Intended for healthcare professionals

DIGITAL HEALTH

Impact Factor: **3.9**
5-Year Impact Factor: **4.2**

Submission guidelines

Submit manuscript

Please read the guidelines in full before submitting your manuscript.
Manuscripts not conforming to these guidelines may be returned.

Submit Manuscript

Sage is committed to upholding the integrity of the academic record. We encourage authors to follow Sage's Publication Ethics Policies and the Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals formulated by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

These resources describe ethical conduct and publication requirements for authors and editors to uphold accuracy, transparency, and disclosure – **including authors' appropriate disclosure of AI use as well as a list of prohibited uses of AI**.

Sage Publishing disseminates high-quality research and engaged scholarship globally, and we are committed to diversity and inclusion in publishing. We encourage submissions and peer review from a diverse range of authors and reviewers from across all countries and backgrounds.

Authors should familiarize themselves with Sage's Accessibility Guidelines to ensure their manuscripts meet recognized accessibility standards.

We encourage authors to refer to the Committee on Publication Ethics' International Standards for Authors.

This Journal is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics.

Hide all sections

Key information

Access: Open Access
APC: See article processing charge information below
Accepts preprints? Yes
Identity transparency: Single anonymized

Publishing fees and open access

DIGITAL HEALTH is an open access, peer-reviewed journal. All accepted articles are made freely available online immediately upon publication, are published under a Creative Commons license, and hosted online in perpetuity.

If, after peer review, your manuscript is accepted for publication, a one-time article processing charge (APC) is payable to cover the cost of publishing, paid by the funder, institution, or author. There is no charge for submitting a manuscript.

The article processing charge (APC) is $3400.

If the paying party is based in the European Union, to comply with European law, value added tax (VAT) must be added to the APC. Providing a VAT registration number will allow an institution to be exempt from paying this tax, except for UK institutions.

The article processing charge (APC) is payable when a manuscript is accepted after peer review, before it is published. The APC is subject to taxes where applicable. Tax-exempt status can be indicated by providing appropriate registration numbers when payment is requested. Please see further details on tax-exempt status here.

For general information on open access at Sage please visit the Open Access page.

Authors may be eligible for discounts to their APC via open access agreements that Sage has with participating institutions. Discounts depend on the terms of the

agreement, find out if your institution is participating by visiting Open Access Agreements at Sage. Eligibility is determined by the corresponding author's affiliation at acceptance matching an agreement.

Your article may be eligible for a full or partial waiver due to our participation in initiatives to increase accessibility to publication across the international academic community. More information about discounts and eligibility.

Preparing your manuscript for submission

Your article must be within the scope of the journal and be of sufficient quality. If not, it will not be reviewed. Please read the journal's Aims and Scope to see if your article is appropriate.

The manuscript must be your original work, you must have the rights to the work, and you must have obtained and be able to supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, including figures, illustrations, tables, lengthy quotations, or other material previously published elsewhere.

Article types

Original Research Article

Research Articles should present novel work within the scope of the journal which represents an important advancement in knowledge or understanding. Research articles need to include an introduction, a well-reported methodology, results, and a discussion of the results in the context of the published literature. Manuscripts must include a structured abstract of 250 words maximum. We recommend authors consult the EQUATOR network website (https://www.equator-network.org/) to ensure they follow the correct reporting guidelines for their paper.

Brief Report

Brief reports are shorter than original research and describe original research findings that do not require a full-length paper. They should share empirical findings from a small-scale pilot, preliminary, or exploratory research. Manuscripts need to include an introduction, a well-reported methodology, results, and a discussion of the results in the context of the published literature. Manuscripts must include a structured abstract of 250 words maximum. We recommend authors consult the EQUATOR network

website (https://www.equator-network.org/) to ensure they follow the correct reporting guidelines for their paper.

Review

A critical and comprehensive review of current relevant literature, identifying limitations in knowledge and a rationale for the study. The main aim of having such pieces is to offer readers an opportunity to understand the significance of developments in areas of the discipline of which they might otherwise be unaware. Manuscripts should include an abstract of 250 words maximum. The recommended word limit is 8,000 words.

Case Report

Case Reports describe a potentially unusual or interesting case in the course of standard or normal clinical practice. Case reports should be structured for peer review as follows: Abstract, Introduction (explaining the importance of the case), Case Description (providing all relevant information), and Conclusions (describing the detailed outcome of the report), followed by Acknowledgements, Funding acknowledgements, Declaration of Conflict of Interest, Patient Consent Statement, References, and figure and table legends. Manuscripts should include an unstructured abstract of 250 words maximum. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words.

