

Guidelines for authors of European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) documents and papers

Introduction

The EAPC have a long and proud history of producing position papers, white papers, guidelines, reports and academic papers about key issues in palliative care¹. Preparation of these papers is usually undertaken by representatives of EAPC task forces or reference groups, but occasionally by other invited experts or representatives of EAPC member bodies.

Most papers have topics which clearly arise from the work of a particular task force or reference group, but others are proposed by the EAPC board, or arise from suggestions of EAPC members. The purpose of these guidelines is to clarify the type, purpose and expectations associated with preparing a EAPC document or paper. EAPC documents, papers and publications are currently variously styled as white papers, recommendations, position papers, charters, commitments, toolkits, view/approach which can be confusing to authors and readers. This document provides clarification on the purpose of these documents, which document types will be produced in the future, and when they are most appropriately used.

Objective

To provide guidelines on the preparation of EAPC branded papers or documents intended for external readership.

To assist authors in understanding the type of EAPC document they are producing.

To ensure that EAPC branded papers or documents are prepared in a robust, consistent and high quality manner which meets the needs of the international palliative care community.

To ensure that papers relating to the work of the EAPC are identifiable, appropriately catalogued and easily searchable for our members and stakeholders.

Principles underpinning the production of all EAPC documents

Contemporary and balanced: Papers and other documents should address issues of contemporary concern to the European palliative care community. Where possible, they should

¹ <http://www.eapcnet.eu>



April 2022

present a balanced view which takes account of different perspectives and the strength of the evidence available (see below).

European: The EAPC is a Europe-wide membership organisation and its written output needs to take account of the cultural, legal, professional and other differences inherent in palliative care provision across this geographical area. Where appropriate writing should reflect this range of views, or take account of the differences in approach across countries and settings. There are occasions where the EAPC needs to take a specific position which may be not congruent with the requirements of all member organisations, but their positions should nevertheless be acknowledged. Papers are written in English, but once approved and published can be translated to other languages using the EAPC translation policy.

Writing group membership: Whilst there may be lead author(s) of the document or paper, processes need to be in place to ensure that the viewpoints of those from a range of different cultural, legal and professional viewpoints are considered. This is likely to mean taking account of the geography of Europe (e.g. East/West and North/South differences), the multi-professional nature of palliative care (e.g. Physicians, Nurses, allied health professionals), and the views of practitioners, policymakers, users and researchers. All writing groups should have a nominated representative or link with an EAPC board member.

Evidence based: All EAPC documents and papers are expected to reflect a considered appraisal of the most robust and contemporary research evidence. We acknowledge that some areas of palliative care have an emerging or under-developed evidence base, and where this is the case it should be clear to the reader which elements of the document are based on research evidence, and which on other forms of knowledge.

Writing process

All EAPC Papers should include reference to the EAPC in the title.

The proposed title, topic, indicative content and writing method (e.g. consensus approach, systematic review, opinion piece) must be approved by the EAPC board prior to work commencing. This may be as part of a task or reference group application, or through direct contact with the EAPC board.

The writing groups (or as part of a task force or reference group update) must provide an update to the EAPC board on progress every six months.

The EAPC board must approve any paper before it is submitted for publication, and should be consulted regarding the proposed place of publication. Guidelines are available on submission to the two EAPC official journals *Palliative Medicine* and the *European Journal of Palliative Care*, (Appendix 1) but groups can also consider direct publication on the EAPC website or in other professional or academic journal.

EAPC paper types

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| <p>White Paper</p> | <p>A white paper is an authoritative report or guide that informs readers concisely about a complex issue and presents the EAPC’s balanced philosophy and position on the matter. It is meant to help readers understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.</p> <p>EAPC white papers should be based on the most robust appraisal of existing evidence coupled with a method of understating the range of views under consideration. This may include systematically constructed reviews (of publishable quality, using acknowledged review designs) where there is sufficient evidence for a review. In the absence of a review they may robustly collect qualitative or quantitative data to inform the issue under consideration. This may, for example, include surveys of EAPC members or consensus work such as Delphi studies. The EAPC requires that such data collection requires appropriate permissions to be in place. This may include research ethics or governance approvals as required for the design and the countries in which such data are collected. EAPC white papers should include a summary of the main points made and any recommendations.</p> |
| <p>Recommendations and/or toolkit</p> | <p>EAPC recommendations are made to guide specific actions in response to certain conditions. These are typically clinical issues. Recommendations are usually made about issues less complex than those for which a white paper would be commissioned.</p> <p>EAPC recommendations need to be based on the most robust available evidence.</p> <p>Recommendations can also be underpinned by the production of an associated toolkit which clearly lays out how the recommendations could be implemented in practice.</p> |
| <p>Charter</p> | <p>Charters are calls to action about a contemporary issue which require people to sign up to certain actions or behaviours. A charter call to action should have specific, measurable, timely, achievable and realistic goals. The actions should, where possible, be based on robust available evidence.</p> |

Appendix 1: European Journal of Palliative Care and Palliative Medicine – Joint guidance for authors of EAPC endorsed outputs

Introduction

The European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC) has two official journals to which authors of EAPC endorsed outputs might consider submitting their material. These are *Palliative Medicine* and the *European Journal of Palliative Care (EJPC)*.

