

International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support

Author guidelines for a practice paper

The purpose of this section

The Practice Paper section of the IJPBS is for practitioners to share information about effective, interventions in the field of Positive Behavioural Support that are function-based, person-centred, and/or constructional. Practice papers are by, definition, practice-based rather than research led. Practice papers must, however, be theoretically grounded in the definition and scope of PBS (Gore et al, 2013).

Contributions are welcome from practitioners, family members, and students. Manuscripts should have original value and be likely to benefit others. Manuscripts should total no more than 4,000 words and follow the structure outlined below. Successful manuscripts will include a clear and relevant aim, a replicable description of what was done, a convincing account that aim was achieved with supporting data, and a brief discussion of the outcome and its implications. Each contribution will include references formatted in Harvard style. All submissions will be peer reviewed for quality, clarity, relevance, impact, and appeal.

General guidelines for preparing a manuscript

The contribution should be written in present tense, except when describing what was done, using first person – (eg, I or we), and include relevant references from published literature, in Harvard format.

Cover page

This should have only the title and any sub-title, this is so submissions can be reviewed anonymously. The author's details should be supplied on a separate sheet and should include: name, address, email address, telephone and fax numbers. The author for correspondence should be clearly identified.

Summary (maximum 150 words)

A summary of the contents of the manuscript under four headings: Background; Method and materials; Results; Conclusion

Introduction – (approximately 750-1000 words)¹

The introduction should begin by describing the broad context or background to the project, (eg, many people with severe intellectual disabilities miss out on opportunities to do ordinary activities of daily living), and work toward stating clearly the project aim (eg, this project assessed the impact of activity planning on opportunity for engagement). On the way readers will want to know why the issue is important to people using or working in services (eg, activity and opportunity affect quality of life), what is already known about the issue (eg, evidence from published research, such as compared to the general population, activity and opportunity are low), and why working on the issue is important (eg, pursuing improved quality of life outcomes depends on, but is not limited to, increasing opportunities for people to participate in activity). Our aim in this project was to increase opportunity for activity engagement through activity planning.

What we did and how it was done – (approximately 1000-1250 words)

This part of the manuscript provides important information about who did what with whom and how.

- Say who participated in the project – essential information only about contributors and consumers
- State the type of service and/or context in which the project was done
- Describe the essential components of what was done and how
- Describe how change was measured and assessed
- Say how information was verified, and how implementation was assessed
- Say how the information was analysed

For example, you might say five people with moderate to severe learning disabilities and ten paid staff participated in our project. All lived or worked at the same address, a shared tenancy. We ran an informal workshop in a nearby community centre in which we helped participants identify and describe personal and household routines. These were written in an accessible format for use in the home. The main aim was to harmonise staff support provided for participation in activity. We measured change by observing and recording activity participation for 6 hours, two weeks before and after the workshop, using the Active Support Measure (ASM; Mansell and Elliot, 1996). We verified the measure by having two people rate one session before and one after the workshop. The overall scores were identical although differences were apparent in individual ratings. We compared the scores before and after the workshop.

Outcomes (approximately 750-1000 words)

Here you describe what you found, but be sure to include only information for which a method has been described. For example, ASM scores for all five tenants were substantially higher following the workshop than before. Proportional increases ranged from 67-98%. Tables and graphs would fit well in this section. Although brief reports are short by

¹ The examples provided are fictitious. They are meant to illustrate style and indicate content, but are not indicative of length or detail.

definition, they still require high quality data. Reviewers will want to know that the information presented is trustworthy (ie, can be relied upon), and that the measures used and information obtained are relevant to the topic. Outcome data may be quantitative or qualitative.

Discussion (approximately 1000-1250 words)

- Say whether or not the specific aim of the project was met, and why your findings may be important and substantial for people with intellectual disabilities
- Comment on how your findings fit with what is already known
- Be modest about the limitations of your findings and the relevance to others
- Suggest next steps for practice or research
- Say whether or not the specific aim of the project was met, and why your findings may be important and substantial for people with intellectual disabilities
- Comment on how your findings fit with what is already known
- Be modest about the limitations of your findings and the relevance to others
- Suggest next steps for practice or research

For instance, you might say something like – outcomes from our project are consistent with those reported in the Active Support literature (eg, Flynn et al, 2019). We welcome our findings and note how tenants’ lives seemed to have been enriched by increased opportunity for activity engagement. For instance, we noted more examples of activities being undertaken without requiring instruction from staff. Although limited in scope, we have shared our work as we believe it might benefit others involved in residential services for persons with moderate to severe learning disabilities. We encourage researchers to consider the potential merit of a more detailed component analysis.

References or bibliography

List citations or further / related reading.

Flynn, S, Totsika, V, Hastings, R P, Hood, K, Toogood, S and Felce, D (2018) ‘Effectiveness of active support for adults with intellectual disability in residential settings: Systematic review and meta-analysis’, *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 31(6), 983-998. doi:10.1111/jar.12491

TEMPLATE

Cover page – title and author details

Summary (maximum 150 words)

A summary of the contents of the manuscript of around 150 words, under four headings: Background; Method and materials; Results; Conclusion

Introduction (approximately 750-1000 words)

Replace this text with about 750-1000 words introducing the reader to your topic. Set the scene in your first sentence and work logically toward declaring the aim of the work you are describing

What we did and how it was done (approximately 1000-1250 words)

Replace this text with a description what you did, how it was done, and who was involved. Make your description as clear and simple as possible so that a reader could copy it.

Outcomes (approximately 750-1000 words)

Replace this text a description of what happened as a result of your work. Make sure you stick to describing this as it relates to your aims and using only information obtained from methods described above.

Discussion (approximately 1000-1250 words)

Replace this text with a discussion of what the findings mean – do they match expectation and what has been reported in the research literature? Then describe the limits of your work and any ideas you have about further work or formal research.

References

List citations or suggest a reading list

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