



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MILITARY MEDICINE SECRETARIAT GENERAL

PRACTICAL GUIDE

Editorial policy of the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services (IRAFMS)

Guidelines for Authors

February 29, 2012

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1) Objectives of the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services (IRAFMS):

A) To enable the exchange of information between the Medical Services of the different Member States. This refers to sharing experience, not information of any promotional nature. It includes accounts of interesting experiences, observations relating to these, or even relevant questions arising from these experiences that deserve to be addressed collectively. As this is a scientific journal, articles must present the problem to be discussed, the suggested solutions, the results obtained and give a critical and comparative analysis of those results. The success of a particular Medical Service can be discussed, but within an analytical framework. Articles can be based on presentations made at an International or Regional Congress organized by the ICMM, or may be work submitted spontaneously by the author (who may or may not be from a Member State). Articles may also be requested by the editorial team from an author or a country whose expertise is recognized in a particular field. In all cases, articles must be submitted to be read by the editorial committee and the fact that they may have been selected as a Congress presentation does not necessarily guarantee acceptance of the submitted text for publication. The Review also publishes articles from other journals brought to the attention of the editorial committee, with the authorization of the publisher and the author.

B) To distribute information about the activities of the ICMM, such as the presentation of national delegates, announcements and reports on congresses, courses, and meetings.

2) Topics covered:

Topics must be related to military medicine (NB : the term « medicine » is used here in the generic sense and includes all branches of the health services, including articles written by pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians and logisticians; similarly, the term « military » refers equally to the uniformed armed forces and to other uniformed services : national guards, police, gendarmes, civil protection forces). Topics may cover combat or disaster medicine, the care and health of troops during overseas operations, including peace-keeping, or in this context for the benefit of civilian populations. They may cover curative or preventive treatment in specific situations of deployment: extreme environmental or climatic conditions, difficult or remote locations, the consequences of using particular weapons systems or protection. Questions concerning aptitude and selection for particular tasks may also be covered. Topics may be related to humanitarian or ethical issues in conflict situations or in natural or industrial disasters.

It is important also to define what is not to be considered as military medicine in the strict sense: in peace time and outside any crisis situation, medical services provide medical support to the national population to varying degrees, within treatment centers open to the public. In this case, nothing distinguishes the medical problems encountered in this context from those observed in the civilian sector, and the IRAFMS should not cover scientific observations of this type. Such topics would be more relevant to specialized journals or to national military medical journals, if accepted for publication.

3) Types of articles:

A) Original work: spontaneously submitted by the authors, or the texts of oral presentations or exhibited works from congresses or symposiums organized by the ICMM.

In both cases, these articles must adhere to the standards of a scientific article and respect the following plan:

- Outline of the problem / current best practice: in order to define the question the author is seeking to answer and to put it into the context of current knowledge. This paragraph shall pay particular attention to the military aspect of the question. It helps to avoid having to remind the reader later in the article, particularly about the geographical or historical context for deployment situations, and allows us to focus on understanding the text.
- Equipment and methods: other than the aspects of time, place and population studied, this paragraph shall describe the methods used, without going into complete details if they are referenced. It outlines the statistical tools used and ethical considerations if applicable.
- Results: this paragraph shall be totally independent from the previous and following paragraphs and shall present the results without commentary. The use of tables and colored graphs is to be encouraged, and wherever possible, these should replace long written explanations. Graphs should be numbered and have a clear key and scale showing the units used.
- Discussion: Particular attention must be given to this significant paragraph. It should give a critical analysis of the results, showing limitations connected to the sample, possible bias etc. It shall also compare results obtained with the results of other studies on the same topic, particularly results obtained by other military forces faced with the same type of problem.

B) Presentation of techniques or equipment:

Although it is not possible to impose a strict scientific structure to this type of article, authors shall focus on defining the specific need the technique or equipment is designed for. Authors shall define the characteristics and conditions of use. Preferably, situations in which the technique has been used shall be described, giving the results obtained and comparing these to other competing methods used, or to more traditional methods. If it is a question of new equipment/materials, the minimum requirement would be that results of experiments shall be given and the outlook for future use shall be discussed.

C) Account of the activity of a Medical Service in a situation of combat, disaster or support to civilians, or during an exercise: a plan similar to that of a scientific article can be used. This would include:

- Situation
- Means deployed
- Summary of activity and main results

- Discussion (strengths and weaknesses, problems encountered, suggested solutions)

D) Articles of historical interest: this type of article aims to show the importance of a military physician, highlighting his life and work or a significant achievement or discovery by a military physician. Member States are asked to contribute to this in order to bring to light achievements of which the public, or even military health professionals, may be unaware.

E) General summaries and reviews: these articles, which may be used as works of reference, are exclusively produced by recognized experts on the request of the editorial committee. Spontaneous submissions are not encouraged and are unlikely to be accepted.

4) General aspects:

A) Articles are published in French or in English, the two official languages of the ICMM. The editorial committee reserves the right to correct errors of expression, grammar or sentence structure. Articles must not exceed 25 pages (35 lines per page), including bibliography.

Abbreviations should be kept to a minimum and should be given in full the first time they are used in the text.

B) Tables and graphs: they must be numbered and include a title and a key which shall be sufficiently clear, relevant, precise, and complete to allow the reader to understand the information without reading the whole text. The same standard is required for the naming of variables in tables and diagrams.

C) Illustrations: chosen for their relevance and referred to in the text, they must be submitted using a suitable format for printing (300dpi). They should also include a caption.

D) Bibliography: the recommendations of the *International committee of medical journal editors* (www.icmje.org) should be used (Vancouver style). References must be numbered in the order they appear in the text. All references must be noted at least once. The bibliography shall avoid reference to articles published in journals not easily accessible to an international readership and to texts without an accessible summary in one of the two official languages of the ICMM (English and French).

E) Summary: in French and in English. When writing the summary, the author must be aware that this will serve as a showcase for the article, published online on the ICMM website.

F) Keywords: in French and English, keywords must be as precise as possible to facilitate the research of other authors. Words such as *military, army, navy, air force* and the names of countries should not be neglected.

G) CV and photograph of the main author: the photograph, in uniform, shall follow the same requirement as for the illustrations. The CV shall be brief and mention rank, university diplomas, the important stages of the author's career and his/her topics of interest, particularly in relation to the article. Other elements such as secondary level studies, family status, hobbies etc. are unnecessary.