

# *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare*

## Instructions to Authors

Instructions to Authors updated 5 October 2022

### **AIMS & SCOPE**

The *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* is an international, open access journal publishing high-quality, original scientific research in health, sports, medicine and welfare. The journal publishes articles spanning co-medical fields, social sciences, rehabilitation, nutrition, health promotion and policy that have been contributed by society members.

The journal is the official journal of the Niigata Society for Health and Welfare. It publishes Full Articles, Brief Communications, Reviews and invited Opinions. Articles undergo rigorous and fair peer review, and are published continuously online and collated into issues two or three times per year. The journal aims to foster communication among researchers and allied health professionals including health, welfare and sports sciences and policy makers. Furthermore, the journal aims to develop an interdisciplinary science among co-medical fields, social science research, rehabilitation, nutrition, health promotion, and policy, for human well-being. We welcome contributions from authors based anywhere in the world.

### **Manuscript Types**

The journal welcomes four manuscript types, all of which are subject to peer review.

#### *Full Articles*

Full Articles are comprehensive reports describing original research. They are presented in a standard format: Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion and References. The main text (excluding references, tables, and figure legends) should not exceed 8000 words.

#### *Brief Communications*

Brief Communications are concise, topical reports describing original research that may not warrant Full Articles but deserve publication as soon as possible. The main text should not exceed 2500 words and should follow the format for Full Articles.

### *Reviews*

Reviews present novel or unique overviews of recent or important developments in the field. They must be insightful and must address the question(s) of interest using appropriate and fully presented evidence; exhaustive general summaries will not be considered. Reviews are generally 5000-6000 words and can explore several aspects of importance in a broader subject area. Reviews are occasionally commissioned by the Editor-in-Chief, and the journal welcomes proposals from interested authors.

### *Opinions*

Opinion articles are invited, fully peer-reviewed and evidence-based articles that offer authors the opportunity to present novel viewpoints or opinions, or raise important matters, for the attention of the journal's readership. Opinions do not usually include new data, but the journal will consider articles that use novel information to support their case. Opinions can follow an essay style, or as otherwise agreed with the Editor-in-Chief, and are generally 1000-2000 words in length.

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The originality of submitted manuscripts and the quality of the work are the prime considerations of the Editors. Submitted manuscripts must be based on original research and not published or under consideration for publication elsewhere, except in special circumstances agreed with the Editor-in-Chief. Any manuscripts not within the scope of the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare*, that do reach an acceptable standard, or exceed the relevant word count may be returned to authors at the Editors' discretion without peer review.

### **Journal & Ethics Policies**

The *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* strives to uphold the highest research and publishing standards. This comprehensive suite of policies covers the main responsibilities of the journal's authors, reviewers, editors, and publisher. Before submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors must ensure that they have read and complied with the journal's policies.

### **Author Responsibilities**

#### **Submission**

The *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* welcomes manuscripts in English from authors based anywhere in the world.

Submission is subject to the condition that the first or the corresponding author is a member of the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare*. Membership is open to researchers and workers in health, medicine, welfare and sports science upon payment of a fee. Please contact the Editorial Office for more information.

Submission of manuscript to the journal implies that all authors: have read and approved the it; have agreed to its submission; have the right to publish it; and have read and complied with the journal's policies on publication ethics. Authors of submitted manuscripts acknowledge that the journal's editors reserve the right to reject or retract any manuscript they believe may breach any of these policies.

### **Duplicate submission**

Submission to the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* implies that the manuscript has not been previously published (in part or in whole, in any language), is not in press, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Authors must inform the editors if any related manuscripts are under consideration, in press or published elsewhere. The posting of a manuscript to a publicly accessible preprint server does not constitute prior publication (see 'Preprints'), but it should be brought to the Editor's attention upon submission.

If authors choose to submit their manuscript elsewhere before a final decision has been made on its suitability for publication in the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare*, they should first withdraw it from the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare*.