For more in-depth investigations of the circumstances of an event or events, please submit a Case Study.

Case Study

Case studies are focused, in-depth explorations of the case's circumstances, the function of which is to develop a complete description of the case within the larger body of research. Authors may conduct interviews, review related records and documents to build a critical analysis of the case outcome. Manuscripts should include an unstructured abstract of 250 words maximum. Articles should not exceed 2,500 words.

Study Protocol

Also known as Trial design articles, study protocols can cover proposed or ongoing research for protocols of registered trials. Information on trial registration (where applicable) and ethics approval should be included in the manuscript. Manuscripts must include a structured abstract of 250 words maximum. We recommend authors consult the EQUATOR network website (https://www.equator-network.org/) to ensure they follow the correct reporting guidelines for their paper.

Perspective

Also known as Commentaries, Debate, Opinion, these may include:

• Brief contributions on controversial issues likely to generate debate between colleagues with different outlooks and opinions, or to develop original perspectives.

• Brief, thoughtful communications on current issues pertinent to the patient experience. Perspectives provide a timely, new insight on implications within the broad domain of patient experience. Authors should be experts in their fields, include an element of opinion, and provide a certain depth of analysis and argument. These are not research reports, or promotional pieces about an organization, product, or program.

• Perspectives highlighting important issues and experiences in child neurology through personal vignettes or opinion essays. Topics can include ethics, research, health policy, public health, medical education and the experience of medicine and the patient-physician relationship.

Manuscripts should not exceed 2,000 words. No abstract is required.

Commentary

Also known as Viewpoint, Short Communication, Article Commentary, these may include:

• Commentaries discuss the findings, implications, and/or outcomes of specific research or wider research on a general topic. They elaborate on or offer original ideas about a specific paper or a widely-researched subject. Commentaries differ from reviews in that they present the author's original ideas and suggestions instead of only collating and reporting the previous research.

• Commentaries provide readers with a focused opinion/view of manuscripts recently published in the journal or elsewhere, or on important changes or trends related to the field.

Manuscripts should not exceed 2,000 words. No abstract is required.

Editorial

An introductory piece submitted by an Academic Editor providing insight into the topic of the thematic issue, otherwise written by the journal's editor as an introduction to any standard issue. By invitation only. Articles should not exceed 2,000 words.

Letter to the Editor

Submit letters if you wish to make corrections, provide alternative viewpoints, or offer counter arguments. These must be written in a professional tone and include references to support all claims if appropriate. Letters to the Editor should consist of one or two paragraphs totalling no more than 500 words, no abstract, no subheadings and fewer than 8 references (one author, et al., no titles). If an abstract is included, it will automatically be made the first paragraph. Letters should not include figures or research material. Letters to the Editor should be submitted through our usual submission process, but if accepted, will not be charged an APC.

Clinical trial registration

The journal conforms to the ICMJE requirement that clinical trials are registered in a WHO-approved public trials registry at or before the time of first participant enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication. The trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

Reporting guidelines

Your manuscript **must** follow the relevant EQUATOR Network reporting guidelines, depending on the type of study. The EQUATOR wizard can help identify the appropriate guideline. You will need to upload the appropriate checklist with your submission.

Other resources can be found at NLM's Research Reporting Guidelines and Initiatives.

If your research involves animals, you will be asked to confirm that you have carefully read and adhered to the ARRIVE guidelines.

Formatting your manuscript

Accepted file types

The preferred format for your manuscript is Word. You do not need to follow a template, but please ensure your heading levels are clear, and the sections clearly defined.

The LaTeX files are also accepted. A LaTeX template is available on the Sage Journal Author Gateway.

Your article title, keywords, and abstract all contribute to its position in search engine results, directly affecting the number of people who see your work. For details of what you can do to influence this, visit How to help readers find your article online.

Title

Your manuscript's title should be concise, descriptive, unambiguous, accurate, and reflect the precise contents of the manuscript. A descriptive title that includes the topic of the manuscript makes an article more findable in the major indexing services.

Abstract

Please include a structured abstract of 250 words between the title and main body of your manuscript that concisely states the purpose of the research, major findings, and conclusions. If your research includes clinical trials, the trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract. Submissions that do not meet this requirement will not be considered.

For clinical trials, the trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

This journal includes video abstracts. For more information on how to prepare a plain language summary, please see this page.

