

CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES

New Zealand College of Midwives Journal

Te Hautaka o Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa

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INTRODUCTION

Scope of the Journal

The New Zealand College of Midwives Journal | Te Hautaka o Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa (the Journal) is a high-quality, peer-reviewed, open access journal using article-based publishing. Articles are circulated to all members of the College and [published on the College's Journal web pages](#).

Papers are indexed to Cinahl, Scopus and ProQuest, and are also searchable via digital object identifier (DOI) numbers.

Interest in midwifery-led care is growing globally and the Journal is aimed at both a national and an international audience. It presents research relevant to the continuity of midwifery care framework in Aotearoa New Zealand within a bicultural Te Tiriti honouring context.¹

Readership includes midwives, student midwives, midwifery managers and educators, allied health professionals and consumers with an interest in pregnancy and childbearing. The Journal informs policy and practice and contributes to the education of midwives.

¹ Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) is an agreement which was signed by representatives of the British crown and Māori in 1840. Te Tiriti o Waitangi aimed to protect the rights of Māori to keep their lands, forests and fisheries, and to give the Crown the right to govern and establish laws and to develop British settlement. <https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/treaty-of-waitangi/>

Aims of the Journal

The aims of the Journal are:

- to promote health as it relates to childbearing wāhine/women/people and their whānau/families
- to promote the view of childbirth as a normal life event for the majority of wāhine, and the midwife's role in effecting this
- to provoke discussion of midwifery issues
- to support the development of Aotearoa New Zealand midwifery scholarship
- to support the development and dissemination of Aotearoa New Zealand and international research into midwifery and maternal and child health
- to provide evidence to support midwifery practice

Article-based publishing

The editors build the “issue in progress” throughout the year, as papers are published on the [College's Journal web pages](#). Each online-only issue covers a calendar year. (From 2024 the Journal publishes individual articles electronically only and no longer produces an issue that comprises all articles published within that year.)

As well as being indexed to academic databases, published articles are uploaded to, and searchable through, the College's [Aotearoa New Zealand Midwifery Research Database](#).

Ethical considerations

Authors need to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, the ethical considerations outlined in the Journal's [Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement](#).

The Journal bases this statement and its guidelines for authors, reviewers and editors on the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\) recommendations](#) and the [Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\) core practices](#).

All manuscripts that report research should ensure that the research has been carried out in accordance with the [Helsinki Declaration](#) as revised in 2013. Aotearoa New Zealand-based research should also follow the [NEAC National Ethical Standards for Health and Disability Research](#).

PREPARING A MANUSCRIPT FOR SUBMISSION

To support authors, the Journal has helpful advice on our website about [writing an article](#).

The Journal welcomes original research, literature reviews, case studies, audits and research methodology manuscripts that fit with the Aims of the Journal.

By submitting a manuscript to the Journal, authors imply that the work is original, has not been published previously in any form and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Manuscript format

Manuscripts should be submitted electronically as follows:

- Word document
- Double line spacing
- Single space between sentences
- Standard margins

Figures and tables

- Authors need to indicate in the manuscript where tables, figures and diagrams would ideally be positioned, although final placement depends upon space when laying it out for publication.
- Diagrams and figures need to be supplied separately in a high-quality image file, as they do not reproduce in high enough quality when embedded in a Word document.
- Data included in graphs and tables should also be sent in a separate Excel document, so they can be regenerated, if necessary.

Style

The Journal style is based on the 7th Edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

Authorship

When the manuscript is co-authored, details for all authors are to be provided. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring that all authors have agreed to submit the manuscript for publication.

It is expected that each person named as an author for a manuscript has made substantial contributions to all of the following:

- The conception and design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the manuscript or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Non-author contributors

Contributors who meet fewer than all 4 of the above criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged. Examples of non-author contributions include acquisition of funding, general supervision of a research group or general administrative support, and writing assistance such as technical or language editing, transcribing interviews and proofreading. Non-author contributions should be specified.

Because acknowledgment may imply endorsement by acknowledged individuals of a study's data and conclusions, the corresponding author should obtain written permission to be acknowledged from all acknowledged individuals.

Word count limits

Word count limits apply according to the type of article. Word counts apply to the body of the text, including in-text citations but not the abstract, tables and figures or reference list. Submitted manuscripts exceeding the word count limit will be returned to the author to reduce the text before peer review. Should an author wish to submit a manuscript which exceeds the word count or number of tables or figures, they can make a request with justification to the co-editors.

Research articles

- Preferred word count of abstract: 300-350 words
- Maximum length of manuscript is 5,000 words, 50 references and six tables or figures.