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Submission to the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* implies that the manuscript is original work. The journal uses iThenticate or other plagiarism detection software to screen manuscripts for unoriginal material. By submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors agree to this screening. The editors reserve the right to reject or retract the manuscript if there is evidence that the manuscript contains an unacceptable level of unoriginal material.

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To support the wide dissemination of research, the journal encourages authors to post their research manuscripts on community-recognized preprint servers either before or alongside submission to the journal. This policy applies only to the original version of a manuscript that describes primary research. Any version of a manuscript that has been revised in response to reviewers' comments, accepted for publication or published in the journal should not be posted on a preprint server. Instead, forward links to the published manuscript may be posted on the preprint server.

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When assessing the novelty of a manuscript submitted to the journal, the editors will not be influenced by other manuscripts that are posted on community-recognized preprint servers after the date of submission to the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* (or after the date of posting on a preprint server, if the manuscript is submitted to the *Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare* within 4 months).

## **Authorship**

Submission to the journal implies that all authors have seen and approved the author list. Changes to the author list after manuscript submission – such as adding or removing author names, or rearranging author order – must be approved by all authors and the editor.

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Authors may make their own data and materials available by including relevant identification numbers and links from their manuscript to relevant community-recognized public databases or digital repositories. All data sets must be made available in full to the Associate Editor and reviewers during the peer review process when requested and must be made publicly available by the date of publication. Authors commit to preserving their data sets for at least 3 years from the date of publication in the journal.

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**Animal/human experimentation**

Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving humans or materials derived from humans must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the principles embodied in the Declaration of Helsinki, its revisions, and any guidelines approved by the authors' institutions. Where relevant, the authors must include a statement in their manuscript that describes the procedures for obtaining informed consent from participants regarding participation in the research and publication of the research.

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A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an author's ability to conduct or report research impartially. Potential conflicts include (but are not limited to) competing commercial or financial interests, commercial affiliations, consulting roles, or ownership of stock or equity. In the interests of transparency, the journal requires all authors to declare any conflicts of interest (or lack thereof) in the 'Compliance with Ethical Standards' section of the manuscript.

Authors should list all funding sources for their work in the Acknowledgements section of their manuscript.

### **Confidentiality**

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. By submitting their manuscript to the journal, the authors warrant that they will keep all correspondence about their manuscript (from the Editorial Office, editors and reviewers) strictly confidential.

### **Editor / Publisher Responsibilities**

#### **Editorial and peer review process**

The journal uses double-blind peer review. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, it is assigned to the Editor-in-Chief, who performs initial screening. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's scope or are not deemed suitable for publication are rejected without review. The remaining manuscripts are

assigned by a Field Editor to an Associate Editor who then assigns two reviewers to assess each manuscript. Reviewers are selected based on their expertise, reputation and previous experience as peer reviewers. Where no Associate Editors are available, the Field Editor takes the role of the Associate Editor.

In principle, reviewers are asked to return their review within 2 weeks. However, this can be extended by 1-2 weeks at the Associate Editor's discretion, depending on the type and content of the manuscript. Upon receipt of the two reviewers' reports, the Associate Editor makes the first decision on the manuscript. If the decision is to request revision of the manuscript, the Associate Editor grants the authors a specified time period within which to resubmit the revised version. Revised manuscripts submitted after this deadline may be treated as new submissions. The Associate Editor may send revised manuscripts to peer reviewers for their feedback or may use his or her own judgement to assess how closely the authors have followed the Associate Editor's and the reviewers' comments on the original manuscript.

The Associate Editor then makes a recommendation to the Field Editor on the manuscript's suitability for publication. The Field Editor passes the recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief, who is responsible for making the final decision on each manuscript.

The members of the Editorial Board act in advisory roles, providing feedback as reviewers and making suggestions to improve the journal. In cases where the Editor-in-Chief or the Field Editor is an author on a manuscript submitted to the journal, a member of the Editorial Board is responsible for making the final decision on the manuscript's suitability for publication in the journal.

