

Submitting articles to BSHG News: guidelines for authors October 2009

BSHG News Editorial Board (Helen Middleton-Price, David Baty, Kevin Kelly, Doug Wilcox and Ann Kershaw)

The following guidelines are aimed at helping authors to submit articles in a format which can be incorporated easily into the newsletter.

General

BSHG members' unsolicited articles of up to 750 words are welcomed by the Editors, and, if are thought to be of interest to the readership, will be incorporated into the next edition of BSHG News. Short pieces of 250 or 500 words are also welcomed. Longer articles are accepted only by arrangement and discussion with the Editor; we would very rarely accept anything over 1500 words. Articles will only be accepted in electronic format, in Word or a Word-compatible programme. Please give your article a filename which clearly identifies the topic.

If you would like your article to be considered for the main section of the newsletter, please send it to the BSHG News Editor, Helen Middleton-Price (Helen.middleton-price@cmft.nhs.uk). If you would like your article to appear in the newsletter section for your own constituent group, send it to the relevant section editors:

ACC: Hazel Harvey-Smith (hazel.harveysmith@nuh.nhs.uk); Simon McCullough (simon.mccullough@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

AGNC: Vicki Wiles (Vicki.wiles@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

CGS: Susan Huson (susan.huson@cmft.nhs.uk)

CMGS: Martin Schwarz (Martin.schwarz@cmft.nhs.uk)

CGG: Chris Jacobs (chris.jacobs@gstt.nhs.uk)

The Editors may edit or reject copy. If there is dispute, Editors may also refer matters to the BSHG News Editorial Board for resolution. The decision of the Editorial Board will be final.

Copy deadlines

From 2009, there will be two issues of BSHG News per year, to be published in June and January. The copy deadlines for these will be 30 April and 30 November respectively. In order to be included in the next edition, articles must be received by the appropriate deadline. If they are not, they will be held over until the next issue.

Images

Any image should have a name which clearly links it to the article that it accompanies. Please ensure all images have high enough resolution for printing, ie: 300 dpi minimum. Poorer quality images cannot be accepted unless there is a very good reason; for example, the only existing photo of an important event.

Style Guide

General

Please keep any formatting to a minimum. If tables, figures and legends are used, please incorporate these into the article, if possible. Only images should be supplied separately.

Left justify text.

Use no indent at the beginning of paragraphs.

Article titles and authors

Titles are to be written in sentence case, not title case.

The title of an article should *not* have a full stop at the end.

The author's name for an article should come at the beginning of an article, left justified, immediately below the title.

Punctuation and spaces

In accordance with modern practice, use only one space after a full stop, comma, semi-colon etc.

Avoid the use of exclamation marks; if you feel you have to use one, use *only* one!

If you are uncertain, check your usage of the apostrophe with someone who is more certain.

In common with modern style, do not use full stops after abbreviations. For example, Dr J Bloggs not Dr. J. Bloggs; J Med Genet not J. Med. Genet.

Fonts

Arial 11 point

Titles and sub-titles in bold

Black font

Italics for Latin: *et al*, *in vitro* etc (not underlined)

No additional formatting

In the main body of articles, use italics, not inverted commas, to identify titles (of books, for example); so *Title*, not 'Title' or "Title". Use "quotation marks" only for quotations.

Try to avoid lists of authors; if unavoidable, use superscript for affiliations eg, Joe Bloggs¹

1. Department of Genetics, University of Scunthorpe

Reference Style

As BSHG news is a newsletter, not a journal, please keep references to a minimum. If they are required, they should be numbered (in superscript) in the text, then listed in number order at the end of the article in Journal of Medical Genetics reference style; for example,

Barth PG, Valianpour F, Bowen VM, Lam J, Duran M, Vas FM, Wanders, RJ. X-linked cardioskeletal myopathy and neutropenia (Barth syndrome): an update. *Am J Med Genet A* 2004; **126**:349-54.

Titles, degrees and honours

1. Use initial capitals for individual titles (Professor), but lower case for plurals (professors).
2. Professor always written in full, not abbreviated to Prof
3. Degree abbreviations are written in upper and lower case, without spaces or punctuation marks: BSc, MEng, PhD, DPhil.
4. Other qualifications: A-level, AS-level, GCSE, MB BS, MRCP, FRCPath.
5. Honours: DBE, CBE, OM.

Capital letters

Only proper names, names of organisations or job titles should be capitalised eg: Human Genetics Commission, UK Genetic Testing Network; "Joe Bloggs, Professor of Medical Genetics at The University of Scunthorpe". But specialties, professions etc should be in lower case eg: "Joe Bloggs is an expert in medical genetics". Or "Joe Bloggs is a consultant in medical genetics"; "Joe Bloggs is a genetic counsellor"; "Joe Bloggs is a clinical scientist".

Some authors tend to use capital letters whenever they want to give emphasis; this has the effect of making them appear slightly deranged, so is best avoided.

As mentioned above, titles of articles should be in sentence case, following modern common usage.

Numbers, figures, dates

1. Numbers in text – one to eleven in words, 12 and upwards in figures.
2. Numbers with measurements – use figures (3 miles, 8 am, 6 %)
3. Use "more than" not over, "fewer" not "less than".
4. Dates: 31 October 2009 (no punctuation and not 31st October 2009), but Tuesday, 31 October 2009
5. Decades: 1990s – not 1990's unless possessive
6. Centuries: 12th century
7. Money: £500, £5,000, £5 million

BSHG and constituent groups

In any run of text, any reference to the BSHG (or its constituent groups) is in capitals.

Other organisations, committees and so on

Always write out in full for first-time use with initials in brackets: Department of Health (DH), then initials in a run of text.

Abbreviations

In general avoid abbreviations.

Do not use ampersand instead of "and" generally, but use it in specific departments eg: Department of Health R & D.

Vocabulary and spellings

English not American (catalyse, not catalyze; practice, not practise (for the noun); counselling, not counselling, etc). But, fetal not foetal; some people incorrectly think that foetal is English and fetal American. In fact, the word does not have a Greek root; fetus derives from the Latin for offspring, *fetus*.