

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 Journal is the official publication of the New Zealand College of Midwives | Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa and is a high-quality, peer-reviewed, open access journal.

With interest in midwifery-led care growing globally, the Journal is of value to 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 o Waitangi¹-honouring context. Articles inform policy and practice and contribute to the education of midwives.

Readership includes midwives, student midwives, midwifery managers, midwifery educators, and allied health professionals and consumers with an interest in pregnancy and childbearing.

As an online-only publication, the Journal provides open access to articles as they are published throughout the year. Articles are also disseminated to College members prior to publication.

Articles are searchable via digital object identifier (DOI) numbers and are indexed in the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature database ([CINAHL](#)), [Scopus](#) and [ProQuest](#), increasing visibility and access for a global audience.

The Journal follows the [Recommendations](#) of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

Aims of the Journal

The aims of the Journal are:

- to explore health issues as they relate to childbearing wāhine/women/people and their whānau/families
- to support the view of childbirth as a normal life event for the majority of wāhine, and the midwifery role in effecting this
- to publish research on the Aotearoa New Zealand model of midwifery continuity of care
- to provoke discussion of midwifery issues
- to support the development of Aotearoa New Zealand midwifery scholarship, research and practice. This includes publishing emerging researchers' work.
- to support the dissemination of Aotearoa New Zealand and international research into midwifery and maternal, newborn and infant health
- to provide evidence to support midwifery practice and education
- to provide a platform for research and knowledge from indigenous and diverse worldviews as they relate to the childbirth continuum and midwifery practice

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.

Article-based publishing

The editors build the “issue in progress” throughout the year, as articles are published on the [College’s Journal web pages](#). Each online-only issue covers a calendar year; however, 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](#).

Human rights and informed consent

In Aotearoa New Zealand the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer’s Rights](#) establishes the rights of health consumers and the obligations of health providers. The code extends to protect health consumers participating in research in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, authors are required to adhere to the code, which includes the rights for consumers to be treated with respect, to be free from discrimination and exploitation, to effective communication, to be fully informed, and to make an informed choice.

Māori research guidance

For all health research undertaken that is of relevance to Māori, and/or if authors have involved Māori participants, authors need to be cognisant of, and state in the manuscript how they have worked with Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) guidelines:

- [Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori](#)
- [Te Ara Tika Guidelines for Māori Research Ethics](#)

Pacific research guidance

For all health research undertaken that is of relevance to Pacific Peoples, and/or if authors have involved Pacific peoples as participants, the authors need to be cognisant of, and state in the manuscript how they have worked with [HRC guidelines regarding Pacific Health research](#).

Original work

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.

If an article that is based on the same research has been submitted or published elsewhere, it must be acknowledged in the cover sheet and referenced in the manuscript.

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.

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 four 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, general administrative support, 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.

Reporting guidelines

The Journal requires that manuscripts adhere to the following reporting guidelines which have been developed for different study designs, and note in the manuscript which guideline has been followed. As part of the submission process, authors need to include the relevant reporting guidance checklist for their study method.

- *Observational cohort, case control and cross sectional studies* - STROBE - Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology [STROBE checklist](#)
- *Randomised (and quasi-randomised) controlled trial* - CONSORT - Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials. [Consort checklist](#)
- *Study of Diagnostic accuracy/assessment scale* - STARD - Standards for the Reporting of Diagnostic Accuracy Studies. [STARD checklist](#)

- *Systematic Review of Controlled Trials* - PRISMA - Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses. [PRISMA checklist](#)
- *Systematic Review of Observational Studies* - [MOOSE](#) - Meta-analysis of Observational Studies in Epidemiology. [MOOSE checklist](#)
- Reporting the range of methods used to improve healthcare - SQUIRE - Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence [SQUIRE checklist](#)
- *Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool* [MMAT](#)
- *Surveys*. A Consensus-Based Checklist for Reporting of Survey Studies – CROSS. [CROSS checklist](#)
- *Scoping reviews*. PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR): [PRISMA-ScR checklist](#)

For other study types, please find the relevant reporting guidelines and checklists on the [Equator Network](#), or state which alternative checklist (e.g. JBI) they are using and include it with the submission.

Qualitative researchers are encouraged to consult the guidelines listed below and include the checklists with their manuscript submission:

- *Qualitative research* - SRQR - Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research: A Synthesis of Recommendations [SRQR Checklist](#)
- *Qualitative research syntheses*. Enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research: the ENTREQ statement. [ENTREQ checklist](#)

Kaupapa Māori and Pasifika methodologies

We acknowledge that Kaupapa Māori and Pasifika methodologies are not specifically covered in these reporting guidelines. Therefore, authors may choose to adapt them or use other quality processes relevant to their manuscripts.

Sex and gender demographic reporting

Where possible, both 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 article, literature review or case study) see [Writing for the Journal: Tips for authors](#) on the Journal web pages.

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, 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 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 editors.
Material should be submitted with the primary manuscript.

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 manuscript. These will be included as part of the published article, and also shared via College communication platforms.