Keywords

Please include a minimum of 5 keywords, listed after the abstract. Keywords should be as specific as possible to the research topic.

Artwork, figures, and other graphics

For guidance on the preparation of illustrations, pictures, and graphs in electronic format, please read Sage's artwork guidelines.

Figures supplied in color will appear in color online.

Please ensure that you have obtained any necessary permission from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, tables, figures, or lengthy quotations previously published elsewhere. For further information including guidance on fair dealing for criticism and review, please see the Frequently Asked Questions page on the Sage Journal Author Gateway.

Acknowledgments

If you are including an Acknowledgements section, this will be published at the end of your article. The Acknowledgments section should include all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship. Per ICMJE recommendations, it is best practice to

obtain consent from non-author contributors who you are acknowledging in your manuscript.

Writing assistance and third party submissions: if you have received any writing or editing assistance from a third-party, for example a specialist communications company, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section and in the covering letter. Please see the Sage Author Gateway for what information to include in your Acknowledgements section. If your submission is being made on your behalf by someone who is not listed as an author, for example the third-party who provided writing/editing assistance, you must state this in the Acknowledgements and also in your covering letter. **Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves.**

Author contributions

As part of our commitment to ensuring an ethical, transparent and fair peer review and publication process, this journal has adopted CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy). CRediT is a high-level taxonomy, including 14 roles, which is used to describe each author's individual contributions to the work.

You will be asked to list the contribution of each author as part of the submission process. Please include the Author Contributions heading within your submission after the Acknowledgements section. The information you give on submission will then show under the Author Contributions heading later at the proofing stage.

Statements and declarations

Please include a section with the heading 'Statements and Declarations' at the end of your submitted article, after the Acknowledgements section [and Author Contributions section if applicable] including each of the sub-headings listed below. If a declaration is not applicable to your submission, you must still include the heading and state 'Not applicable' underneath. Please note that you may be asked to justify why a declaration was not applicable to your submission by the Editorial Office.

Ethical considerations

Please include your ethics approval statements under this heading, even if you have already included ethics approval information in your methods section. If ethical approval was not required, you need to explicitly state this.

All papers reporting studies involving human participants, human data or human tissue must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board

approved the study, or waived the requirement for approval, providing the full name and institution of the review committee in addition to the approval number. If applicable, please also include this information in the Methods section of your manuscript.

Consent to participate

Please include any participant consent information under this heading and state whether informed consent to participate was written or verbal. If the requirement for informed consent to participate has been waived by the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board (i.e. where it has been deemed that consent would be impossible or impracticable to obtain), please state this. If this is not applicable to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section.

Consent for publication

Submissions containing any data from an individual person (including individual details, images or videos) must include a statement confirming that informed consent for publication was provided by the participant(s) or a legally authorized representative. Non-essential identifying details should be omitted. Please do not submit the participant's actual written informed consent with your article, as this in itself breaches the patient's confidentiality. The Journal requests that you confirm to us, in writing, that you have obtained written informed consent to publish but the written consent itself should be held by the authors/investigators themselves, for example in a patient's hospital record. The confirmatory letter may be uploaded with your submission as a separate file in addition to the statement confirming that consent to publish was obtained within the manuscript text. If this is not applicable to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The journal requires a declaration of conflicting interests from all authors so that a statement can be included in your article. For guidance on conflict of interest statements, see our policy on conflicting interest declarations and the ICMJE recommendations.

If no conflict exists, your statement should read: 'The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article'.

Funding statement

All articles need to include a funding statement, under a separate heading, **even if you did not receive funding**. You'll find guidance and examples on our Funding page.

Data availability

The Journal is committed to facilitating openness, transparency and reproducibility of research, and has the following research data sharing policy. For more information, including FAQs please visit the Sage Research Data policy pages.

Subject to appropriate ethical and legal considerations, authors are encouraged to:

- Share your research data in a relevant public data repository
- Include a data availability statement linking to your data. If it is not possible to share your data, use the statement to confirm why it cannot be shared.
- Cite this data in your research

Reference style and citations

The journal follows the Sage Vancouver reference style. View the Sage Vancouver guidelines to ensure your manuscript conforms.

Every in-text citation must have a corresponding citation in the reference list and vice versa. Corresponding citations must have identical spelling and year.

Authors should update any references to preprints when a peer reviewed version is made available, to cite the published research. Citations to preprints are otherwise discouraged.