### **Reviewer suggestions**

When submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors may suggest reviewers that they would like included in or excluded from the peer review process. The Associate Editor may consider these suggestions but is under no obligation to follow them. The selection, invitation and assignment of peer reviewers is at the Associate Editor's sole discretion.

### **Reviewer reports**

It is the journal's policy to transmit reviewers' comments to the authors in their original form. However, the journal reserves the right to edit reviewers' comments, without consulting the reviewers, if they contain offensive language, confidential information, or recommendations for publication.

### **Acceptance criteria and editorial decisions**

If a manuscript satisfies the journal's requirements and represents a valuable contribution to the published literature, the Associate Editor may recommend acceptance for publication in the journal.

In brief, the criteria for acceptance are that a manuscript is:

- within the subject area as outlined in the Aims and Scope
- novel
- scientifically, ethically, and otherwise rigorous
- of interest to the journal's broad audience, even if focused at a local or regional scale
- well-constructed and written in clear English.

If a manuscript does not meet the journal's requirements for acceptance, but it has a high probability of acceptance after minor or major revision, the Associate Editor may ask the authors to revise it accordingly. Revised manuscripts must be submitted within a period specified by the Editor, otherwise they will be treated as new submissions.

If a manuscript does not meet the journal's requirements for acceptance or revision, the Associate Editor will recommend rejection.

### **Editorial independence**

Niigata Society of Health and Welfare has granted the journal's Editorial Board complete and sole responsibility for all editorial decisions. Niigata Society of Health and Welfare will not become involved in editorial decisions, except in cases of a fundamental breakdown of process.

Editorial decisions are based only on a manuscript's scientific merit and are kept completely separate from the journal's other interests.

### **Appeals**

Authors who believe that an editorial decision has been made in error may lodge an appeal with the Editorial Office. Appeals are only considered if the authors provide detailed evidence of a misunderstanding or mistake by a reviewer or editor. Appeals are considered carefully by the Editor-in-Chief, whose decision is final.



## **Confidentiality**

The journal maintains the confidentiality of all unpublished manuscripts. Editors will not:

- disclose a reviewer's identity unless the reviewer makes a request for such disclosure
- discuss the manuscript or its contents with anyone not directly involved with the manuscript or its peer review
- use any data or information from the manuscript in their own work or publications
- use information obtained from the peer review process to provide an advantage to themselves or anyone else, or to disadvantage any individual or organization.

## **Conflicts of interest**

A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an editor's ability to act impartially when assessing a manuscript. Such circumstances might include having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an author, or having a financial stake in the work or its publication.

Members of the journal's Editorial Board undertake to declare any conflicts of interest when handling manuscripts. A Field Editor or an Associate Editor who declares a conflict of interest is replaced by a new Field Editor or an Associate Editor.

## **Errata and retractions**

The journal recognizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of published literature.

A published article that contains an error may be corrected through the publication of an Erratum. Errata describe errors that significantly affect the scientific integrity of a publication, the reputation of the authors, or the journal itself. Authors who wish to correct a published article should contact the Editorial Office with full details of the error(s) and their requested changes. In cases where co-authors disagree over a correction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If an Erratum is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

A published article that contains invalid or unreliable results or conclusions, has been published elsewhere, or has infringed codes of conduct (covering research or publication ethics) may be retracted. Individuals who believe that a published article should be retracted are encouraged to contact the Editorial Office with full details of their concerns. The Editor-in-Chief will investigate further and

contact the authors of the published article for their response. In cases where co-authors disagree over a retraction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If a Retraction is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

The decision to publish Errata or Retractions is made at the sole discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

### **Editors' own publications in the journal**

Any member of the journal's Editorial Board who is an author on a submitted manuscript is automatically excluded from the peer review process. They are able to see their manuscript as an author but not as an editor, thereby maintaining the confidentiality of peer review.

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The journal will respond to allegations of ethical breaches by following its own policies and, where possible, the guidelines formulated by the Committee on Publication Ethics.

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- discuss the manuscript or its contents with anyone not directly involved in the review process
- involve anyone else in the review (for example, a post-doc or PhD student) without first requesting permission from the Editor
- use any data or information from the manuscript in their own work or publications

- use information obtained from the peer review process to provide an advantage to themselves or anyone else, or to disadvantage any individual or organization.