Artificial intelligence-assisted (AI-assisted) technology

Authors must disclose if AI-assisted technology (e.g. large language models or chatbots) has been used in the research and/or production of the manuscript. If any of these technologies have been utilised, authors must 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). The use of simple grammar and spell-check tools do not need to be disclosed.

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 included with the manuscript submission. Please contact one of the 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.

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 (jpeg/pdf/gif), as they do not reproduce in high enough quality when embedded in a Word document. The editorial team may request the authors to also provide an editable version.
- Data included in graphs and tables should also be sent in a separate Excel document, so they can be regenerated, if necessary.

STYLE

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. For the benefit of those who may be unfamiliar with te reo Māori words | kupu used in the manuscript (including the Journal's international readership), at first mention of a phrase or kupu Māori please include a brief 2-3 word definition of what it means in the context of your research. Alternatively, consider listing kupu as a glossary if there is a reasonable number throughout the manuscript or if the explanations are longer or more complex.

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 Appendix 1: Glossary of terms in the [SAGER guidelines](#). If alternative definitions are preferred by manuscript authors, these should be included in a glossary.

When authors reference or discuss findings from other sources, they need to retain fidelity to the gender language used in the original source they are citing.

Spelling

The Journal generally uses Aotearoa New Zealand or United Kingdom English, rather than United States spelling, but does use “fetal” rather than “foetal”.

Bullet points and footnotes

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

References and citations

Authors are responsible for providing accurate and complete references in American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition format.

Please check citations and references carefully, ensuring they correspond and that none are missing, 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.

SUBMITTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

Author cover sheet

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

The corresponding author, whose email address will be published within the article, is responsible for completing the author cover sheet, which includes declarations around integrity:

- Agreement of all authors to submit the manuscript
- Originality of the manuscript and any publication considerations elsewhere
- Ethical approval details
- Use of artificial intelligence-assisted technology
- Commercial, personal or organisational interests
- Funding allocated to the production of the manuscript

Any interests declared may be anonymised and provided to reviewers at the editor's discretion.

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

Manuscript format

Manuscripts should be submitted in the following format:

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

Anonymise your manuscript

Submitted manuscripts, and any other supporting files that will be sent for peer review, need to be anonymised before submission:

- Please remove authors' names, initials or affiliations that appear in the manuscript and the filename.
- Please ensure that author names are removed from the file properties). You might like to consider using the [Microsoft Document Inspection](#) option to remove identifying details.
- Use third person to refer to work the authors have previously published, e.g. "Smith and Green (2021) found" rather than "the authors previously found (Smith & Green, 2021)".

Emailing your manuscript

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

The receipt of each submission will be confirmed but if you need to discuss your submission, please contact Co-Editor Claire MacDonald at research@nzcom.org.nz 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, word count limit and academic writing standard.

Double-anonymised peer review

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 will have been 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 identified, 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 to the Journal editors regarding publication:

- Accept manuscript with minor revisions made to the editors' satisfaction.
- Accept manuscript with major revisions made to the editors' 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 Associate Editor appointed to the manuscript.

Revision and acceptance

The Associate Editor assesses feedback and recommendations from reviewers.

If reviewers recommend accepting the manuscript with either minor or major revisions:

- The Associate Editor provides feedback to the author, which includes copies of the reviews and editorial comments. The aim is to support authors to improve the overall academic standard of the manuscript through critique, feedback and revision.
- If a reviewer recommends major revision, they will be offered the opportunity to re-review the revised manuscript.
- Once the Associate Editor is satisfied with the revised manuscript, a Journal Co-Editor assesses it and makes the decision regarding acceptance for publication:
 - Manuscript is accepted in principle for publication, or
 - Manuscript needs further revision.

If reviewers recommend declining the manuscript:

- The Associate Editor liaises with the Journal Co-Editors who make the final decision.
- Feedback is collated and provided to the author.

The Journal editors reserve the right to send a manuscript for further review:

- 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.

The Journal editors reserve the right to decline a manuscript; however, this is unlikely if both reviewers have recommended acceptance.

In-house checks

Once accepted in principle, manuscripts go through a process of proofreading and in-house checks. This process includes final copy-editing suggestions to the author, which supports our commitment to produce a high-quality publication. This also ensures all articles are consistent with our Journal editorial style. 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 receives the final laid out proof and 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.

New Zealand College of Midwives Journal Te Hautaka o Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa 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 a manuscript rejection, a detailed letter that responds to the reviews and reasons given for rejection should be sent to Co-Editor at research@nzcom.org.nz. The Co-Editors will review the letter, manuscript and reviewers' reports to make a final decision.

If authors discover an error or inaccuracy in their published article, they must promptly notify the Co-Editor at research@nzcom.org.nz. An erratum will then be published.

Letters to the editor

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

Letter requirements:

- Must be received within three months of the article's publication
- Word count of up to 300 words.
- Include no more than five references and one small table, figure or image.

Correspondents need to provide:

- Corresponding author's email address
- Affiliations for all authors (if relevant)
- A declaration 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 article authors are 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.