April 2022

These two journals differ slightly in their aims, scope and remit. This document is designed to assist potential authors to:

- Determine which journal might be most appropriate for the particular output
- Prepare to maximize the chance of acceptance of submitted material.

Suitable outputs

Both journals will consider outputs of EAPC endorsed activities, such as EAPC task forces. These outputs might include:

- Elements of the research conducted, such as
 - Description of and outputs from a Delphi study
 - Description of and outputs from a survey
 - Description and results of a review of the literature
- Summary of the report and recommendations
- Guides for policy development
- Editorials
- Review articles, for example:
 - Discussing the background to the task force
 - Summarising the key differences between countries in the specific area examined
 - Recommendations in a concise, easy to digest, layout.

It is important to remember that journal submission has certain implications with regard to copyright, and material should not be submitted that cannot meet any required assurances on submission and later if a paper is accepted for publication to your chosen journal. Please carefully consider how this may affect the sequence of submission to conferences and any published task force information and outputs (e.g., on the EAPC website).

Provided below is a table of how each of these outputs might be considered for each journal.

Table 1: Summary of acceptable types of articles and submission requirements

| | EJPC | Palliative Medicine |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Elements of the research conducted | Yes | Yes. Articles reporting the research underpinning an EAPC output must meet our standard reporting guidelines, (http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal201823/manuscriptSubmission), which includes robust and complete methodological description meeting the relevant reporting guideline (such as CONSORT, COREQ etc. See Equator Network for details) |
| Summary of the report and recommendations | Yes | No |
| Guides for policy development | Yes | No |
| Curricula or | Yes to articles that | No, unless reporting the research/systematically |

April 2022

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| educational recommendations. | describe the research or rationale for the setting of the curricula. Unlikely to carry stand alone curricula. | constructed review underpinning recommendations. |
| Editorials | No | Editorials are usually commissioned by the editorial team, but we also welcome ideas for editorials. |
| Review articles | Yes | Yes. Articles reporting the review underpinning an EAPC output must meet our standard reporting guidelines (http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal201823/manuscriptSubmission), which includes robust and complete methodological description meeting the relevant reporting guideline (such as PRISMA etc. See Equator Network for details) |
| Call for papers | Yes, <i>EJPC</i> often has calls for papers for current themes | Yes, a number of themed issues are published for which there will be a call for papers |

Preparing your output

- 'Begin with the end in mind' – for an output to be suitable you will need to have prepared properly in constructing the work.
- For your submission to be accepted you need to spend time considering the structure of your material, and editing and reviewing your manuscript. Take account of the guidelines given by your chosen journal which include guidance on structure of titles, abstracts and the paper itself.
- There are three potential outcomes for a submission: reject before review, reject following review, or major/minor amendments following review. Please prepare to receive comments from reviewer(s), which all reviewers endeavour to make constructive but will require action before final acceptance.
- Small details – such as ensuring your manuscript is within the allowed word limits, are set out correctly and are edited by a fresh keen eye before submission are essential to acceptance.
- Articles based on EAPC work that are accepted for publication are highly accessed and highly cited – it is well worth the effort to ensure that your work in addressing the aims of the task force are thoroughly publicised and can contribute to further developments in the field of palliative medicine.
- If in doubt prepare pertinent questions about your planned submission and ask the Editorial office. Both journals are receptive to advising authors with respect to submissions as it saves time in the long term.

Guidance notes from the Editors

There is no automatic acceptance for articles in either of the EAPC's journals.



April 2022

When setting up your task force, consider what outputs you might like to see as you structure the task force activities. Whilst you might not be able to achieve everything, if you would like to report your work as a research paper you must consider conducting the research in an appropriate manner to be acceptable to the journal to which you aspire.

Palliative Medicine is a peer reviewed international research journal, and therefore primarily publishes articles which meet high standards of research, or reports reviews of robustly conducted work. Much of the EAPC work does meet these criteria, and publication usually means that such articles are highly accessed and cited. Much of the audience lies outside Europe and therefore papers should be prepared which address the needs of a wide readership.

EJPC is not externally peer-reviewed and has a slightly different remit, thus the journal will consider more opinion based pieces; however, these must add value to the area of palliative care and not be reiterations of well-known fact. Ideally *EJPC* prefers articles that are designed to support or influence positive changes in practice or policy in palliative medicine. *EJPC* aims to encourage professionals (including non-academics) to share their experiences, knowledge and practice relevant for our 1st and 3rd world audiences.