### **Reviewer conflicts of interest**

A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence a reviewer's ability to assess a manuscript impartially. Such circumstances might include having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an author, having a financial stake in the work or its publication, or having seen previous versions of the manuscript.

Editors try to avoid conflicts of interest when inviting reviewers, but it is not always possible to identify potential bias. Reviewers are asked to declare any conflicts of interest to the Associate Editor, who will determine the best course of action.

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## **MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION**

Since June 1st, 2022, the Journal has started accepting submissions via Editorial Manager. The information on submitted papers can be available on the system at any time. The author signs in to the Editorial Manager, and click Submit New Manuscript

### **Submission Steps**

#### **Article Type Selection**

Follow the on-screen instructions to select the appropriate article type as follows: Full Article, Brief Communications, Reviews and Opinions (invited only).

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Upload the following submission files individually:

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#### **General Information**

##### **Category and Fields**

Select one of the categories provided that most closely matches the research area discussed in the manuscript.

### **Keywords**

Add keywords to help expedite processing of your manuscript (optional). You will not have an opportunity to make changes, so make sure to add concise, accurate keywords now.

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Provide the names of any Editors or reviewers who should not assess the submission, and give the reason for opposition. Make sure to clearly indicate if the individual is an Editor in the explanation.

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- Title
- Running title
- Abstract
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When you supply all requested information, click Build PDF for Approval on the final screen. The system will merge the submission files into a PDF for your review. Click Approve to send it to the journal.

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## **MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION**

### **Manuscript Organization**

Manuscripts should be written individually as follows.

The following elements are required, in order:

- Title page: List title, running title, authors, and affiliations
- Abstract
- Manuscript (Main text)
- Figures (if needed)
- Tables (if needed)

### **Style**

The manuscript must be written in English in MS Word, using double line spacing on a standard A4 page size, 11-point type in Times New Roman font, and margins of at least 3 cm. Each page and line should be numbered in order throughout the manuscript.

### **English Standard**

Manuscripts should be written in clear, grammatically correct English. Authors who are not fluent in English are strongly encouraged to have their manuscript checked by a fluent English speaker or by an editing service prior to submission. If a manuscript is not clear due to poor English, the authors may be requested to revise it before undergoing peer review process.

### **Format**

Full Articles should comprise the following sections: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion/Conclusion, Acknowledgements, Compliance with Ethics Standards, References. In other article types, sections may be omitted or combined as appropriate.

The maximum length of the text is 8000 words including all pages in the manuscript.

The title page should contain: Title, running title, Authors' full names, Affiliations, Keywords, and the name and full address (including postal address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address) of the corresponding author.

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The title should describe the content of the article briefly but clearly and is important for search purposes by third-party services. Do not use the same main title with numbered minor titles, even for a series of papers by the same authors. Do not use abbreviations in the title, except those used generally in related fields.

The title of the manuscript must not exceed 30 words. The title should be informative and contain the major key words. Avoid unnecessary words like "Studies in".

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Provide the full names of the author(s).

Example: George Dexter Smith, Taro Ishida

The name of one corresponding author should be clearly indicated with his/her postal address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address.

### **Affiliations**

Provide full names and addresses of institutions (including laboratory, department, institute and/or university, city, state and country). When authors belong to different institutions, their respective addresses should be indicated by superscript numbers. When authors have new addresses, they should be given in a footnote and indicated by superscript symbols (such as \* and \*\*).

### **Keywords**

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### **Abbreviations**

Abbreviations should be defined at first mention in the text and in each table and figure. For a list of

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### **Abstract**

The Abstract should clearly express the basic content of the paper in a single paragraph and should include the purpose of study, materials and methods, main results and findings, and conclusions.

Abstracts must not exceed 300 words for all article types. Avoid using specific abbreviations. If it is essential to refer to a previous publication, omit the article title (e.g. Maekawa S, Endo S, and Sakai H. *Sci. Journal*. 2015; 14: 10–15).

