Evidence Based Nursing Journal: Author guidelines for commentaries.

An EBN commentary is an opportunity for authors to summarize a key research paper, to identify the key implications for nursing, to set the findings in a wider context and – in some cases – to critique the paper itself. This guide will provide a broad framework for you to produce a successful commentary.

Structure of a commentary;

1: ***Declarative title.*** The title should tell a potential reader what the key take-home message from the primary paper is. It may therefore be quite different from the title of the primary paper. For example, a commentary on a primary paper entitled…

"An integrative review of fatigue experienced by women before and during myocardial infarction"

…had a declarative title of:

"Fatigue is an important potential symptom of Myocardial Infarction in women."

2. ***Implications for practice and research (Approx. 30 words):*** There should be two bullet points here that summarise key implications of the source paper – one with an implication for practice, and one for research. The implications should be short, to the point, and prescriptive.

3. ***Context (Approx. 100 words):*** This section should set the scene in which the research took place. For example, it may outline the prevalence and impact of a particular disease, or highlight the importance of the professional issue that was researched in the primary paper. The context section should also clarify and define any key terminology.

4. ***Methods (Approx. 150 words):*** A summary of the methods used to carry out research should be provided here. There does not need to be any critique or analysis of the approach used – just a succinct and descriptive account.

5. ***Findings (Approx. 200 words):*** An overview of the research findings. Given the restriction on word length, it will only be possible to cover the headline findings (e.g. key themes for qualitative studies; primary outcomes in quantitative studies). Please include any critical statistics (e.g. odds ratio; confidence interval) to support conclusions.

6. ***Commentary (Approx. 300 words):*** This is the section that provides you with the greatest opportunity to outline your own perspectives and opinions on the primary paper. The commentary should seek to set the findings of the paper in a broader context and identify how they align (or not) with the existing evidence-base. The commentary section also offers an opportunity to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology, though this should not be a reprise of the limitations section of the source paper. This section should be supported with published evidence beyond that of the source paper.

Word length: A commentary should be no more than **800 words** in length. This word length includes the implications for research and practice, the main body of the work, the in-text references and reference list. It does not include the declarative title, your author details, the citation of the primary article, or declarations of interest.

Referencing: In-text citations must be numbered sequentially as they appear in the text, and this should be mirrored in the reference list. Journals from BMJ use a slightly modified version of Vancouver referencing style available in Endnote.