

Advanced Practitioner Professional Development Through Publication

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Abstract

Professional development is vital to the growth and career satisfaction of oncology advanced practitioners (APs). Among the many avenues for development, publication offers a platform for APs to share knowledge, contribute to the profession, and improve patient care. This article outlines various publication opportunities available to APs, including poster abstracts, journal articles, and newsletter pieces. Poster presentations remain a dynamic method for showcasing clinical work and engaging with peers at conferences, offering both educational value and networking potential. For those seeking a more comprehensive review of findings, manuscript submission to peer-reviewed journals provides a structured format to present research, reviews, or clinical innovations. Additionally, newsletters offer accessible formats for sharing insights with a targeted professional audience. This article reviews submission processes and helpful strategies to guide APs through the often-intimidating path to publication. By engaging in publication, APs not only enhance their own professional development but also contribute to the collective advancement of oncology practice.

Professional development is important to the advancement of oncology advanced practitioners (APs) and can be cultivated through publication, speaking engagements, networking with colleagues, and attending conferences. Advanced practitioners are often focused on the demands of clinical practice, and this can take priority over more formal AP professional development endeavors.

However, investing in one's professional development can lead to career advancement opportunities and improve career satisfaction (Price & Reichert, 2017). Publication is a common way for APs to contribute their work. Finding the right resources while selecting the most appropriate publication format can make sharing work with peers less intimidating. This article gives clear explanations on beginning the publication process.

ABSTRACTS AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

One type of publication that can be explored is abstract submission for a poster presentation (Table 1). Posters remain an important method for communicating scientific findings and remain an excellent way for APs to highlight their work. The visual appeal of posters continues to advance with new formats gaining popularity. Posters continue to thrive at academic conferences worldwide. Styles can range from a comprehensive historic version to the slimmed down and highly focused modern version.

Once a poster presentation is decided on as the best mode of publication for the work, the next consideration is which conference will have the most appropriate audience to determine the impact value. Conference guidelines should be reviewed prior to submission. Poster presentation can also be a helpful networking tool, particularly if the submission is chosen for oral presentation.

Typical poster abstract components include:

- Background (Context, Setting, Aim, Goal, Objective, Purpose)
- Methods (Intervention, Approach, Procedure, Design, Framework, Processes)
- Results (Findings, Outcomes, Discoveries)
- Conclusions (Summary, Evaluation, Interpretation)
- Discussion
- Recommendations (Future Directions, Proposal, Application)

Poster abstracts should be a concise snapshot of the overall work/research and provide the reader with an understanding of the study's purpose, the method of the work, and clinically relevant findings. Poster abstracts typically have a word limit of about 500 words. It is important to have an enticing and clear title. Often, the abstract title at the time of submission will be the final title used in all references to the abstract, including the poster, poster listings, and publication. Tables are typically not allowed within the body of an abstract but may be used on posters to describe the content. Abbreviations may be used within the abstract after the words are spelled out at first use, with the abbreviation following in parentheses. It is important to remember the Four Cs of abstract writing (JADPRO Live, 2024):

- Complete: covers the major parts of the project
- Concise: no excess wordiness of unnecessary information
- Clear: readable and well organized
- Cohesive: flows smoothly between parts.

Although rare, some organizations offer the opportunity to submit the poster abstract for “pre-review,” with high-level constructive feedback intended to maximize chances of the work being accepted. This feedback can also be helpful while designing the poster for maximum effectiveness. By elevating one's own professional development with a professionally written abstract and subsequent poster, AP colleagues can be inspired to pursue their own research and projects.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

As another form of publication, journal articles offer a more in-depth exploration of certain topics and can be an excellent method of sharing information for APs. In contrast to an abstract for a poster, which is typically submitted to a specific conference or research meeting, a manuscript is submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed research journal. Journals are often available in print and online with varying formats based on the content of the article (research, case study, review articles, short reports, editorials). Manuscript publication allows the AP to share relevant clinical data to expand the knowledge base of fellow clinicians, improving the quality of cancer care across the continuum. Manuscripts are typically structured as the AP's independent research, a meta-analysis, or a systematic review. They contain four main elements, which include the background and purpose, methodology, results, and conclusions. The purpose should clearly define the reasoning and importance of the research. The methods used to answer the question should be identified, such as selection of study participants, settings, measurements, and analytical methods. It is important that the methodology is clear and reproducible. Results should be clearly summarized and include specific measures of statistical and clinical significance. The conclusion should highlight the novel contribution of the manuscript, the implications of the research, and identify and address any potential limitations.

Table 1. Publication Types

| | Max word count | Content/topics | Purpose | Use of graphics | Intended audience |
|---------------------|------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Journal article | Varies per publication | Topics relevant to medical professionals | In-depth exploration of idea | Yes, although limited to infographics | Academic journal readers |
| Poster presentation | Varies per publication | Varies based on poster type | Visually appealing presentation of information | Yes | Conference attendees |
| Newsletter | Varies per publication | Varying topics relevant to target audience | Convey ideas in a brief, easy-to-read format | Yes | Members of professional organizations |

Authors may use tables, photos, graphs, or illustrations to enhance the visual appeal and ease of understanding the data. Granted permission with signatures from the authorized party is required if the AP includes previously published or copyrighted material. References should be listed in the designated format by the publisher. All authors are required to submit their financial disclosure/conflict of interest, for example by completing a International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) disclosure form.

Article submission is often completed online through the publisher's website. The instructions for the steps of submission are listed as part of the online submission process. Once this is completed, editors and editor-in-chief will perform an initial review, then send it for peer review. After the double-blinded peer review, a decision of accept, minor revision, major revision, or reject is determined. A time limit is typically given for revision unless it is rejected. The article will be scheduled for publication upon final acceptance.

NEWSLETTER PUBLICATIONS

Another option for publication for the AP is a newsletter format. Newsletters inform audience members about current topics, trends, and practice updates, and are written to be easily readable (subject line ideally containing only 3-5 words) and not necessarily academically rigorous. Newsletters provide an opportunity to disseminate timely insights, organizational updates, or practical takeaways for busy professionals while connecting with peers. These publications are written for a specific audience and often incorporate a variety of graphics aimed at condensing the information in a visually

appealing way for the ease of the reader. Keeping text short and concise is helpful to allow readers to scan the information more easily; often newsletters will have a maximum word count (EBSCO, n.d.). Criteria for submission may vary depending on the organization and can often be found on the organization's website.

CONCLUSION

Publication is an excellent form of professional development for APs. With some guidance on how to approach publication, it can be a seamless accomplishment with high impact on the AP field and patient care. Various formats of publications can be considered, including poster development, journal article publication, and newsletter format. Advanced practitioners should consider their prospective audience and the method of publication that would be the most effective and efficient to display their information. Professional development is an important aspect of the role of the AP, as it can improve career satisfaction and lead to career advancement opportunities. Professional organizations such as the Advanced Practitioner Society for Hematology and Oncology (APSHO) have resources and peer mentorships available to help APs with their professional goals. While publication can be considered daunting, when simplified, it is the basic sharing of practice between peers. Professional development through publication broadens the reach of the AP's clinical practice by sharing expertise and knowledge, thus elevating the quality of care provided to patients. ●

Disclosure

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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