively. No data or conclusions are to be reported.
- The pertinence of the study is presented in relation to the current theories and methods associated with the problem. Existing gaps in knowledge or conflicting data are to be highlighted.
- A general overview of the study is presented in the introduction, which serves to provide the reader with an outline for the sections that follow.

### **Materials and Methods:**

- Selection of the study subjects must be described clearly. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are to be mentioned along with method of allocation to groups. \*\*All participants must be properly consented and no identifying information is to be included in the study!
- The research design is to be described in detail. The research design is the plan that is chosen to answer the research question. The methods, apparatus

and procedures are to be identified in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results, if necessary.

- Methods of error elimination such as blinding, introduction of a control group and placebo, randomisation etc. are to be mentioned distinctly.
- The measurement instrument including its psychometric qualities is described clearly. The psychometric qualities include validity, reliability, objectivity and precision. An example of the instrument should be given in the text or in an appendix.
- The data collection procedure is to be clearly described.
- The data analysis procedures are stated in precise terms.
- The setting in which the study took place is described. This information is useful to the reader in deciding whether results can be applied to his/her setting.
- Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic names, doses and routes of administration.
- Give references for all the methods used in the study including statistical methods.

### **Results:**

- Present your results in a logical sequence in the text, tables, figures and illustrations. Do not repeat in the text all the data in the tables or figures. Highlight the important data and accurately refer to the figures provided.
- Emphasise or summarise important observations/findings. \*\* The results section should contain only the study findings, and does not offer opinions or discussion about these findings.
- All the subjects included in the study should be accounted for. There should not be any hesitation in reporting any negative or unexpected result – do not leave out study results which you weren't expecting to find!

### **Discussion:**

- The discussion provides the opportunity to discuss all the data from the results section, with an emphasis on the implications of these findings and their limitations.

- The discussion should cover all the debatable aspects of the study. It can go beyond the results obtained and can cover methodological and other critical issues.
- Relate the study observations/findings to other relevant studies from your literature review. Emphasise similarities and/or conflicts.
- The new and important aspects of the study and the conclusions drawn are to be emphasised.
- Scope and need for future additional research is to be discussed.
- The discussion should not be misused as a platform to state opinions. Readers should not be side- tracked into another topic.

### **Conclusions:**

- Link conclusions with the goals of the study. Avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not supported by your data.
- The conclusions and practical outcomes of the study should be commensurate with the design used and results obtained. Conclusions and recommendations made should not go beyond the limits of the study conducted, i.e. should not over-generalise from the design and sample used.
- State new hypotheses when warranted. Recommendations when appropriate may be included.

### **References:**

- The references are to be presented in the style used in *Nature* (see URL in email).
- Avoid using 'abstracts' as references. The references must be verified by the author against the original documents.

### **Figure Legends:**

- Figure legends are to be included in the Word document before the references section. They should describe in detail the figure in question.

### **Tables:**

- Tables are to be included in the Word document after the references section.

### **Acknowledgements:**

- All help must be acknowledged and appropriately thanked.

### **Clinical Points Box:**

- A “Clinical Points” box should be included containing 4 to 6 key messages in the form of succinct, single-sentence bullet points. These should be the most important “take-home” messages from the article. Some “speed-readers” may read only this box and the introduction!
- The “Clinical Points” box will come before the Abstract in the final publication.

### **Figures and Illustrations (must be in high definition):**

- Illustrations are highly encouraged – may be in the form of clinical photographs, line drawings and flow charts, etc. Colour illustrations are welcome.
- Send them clearly-labelled, preferably as a jpeg file, in a separate PowerPoint file to the article.
- Each figure should have a corresponding legend.
- Please remember that we need informed consent from the study subjects for any material you obtain even if it does not include identifiable information. This includes X-rays, histology slides, and so on.