

Guidelines for reviewers

From the editorial team of *ERJ*

Guidelines for reviewers

Contributors of *European Rehabilitation Journal (ERJ)* include all professionals team member involved in the patient *ERJ* process, embracing clinicians, engineers, administrators and many others. Submissions are welcome from all.

Once an article submission is made, the editors focus on the issue of the article's priority for ERJ readers, knowledge development and improved care.

Published work in *ERJ* aims to raise novelty, generalizable findings, high impact work on thinking or actions at the bedside. All articles should be clearly written, contain consistent following the national ethic legislation, discuss properly the work and reference relevant material. If all those basics criteria are not respected this may raise the risk of reject before to the review process.

The Responsibility of the Peer Reviewer

As a reviewer for ERJ, you are responsible for critically reading and evaluating a manuscript, and then providing constructive, and honest feedback to authors about their submission. You must discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the article, potential ways to improve the strength and quality of the work and evaluate the relevance and originality of the manuscript.

Before accepting to review data please consider the following:

The article you are being asked to review must match your field of expertise. If it is not the case, please notify the editorial office as soon as possible. It would be appreciated if you could recommend an alternate reviewer.

Reviewing of the manuscript must be completed within 6 weeks. If you think you won't be able to deliver it on time, please contact us as soon as possible.

All conflicts of interest must be disclosed to the editors before reviewing thoughts if you have any questions about the potential conflict of interest you may have, please contact the editorial office.

The identities of reviewers remain anonymous.

By accepting the peer review, editors and reviewers commit to :

- 1 Not to have any conflict of interest or relationship that would affect the evaluation and judgment of the article.
- 2 Provide high-quality peer review on time
- 3 To behave professionally, scientifically, ethically, and constructively.

In case of disagreement in the peer review, the editor-in-chief may request a new reviewer for a new evaluation.

The final decision on acceptance or rejection of an article rests with the Associated Editor and the Editor-in-Chief.

During the reviewing

For all reviews, we strongly encourage each peer-reviewer to use the referred reporting guidelines from the EQUATOR network that fit the design of the reviewed paper: <https://www.equator-network.org>

While reviewing an article, please consider the general following points:

- Overall novelty and relevance of the publication
- Does the article adhere to the journal's standards?
- Is the research question an important one?
- Do you think that the paper is in the top 30% of papers in this field?

Organization and Clarity

Title: Does it clearly describe the content of the article? Does the design is mention in the title?

Abstract: does it reflect the content of the article; specifically regarding the main objective and the conclusion related to the article? When it is possible, the IMRaD skeleton should be respected.

Introduction: It should provide a clear, accurate and short context that brings the authors to their research question. It should clearly describe the hypothesis(es) and the objectives (main and secondary if necessary) of the paper.

Method:

- The authors should explain thoroughly how the data were collected (material and technics, time frame, databases used)
- The inclusions/exclusion criteria of the population (or the articles if systematic review) should be clearly stated.
- A statistical paragraph (if it is an original article) should describe the method used to represent and analyze the data.
- The reviewer should ask himself the following questions:
- Is the design suitable for addressing the objectives of the study?
- Is there sufficient information present in the method to replicate the research?
- If needed, was the sampling appropriate?
- Have the equipment and materials been adequately described?
- Are the measurements described clearly?
- If deemed necessary, did the authors previously register their protocol onto an online platform (such as clinical trial)?

For all interventional research, ethical approval by a regional or national committee should appear. If not, this might be a cause of rejection.

Results: the authors should explain in words what they discovered in the research. It should be clearly laid out and in a logical sequence. The use of tables and figures are encouraged but should be used only if they add values to the text (not replicate data). Interpretation of results should

not be included in this section. While reviewing the results section, the reviewer should ask himself the following questions:

- Has an appropriate analysis been conducted? -Are the data reported correctly, using the mean and standard deviation or median and interquartile range when necessary? If you are not comfortable with statistics, please advise the editor when you submit your report.
- Do the authors respond clearly to their primary and secondary objectives?
- Does the data provided in Tables and figures provide enough details?

Conclusion/Discussion:

The claims in this section should reasonably be supported by the results. The authors should indicate how the results relate to their expectations and earlier research. The authors should state if their results support or contradict previously published data. If deemed necessary, the author should explain the limits of their work.

Scope

Submissions should present data that offer novel approaches to improving the systems, processes, tools, feasibility, or cost-effectiveness concerning the delivery of care related to *ERJ*.

Article Types Considered

All articles are submitted to the peer-review process are:

- *Observational studies*
- *Brief reports*
- *Systematic reviews and meta-analysis* (Submissions should clearly address one clinical topic of which of a corpus of data are already published. The authors should make a thorough and systematic search in the literature following appropriate guidelines.)
- *Narrative review articles* (Only requested by the editorial office. Submissions should be a critical review concerning issues that are relevant to a topic linked to *ERJ*. Reviews should be focused on one identified topic.)
- *Clinical cases* (Submissions should describe situations where individuals were faced with a challenge in health care delivery. The article should describe the challenge faced, the options, the thought process behind the decision made, and the lessons learned.)

Confidentiality

All submissions are confidential. Therefore, please do not discuss any aspect of the submissions with a third party. If you would like to discuss the article with a colleague, please ask the editor. Finally, do not contact the author directly.

Ethical Issues:

Please, contact the editor in the following situations:

- If you suspect plagiarism
- If you suspect fraud
- For other ethical concerns such as patients/subjects confidentiality, violation of the standards of clinical research and best practices of clinical research.

Additional info

Please complete the reviewing by the due date. It is particularly important for the journal editorial office. Your recommendation regarding an article will be strongly considered when the editors make the final decision, and your thorough, honest feedback will be much appreciated. When writing comments, please try to be as clear as possible for the authors to be able

to address properly your concerns. Please never hesitate to contact the editorial office team member that oversees the paper with any questions you may have.