EndNote

If you use EndNote to manage references, you can download the Sage Vancouver EndNote output file

Supplemental material

This Journal can host additional materials online (e.g. datasets, podcasts, videos, images etc.) alongside the full text of the article. Your supplemental material must be one of our accepted file types. For that list and more information please refer to our guidelines on submitting supplemental files.

English language editing services

Authors seeking assistance with English language editing, translation, or figure and manuscript formatting to fit the journal's specifications should consider using Sage

Author Services. Visit Sage Author Services for further information.

Submitting your manuscript

As part of the submission process you will need to confirm that this is your original work, that you have the rights in the work, that this is for first publication in this Journal, that it is not being considered for/has not already been published elsewhere, and that you have obtained and can supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you.

Please see our guidelines on prior publication and note that the journal may accept submissions of manuscripts that have been posted on preprint servers.

Preprints

The journal will consider submissions of manuscripts that have been posted on preprint servers.

Please enter the preprint DOI in the designated field when submitting your manuscript. We advise that you inform the Journal Editorial office about your posted preprint at submission.

Note that you should **not** post an updated version of your manuscript on a preprint server while it is being peer reviewed.

Learn more about our preprint policy.

Submission site

Submit your manuscript online via Sage Track.

IMPORTANT: Please check whether you already have an account in Sage Track before trying to create a new one. If you have reviewed or authored for the journal in the past year it is likely that you will have had an account created. For further guidance on submitting your manuscript online please visit ScholarOne Online Help.

Manuscripts should only be submitted with the consent of all contributing authors. The individual responsible for submitting the manuscript should carefully check that all those whose work contributed to the manuscript are listed as authors.

Ensure you upload all relevant manuscript files, including any additional supplemental files (including reporting guidelines where relevant).

Authorship

Please view our authorship policies, which includes information on criteria for authorship, who should be the corresponding author and more.

Please note that AI chatbots, for example ChatGPT, should not be listed as authors. For more information see the policy on Use of ChatGPT and generative AI tools.

Files

- **Cover letter.** To help the Editor in their preliminary evaluation, please indicate why you think the manuscript suitable for publication.
- Your **manuscript**, properly formatted according to all stipulations above, and within the scope of the journal.
- **Figures and images.**
    - All figures must be numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text – they will appear in the published article in the order they are numbered.
    - Figure resolution is 300dpi. More information on figure/image preparation can be found here.
- **Supplemental material.** This journal can host additional materials online (e.g. datasets, podcasts, videos, images, etc) alongside the full-text of the article. Your supplemental material must be one of our accepted file types. For that list and more information please refer to our guidelines on submitting supplemental files.

Other information required for submission

- ORCID ID of the submitting author.
    - It is strongly encouraged that all co-authors ensure their ORCID IDs are linked to their accounts in the submission system prior to article acceptance, as this is the only way to have their ORCID ID present on the published article. **ORCID IDs cannot be added to manuscripts after acceptance/publication.** Please note that each co-author must log in to the submission system to add their own ORCID ID to their account. To add an ORCID ID, edit your account, click the link when prompted, and sign into your ORCID account to validate your ID. You will then be redirected back to the submission system and your ORCID ID will become part of your accepted publication's metadata.
    - Please create an ORCID ID if you do not already have one or visit our ORCID homepage to learn more.
- Complete list of authors, with their institutional affiliations.
    - The author information you enter at submission must exactly match what is included on your manuscript and/or title page, including full names, academic affiliations, and corresponding author contact details.
    - **The listed affiliation should be the institution where the research was conducted.** If an author has moved to a new institution since completing the research, the new affiliation can be included in a note at the end of the manuscript.
    - **All listed authors must meet the criteria for authorship (above).**
    - **All persons eligible for authorship must be included at the time of submission.**

    - All authors must have given consent for the manuscript to be submitted in its current form.
- Keywords: During submission, you may be asked to select or enter keywords for your manuscript. These keywords are used to match appropriate reviewers to your manuscript.
- The number of figures, tables, and words in your manuscript.
- Funder information: Name, grant/award number.
- You may be required to enter your declaration of conflicting interest as part of the submission process, in addition to listing it on your manuscript and/or title page. Please have it on hand.
- If you have posted your manuscript to a preprint server, you will be asked to supply the DOI (this does not prohibit submission, but no changes should be made to the preprint version while your manuscript is under evaluation in this journal). Please see our guidelines on prior publication. If the article is accepted for publication, the author may re-use their work according to the journal's author archiving policy. If your manuscript is accepted, you must include a link in your preprint to the final version of your published article.

