

How to Write

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

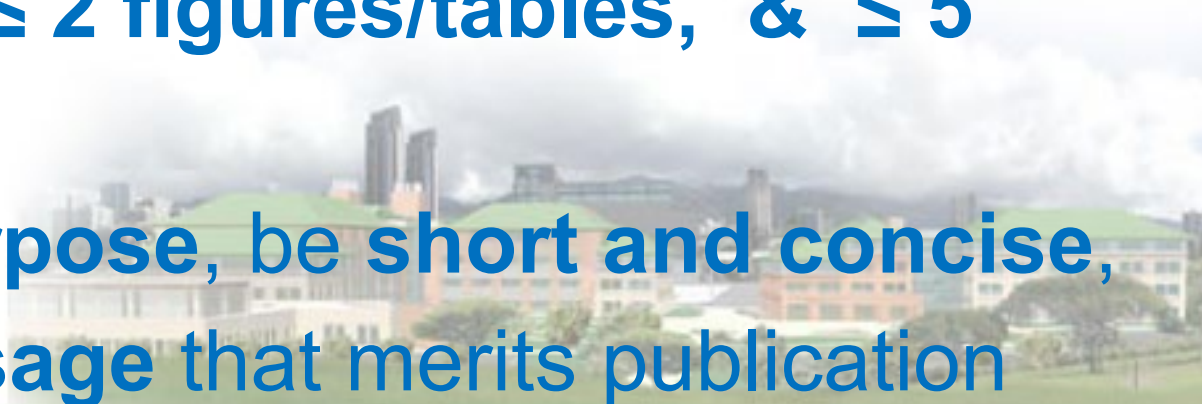


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What is a Letter-to-the-Editor?



- a. **A short communication on any subject of interest to the journal reader, published at the Editor's discretion**
- b. **≤ 600 words (250 words DS/page) , ≤ 5 references, 0 or ≤ 2 figures/tables, & ≤ 5 authors**
- c. **Must have a purpose, be short and concise, with a clear message that merits publication**



Purposes of a Letter



- **Objective and constructive comments** on previously published articles
 - a. Provide **additional information or evidence** (other research studies)
 - b. Raise points **not adequately covered** in the article
 - c. Identify **errors** and making a **correction**
 - d. Approaching subject matter from a **different perspective**
 - e. Provide a **counterpoint**
 - f. Provide an **alternate theory**
- **Case report**
- **Case series** or reporting an **adverse drug reaction**



How to Write an Editorial Letter



International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommends publishing letters in journals together with their answers

- a. Select medical **topic** that you enjoy and or specialize in
- b. Select a journal that publishes “Letter-to-the-Editor”
- c. Most journals only accept letters discussing **their journal articles**
- d. Respond within **1-2 months** of publication -
→ the sooner, the better, **1 MONTH IS BETTER**
- e. Some journals have online “**rapid response**” or **electronic letter** section



Common Writing Strengths



- a. **A short title (use PubMed key words)**
- b. **Use brief and concise wording (avoid cutesy)**
- c. **Make specific comments**
- d. **Base comments on scientific evidence, not biased opinions**
- e. **Authors' names, email addresses, and institutional affiliations at end of letter**



Before Letter Submission



- a. Most journals require **cover letter**:
 - a. Introduce your **intentions**,
 - b. Declare any **conflicts of interest**,
 - c. Statement that **letter is original** and has not been submitted/published elsewhere
- b. Submit **copyright** assignment from each author



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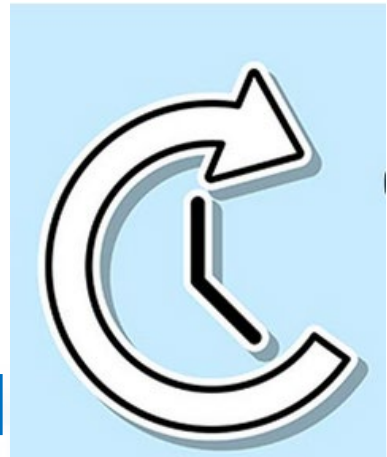
Pixabay.com – free pics

After Letter Submission

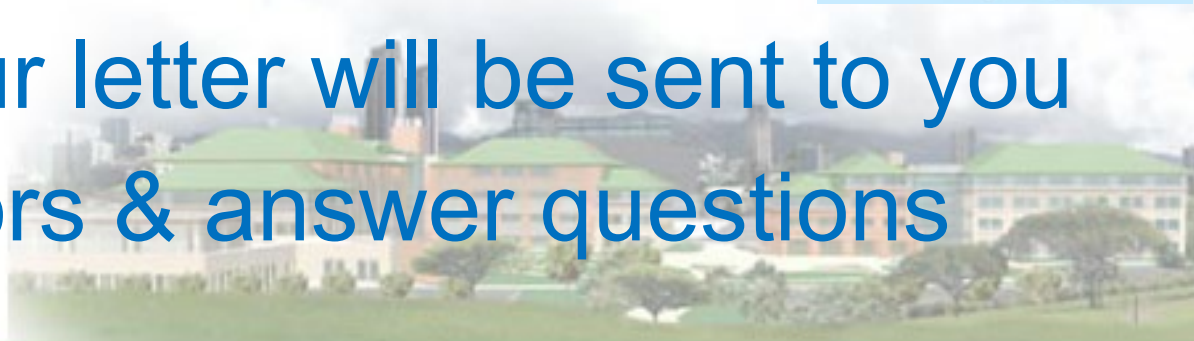


- a. **Review** - Editor may decide or it may go out to reviewer and original author
- b. **Rejection** – It happens. Submit another letter! Resilient, learn, stronger...

- a. **Acceptance** – respond asap
Meaning a 24-48 hour turnaround



- i. a **proof** of your letter will be sent to you
- ii. check for errors & answer questions



Questions?



Thank you!



Contact AmyBrown@Hawaii.edu