Review articles (systematic reviews, meta-analyses, meta syntheses)

- Preferred word count of abstract: 300-350 words
- Maximum length of manuscript is 5,000 words, 100 references and six tables or figures. Please note that the reference list should only exceed 50 references when a large number of articles require inclusion in the findings.

Discussion or theoretical articles (including case studies)

- Preferred word count of abstract: 250-300 words
- Maximum length of manuscript is 3,500 words, 40 references and six tables or figures.

Supplementary material

- Authors wishing to include supplementary data are requested to contact the co-editors. Material should be submitted with the primary manuscript.

Reporting guidelines

The Journal requests that authors follow the following reporting guidelines which have been developed for different study designs:

- Randomised trials: [CONSORT](#)
- Observational studies: [STROBE](#)
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses: [PRISMA](#)
- Please see the [Equator Network](#) for details of reporting guidelines for other study types.

Where possible, sex and gender information should be reported in the study design, data analyses, results, and interpretation of findings, in accordance with the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) [guidelines](#).

Section headings

Research manuscripts

Most research manuscripts should follow these section headings:

- Abstract:
 - Background
 - Aim/s
 - Method/s
 - Findings or Results
 - Conclusion
- Keywords:
 - Preferred number 3-5
- Body of article (depending on type of article):
 - Background or Introduction
 - Aim/s
 - Method/s
 - Findings or Results
 - Discussion
 - Strengths and limitations
 - Conclusion
 - Acknowledgements and Declaration of Interests
 - References

For detailed information on the sections of a research article, please see the Recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors: [Preparing a Manuscript for Submission to a Medical Journal](#): Manuscript Sections.

Other manuscripts

For further information on structuring manuscripts (a research paper, literature review or case study) see [Writing for the Journal: Tips for authors](#) on the Journal web pages.

Spelling

The Journal uses Aotearoa New Zealand or United Kingdom English, rather than United States spelling.

Bullet points and footnotes

The Journal style is to avoid bullet points and footnotes in articles (apart from footnotes attached to tables).

Inclusive language

Authors should use language that conveys respect and acknowledges diversity. The Journal style is to support humanising terms (for example, *give birth* rather than *deliver*; *women with diabetes* or *people with diabetes*, rather than *diabetic women* or *diabetic people*). Authors should use the definitions of sex, gender and gender identity from the [SAGER guidelines](#). If alternative definitions are preferred by manuscript authors, these can be included in a glossary.

Te reo Māori

Te reo Māori is the language of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand and is an officially recognised language in Aotearoa New Zealand. When using te reo words or phrases, at first mention please include a brief 2-3 word definition of what they mean in the context of your research. Alternatively, consider listing them as a glossary if there is a reasonable number used throughout the manuscript or if the explanations are more complex.

Artificial intelligence-assisted technology

Authors must disclose at submission if AI-assisted technology (e.g. large language models or chatbots) has been used in the production of the manuscript. If any of these technologies have been utilised, authors must also describe in the appropriate section of the manuscript how they used it (e.g. in the method section if used for data collection or analysis; in the acknowledgment section if used for writing assistance).

Copyright material

It is the responsibility of authors to ensure that any necessary permission is sought for copyright material. This relates to substantial quotations, diagrams, artwork, photographs and other items that are owned by others.

Written evidence of copyright permission must be produced if the manuscript is accepted for publication. Please contact one of the co-editors if you need to clarify what might constitute copyright material.

Plagiarism

The Journal has zero tolerance to plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, and requires authors to ensure that it does not occur.

References

Authors are responsible for providing accurate and complete references in APA 7th edition format. Please check citations and references carefully, ensuring they correspond, especially when additions or deletions have been made to the text during the review and editing process. Authors may find it helpful to use a reference manager tool.

Key points

Authors need to supply three key points of up to 20 words each in a bulleted list, outlining the important points about their paper. These will be published as part of the paper, and also shared via College communication platforms.

SUBMITTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

Author cover sheet

An Author Cover Sheet needs to be and submitted with each manuscript. This is [available online](#) but if you are unable to fill it in digitally, please email [Journal Secretariat Annie Oliver](#) for a Word version.

Completion of the cover sheet is the responsibility of the corresponding author, whose email address will be published with the paper. The corresponding author is also responsible for ensuring that all authors have agreed to submit the manuscript for publication.

As the Journal is committed to publishing papers of quality and integrity, the cover sheet includes a Declaration of Interest. Authors must state if there are any commercial, personal or organisational interests that could influence, or could be perceived as influencing, the production of their research or their submission to the Journal.

These include, but are not limited to:

- payments, honoraria or travel costs in respect of the research
- financial interests in any product the research might promote
- reimbursement by commercial entities
- to an author's employer for the author's time and expertise
- membership of an organisation or a professional or advisory group

If authors declare any interests, these are provided anonymously to reviewers.