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The Introduction should provide sufficient background information to allow the reader to understand the purpose of the investigation and its relationship with other research in related fields. It should not include an extensive review of the literature.

### **Materials and Methods**

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## **Results**

The Results should present the research data with a particular statistical significance. Tables and figures, including photographs, can be used to describe the research results (see below). Excessive explanations of the data presented in tables and figures should be avoided.

## **Conclusion / Discussion**

The Conclusion or Discussion should be concise and should deal with the interpretation of the results. They should focus on the interpretation and significance of the findings, comparing them to previously published knowledge. Novel models or hypotheses may be proposed in this section only if they are suggested by the results obtained in the research. Do not repeat the description of the research results in this section.

## **Acknowledgements**

List all funding sources supporting the work as well as those individuals the authors wish to name for their significant contribution to the study.

## **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

Any conflicts of interest, ethical approval, and informed consent should be stated in this section, along with the approval letter number issued by the institutional review board or the ethics committee.

## **References**

Number references consecutively in the order that they are first cited in the text. Identify references in the text by Arabic numerals in square brackets. No more than 50 references are allowed. Works should only be cited when the authors have read them; this avoids flawed descriptions and the promulgation of errors.

In the reference list, references should appear in numerical order. For references with three or fewer authors, list the surnames and initials of all authors. For references with four or more authors, list the surnames and initials of the first three authors followed by “et al.” The titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the style used for MEDLINE ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals)).

The list of references should only include works that are cited in the text and that have been published

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Except for the number of authors, references should follow the standards summarized in the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals issued by the National Library of Medicine (NLM), United States of America: Sample References ([www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform\\_requirements.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html)) webpage and detailed in the NLM’s Citing Medicine, 2nd edition ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/)). In cases where there is no journal abbreviation provided in NLM catalogue, use the full title.

References in languages other than English should be cited with the authors’ names, the title and the source of the work in the original language as well as a English translation of the title in a bracket after the title and before the period, using the style shown in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition. For sources written in a different alphabet than the Roman alphabet, transliterate the original alphabet into the Roman alphabet. For Chinese, Japanese and Korean languages, please follow the examples at the Yale University Library webpage: ‘Quick Guide on Citation Style for Chinese, Japanese and Korean Sources: APA Examples’ ([guides.library.yale.edu/c.php?g=296262&p=1974231](http://guides.library.yale.edu/c.php?g=296262&p=1974231)). The year of publication, volume, issue, and page numbers should be formatted as described in the NLM’s ICMJE recommendations.

Example references:

1. Gotoh Y, Kurokami H, Ikuta T. Measurement of critical viewing skills in web browsing using correspondence analysis. *Niigata j. Health welf.* 2009;9:2-17.
2. Rose ME, Huerbin MB, Melick J, et al. Regulation of interstitial excitatory amino acid concentrations after cortical contusion injury. *Brain Res.* 2002;935(1-2):40-6.
3. Langhorne P, Coupar F, Pollock A. Motor recovery after stroke: a systematic review. *Lancet Neurol.* 2009;8:741-754.
4. Spector R, Snodgrass RS, Johanson CE. A balanced view of the cerebrospinal fluid composition and functions: focus on adult humans. *Exp Neurol.* 2015;273:57-68.  
[doi.org/10.1016/j.expneurol.2015.07.027](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.expneurol.2015.07.027)

5. Kondō S. Yēru Daigaku Shozō Harima no Kuni Ōbe no Shō Kankei Monjo ni Tsuite [On Harima no Kuni Ōbe no Shō Kankei Monjo at Yale University Collection]. Tōkyō: Tokyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo Kenkyū Kiyō. 2013;23:1-22. (in Japanese)
6. Van Roosmalen L, Ohnabe H. Universal design. In: Cooper AR, Ohnabe H, Douglas DA, editors. An introduction to rehabilitation engineering. 1st ed. London: Taylor & Francis; 2007. p. 47-65.
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