Peer review policy

The following summary describes the peer review process for this journal:
Identity transparency: Single Anonymized
Reviewer interacts with: Editor
Review information published: None

Your manuscript will undergo an initial evaluation. If it does not conform to the requirements laid out in these guidelines, it will be returned to you for amendments prior to peer review. Manuscripts may be desk rejected without peer review at this point if they are out of scope for the journal or otherwise unsuitable.

After passing the initial evaluation, your manuscript will then be peer reviewed. You can log in at any time to check the status of your manuscript. We will notify you when a decision has been reached.

The following manuscript types may not require two independent reviews to be accepted: Editorials and Letters to the Editor.

Digital Health operates a conventional single-anonymized reviewing policy in which the reviewer's name is always concealed from the submitting author. Two independent reviews are required for a manuscript to reach a Revise or Accept decision.

To ensure the integrity of the peer review process we assign reviewers and cannot accept author recommendations.

All manuscripts are reviewed as rapidly as possible, while maintaining rigor. Reviewers make comments to the author and recommendations to the Editor who then makes the final decision on all manuscripts, including those appearing in a special issue or special collection. The Editor or members of the Editorial Board may occasionally submit their own manuscripts for possible publication in the Journal. In these cases, the peer review process will be managed by alternative members of the Board and the submitting Editor/Board member will have no involvement in the decision-making process.

Read Sage's complete peer review policy.

Plagiarism

The journal and Sage take issues of copyright infringement, plagiarism or other breaches of best practice in publication very seriously. Please read Sage's complete policy on plagiarism and the actions we may take.

After acceptance

After acceptance you will receive instructions via email inviting you to complete the Open Access process. This will include signing the appropriate Creative Commons license and, where applicable, paying the Article Processing Charge (APC) or assigning a bill payer. Once the APC has been processed, your article will be prepared for publication and can appear online within an average of 30 days. Please note that, where an APC is applicable, production work cannot be completed on your manuscript until payment has been received.

Contributor's Publishing Agreement

Before publication we require the author as the rights holder to sign a Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement. The journal publishes manuscripts under Creative Commons licenses. The standard license for the journal is Creative Commons by Attribution Non-Commercial (CC BY-NC), which allows others to re-use the work without permission as long as the work is properly referenced and the use is non-commercial. For more information, you are advised to visit Sage's OA licenses page. Alternative license arrangements are available at the author's request (e.g. to meet particular funder mandates).

reprints

If your manuscript was posted on a preprint server prior to acceptance, you must include a link in your preprint to the final published version of your published article.

Production

Your Sage Production Editor will keep you informed as to your article's progress throughout the production process. Proofs will be made available to the corresponding author via our editing portal, Sage Edit, or by email, and should be returned promptly to avoid delaying publication. Authors are reminded to check their proofs carefully to confirm that all author information, including names, affiliations, sequence, and contact details are correct, and that Funding and Conflict of Interest statements, if any, are accurate. **This is the final opportunity to make changes to your manuscript. Further corrections will not be possible after publication. Changes to the author list are not permitted at this stage.**

Publication

One of the many benefits of publishing your research in an open access journal is the speed to publication. With no page count constraints, your article will be published online in a fully citable form with a DOI number as soon as it has completed the production process. At this time it will be completely free to view and download for all.

Promoting your article

Publication is not the end of the process. Between us, we can ensure that your article is found, read, downloaded and cited as widely as possible. Many of the most effective tactics are those you can do quickly and easily to your network of contacts and peers. Visit the Promote Your Article page on the Sage Journal Author Gateway for numerous resources to help you promote your work.

Further resources

The Sage Journal Author Gateway has some general advice on how to get published, plus links to further resources. Sage Author Services also offers authors a variety of ways to improve and enhance your article including English language editing, plagiarism detection, and video abstract and infographic preparation.

If you have any questions about publishing with Sage, please visit the Sage Journals Solutions Portal.

You can view our complaints and appeals procedure.

Contact us

You can direct any questions to the journal's editorial office: Philippa Stevens

Publishing Editor

Email Address: philippa.stevens@sagepub.co.uk.

Keep up to date

Facebook X LinkedIn YouTube RSS feed Email alerts

View all options

Also from Sage

CQ Library

Elevating debate

Sage Data

Uncovering insight

Sage Business Cases

Shaping futures

Sage Campus

Unleashing potential

Sage Knowledge

Multimedia learning resources

Sage Research Methods

Supercharging research

Sage Video

Streaming knowledge

Technology from Sage

Library digital services