

General Guidelines for Case Study Reporting

Title of a case report / a case series

Author Name(s)

Author work department

Abstract (Not less than 150 words but not exceeding 350 words)

Summarize the case presentation, outcome and emphasize learning points.

- **Introduction** about why this case is important and needs to be reported. Please include information on whether this is the first report of this kind in the literature.
- **Case presentation** Brief details of what the patient presented with, including the patient's age, sex and ethnic background.
- **Conclusion** A brief conclusion of the learning point from the case report and what the clinical impact will be. Is it an original case report of interest to a particular clinical speciality of medicine or will it have a broader clinical impact across medicine? Include information on how it will significantly advance our knowledge of a particular disease etiology or drug mechanism.

Full Case Report

Introduction

Explain the background of the case, including the disorder, usual presentation and progression and an explanation of the presentation a new disease, or discuss an adverse drug interaction by giving details of the drug's common use and any previously reported side effects. Include a brief literature review.

Case presentation (Presenting features/medical/social/family history)

This should present all relevant details concerning the case. The case presentation should contain a description of the patient's relevant demographic information (**without any details that could lead to the identification of the patient**);

- patient's illness presentation, symptoms and signs;
- relevant medical history of the patient;
- Investigations (If relevant)
 - Any investigation/tests that were carried out that provide background (baseline) data/*picture are relevant and
 - Management decisions should be discussed in full
- Differential diagnosis (If relevant)
 - Report the final diagnosis.
 - Consequences to management or treatment for the differential diagnoses
 - Example - A man in his 60s who has smoked for 40 years and presents with epigastric pain radiating posteriorly may have a leaking abdominal aortic aneurysm, acute pancreatitis or a perforated duodenal ulcer. Particular historical details and investigations separate these diagnoses, and treatment of each is vastly different; indeed, treating one cause for the other is detrimental. Discuss these and the pitfalls that may ensue.
 - Appropriate *images/videos to illustrate point (Patient informed consent required to ensure patient confidentiality protection);

*It is a compulsory requirement to obtain patient's informed consent for Images for Case Study Reporting – See Informed Consent.

- Treatment (If relevant) - Describe about treatment or intervention, including pharmacological and non-pharmacological.
- Outcome and follow-up data, if the patient has died please report even not directly related.
- Describe finding that influenced your clinical decisions .
- If it is a case series, then details must be included for all patients.

Discussion (optional)

Include a very brief review of similar published cases, describe mechanisms of injury, guidelines and their relevance, diagnostic pathways (use diagrams if applicable) and the points of interest of the case
A brief summary of relevant clinical guidelines is appropriate

The discussion of pitfalls is the single biggest contribution to learning in case reports:

- unusual presentations of common cases
- in conclusive results
- grey areas in indications for treatment
- Management challenges
- Near misses

This section is for additional comments that provide any additional relevant information not included in the case presentation, and put the case in context or that explain specific treatment decisions.

Learning points/take home messages (at least 3 to 5 points)

This part is required. These are the most crucial part of the case – what do you want readers to remember when seeing their own patients

Conclusion

This should state clearly what can be concluded from the case report, and give a clear explanation of the importance and relevance of the case. Is it an original case report of interest to a particular clinical speciality of medicine or will it have a broader clinical impact across medicine? Please include information on how it will significantly advance our knowledge of a particular disease etiology or drug mechanism.

Patient's perspective (optional)

This section is an opportunity for the patient to add a description of the case from their own perspective. The patient should be encouraged to state what originally made them seek medical advice, give a description of their symptoms, whether the symptoms were better or worse at different times, how any tests and treatments affected them, and how the problem is now.

This section can be written as deemed appropriate by the patient, but should not include identifying information that is irrelevant to the case reported. Consent to publish is required.

Abbreviations

Do not use abbreviations for diseases or investigations.

Consent (Compulsory)

Signed informed consent must be obtained from patients (or relatives/guardians).

Consent forms are available in several languages <http://group.bmj.com/products/journals/patient-consent-forms>

Images used for case study reporting:

1. X-rays, laparoscopic images, ultrasound images, pathology slides, or images of indistinctive parts of the body – may be used without consent as long they are anonymized by the removal of any identifying marks and are not accompanied by text that could reveal the patient's identity through clinical or personal detail.
2. If there is any chance that a patient may be identified from a photograph or other image or from its legend or accompanying text, patient's written consent is needed.

Publication of case study reporting:

Must obtain patient's consent for the case report to be published.

In the absence of consent, a case report about a living person must be anonymised or cases without consent for publication will not be considered.

If the person described in the case report has died, consent for publication must be sought from their next of kin or legal guardians.

Acknowledgements

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References

All references must be numbered consecutively, in brackets, in the order in which they are cited in the text, followed by any in tables or legends.

Adapted from:

- (1) Journal of Medical Case Reports – Instruction for authors manuscript for case report at <http://www.jmedicalcasereports.com/authors/instructions/casereport>)
- (2) BMJ Case Reports – Instruction for authors manuscript for case report at <http://casereports.bmj.com/site/about/>