Either a summary of declared interests, or a statement saying there is no conflict of interest, will be published with the paper.

The Author Cover Sheet also includes a declaration regarding the use of artificial intelligence-assisted technology. As noted above, authors must disclose if AI-assisted technology (e.g. large language models or chatbots) has been used in the production of the manuscript. If so, authors must also describe in the appropriate section of the manuscript how they used this technology.

Emailing your manuscript

Please email your manuscript to co-editor Claire MacDonald at research@nzcom.org.nz, with the subject line: *NZCOM Journal manuscript submission*.

Submissions need to include the following attachments:

- Manuscript with title
- A completed Author Cover Sheet
- Separate hi-resolution image files of any figures and diagrams
- A separate Excel document of data for tables, figures and diagrams

The receipt of each submission will be confirmed but if you need to discuss your submission, please contact the co-editor by email or phone 03 377 2732.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Authors are emailed with progress updates throughout the editorial process, from submission to publication.

On receipt of submission

All submissions are first assessed by an editor to ensure they meet the Journal's Aims and word count limit.

Double-blind peer review process

If deemed suitable for review, manuscripts are sent to two (or sometimes three) external reviewers who have expertise relevant to the content. Any details that could potentially identify the authors (e.g., initials, ethics approval, declaration of interest) are temporarily removed during the review process.

Reviewers who are invited to review a manuscript are required to declare any interests that might conflict, or might be perceived to be in conflict, with their ability to carry out an impartial/objective review of that manuscript. If any conflict is declared, an alternative reviewer is appointed.

The reviewers carefully and objectively critique the manuscript in a formalised manner, stating strengths and weaknesses and indicating improvements they consider necessary to support the quality of the manuscript. Their written report also includes a recommendation regarding publication:

- Accept manuscript with revisions made to editor's satisfaction
- Decline manuscript in its current form as it needs extensive revision before being resubmitted and re-reviewed
- Decline manuscript as it is not suitable for publication in the Journal

Reviewer feedback is then sent to the editor who has been appointed to the manuscript.

Editing process

The editor collates feedback from reviewers and communicates with the corresponding author regarding the recommended revisions. The editor works with the author to improve the overall academic standard of the manuscript, through a process of critique, feedback and revision. Our goal is to encourage authors with this process.

The professional co-editor also assesses the manuscript. Authors are then notified about the acceptability of the manuscript for publication:

- Accepted in principle
- Not acceptable in its present form; needs to be re-submitted and reviewed again after extensive revision
- Decline, as not suitable for publication in the Journal

Please note that the editors reserve the right to send a manuscript for review again if:

- there have been substantial delays in an author’s response to feedback during the editorial/in-house processes, and
- the research context has developed notably since the original reviews were undertaken

In-house checks

Once accepted in principle, manuscripts go through a process of proofreading and in-house checks. The editors reserve the right to modify any accepted manuscript with regard to syntax, format and layout.

At the end of the checking process, the author provides final confirmation and permission to publish the article.

PUBLICATION

Copyright

Articles that are accepted and published become the copyright of the Journal. The following table outlines the subsequent rights of authors.

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Copyright agreement	
This agreement allows authors to share their work in the following ways, providing it remains attributable to the New Zealand College of Midwives Journal	
Read, print and download	✓
Redistribute or republish the final article (e.g. display in a repository)	✓
Translate the article	✓
Download for text and data mining purposes	✓
Re-use portions or extracts in other works	✓
Sell or re-use for commercial purposes	✗

Dissemination

Published articles are first disseminated to College members and then uploaded with open access to the [Journal web pages](#).

Articles are searchable on the [Aotearoa New Zealand Midwifery Research Database](#) and also by DOI. They are also indexed in the Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (Cinahl), Scopus and ProQuest.

Raising concerns

If authors wish to appeal against any editorial decisions, they should contact one of [the co-editors](#), who will present concerns to the Editorial Board for resolution.

If authors discover an error or inaccuracy in their published paper, they must promptly notify the co-editors. An erratum will then be published.

Letters to the editor

The Journal welcomes letters to the editor about articles it has published.

Letter requirements:

- The letter must be received within three months of the article's publication.
- The word count is up to 300 words and no more than five references and one small table, figure or image.

Correspondents need to include:

- the corresponding author's email address
- affiliations for all authors (if relevant)
- a declaration of interest or conflict of interest statement.

By submitting a letter to the editor, correspondents give permission for the Journal to publish any or all of the above content.

The Editorial Board assesses letters received and, if they are accepted for publication, the author is invited to provide a response (if relevant). Accepted letters and responses are published together on the Journal webpages and indexed in Cinahl, Scopus and ProQuest.

The editors reserve the right to accept, edit, abridge or decline letters and author responses.