

Writing for AGENDA

Writing for *AGENDA*, the BGS member magazine, needn't be a daunting task. This information should help guide you through the process.

What is *AGENDA*?

The British Geriatrics Society (BGS) is the membership association for professionals specialising in the healthcare of older people across the UK. Founded in 1947, we now have over 4,500 members, and we are the only Society in the UK offering specialist expertise in the wide range of healthcare needs of older people.

AGENDA is published six times a year and is sent to all members in hard copy, and is also available to members on our website: www.bgs.org.uk.

What is the audience?

Our members are mainly geriatricians and other doctors specialising in working with older people, however we also have a growing number of nurses, AHPs and ACPs who are choosing to become members and therefore receive the newsletter. These are mainly UK-based (spread across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) but around 10% are based overseas, so bear this in mind when writing.

What are the style requirements?

You should already have been given an indication of what topic to write about, how many words are required, and provided with a deadline, but see below for a few general pointers for your writing:

- The writing style should be fairly **informal** and **conversational**. Imagine you are writing for a colleague.
- Don't feel constrained by conventional article formats! 'Top Tips,' 'Myths and Facts,' or 'Dos and Don'ts,' 'How To' are some possible suggestions for variations. However traditional articles are very welcome too.
- **References** are not necessary, but feel free to include them if they would help readers further navigate the topic. Please use the Vancouver referencing style (numbered in the text and listed in numerical order at the end) and try and limit to around 25 if possible.
- If the article is clinical in nature, try and make it **practical** and **helpful**. Think about what clinicians might take away and do differently as a result of reading it.
- If the article is a report or case study, think about the aspects which are most **useful**, **interesting** or **surprising**, and try and share any **lessons** you have learnt and how you might put these into practice.



- If the article is an editorial, profile or opinion piece, feel free to share your own thoughts and perspectives but try and keep in mind the question "*what will readers get out of this?*"
- A **box** of information (such as sources of further reading, interesting facts/statistics, short case study examples, etc) can also be a good addition to an article.
- **Images, illustrations, tables, or figures** are welcomed and encouraged. If photos show identifiable people, please ensure you have the relevant **consent** to use them for publication. Images must be at least **300dpi** in resolution. Try and limit the use of images/figures/tables etc to one per 250 words of text.
- Likewise, if you are directly re-using copyrighted material, please obtain the relevant **permissions** before submitting it as part of your article.
- If your article is coming up much longer than anticipated, consider breaking it up into a **mini-series**.

What else should I include?

- A **suggested title** for your article.
- If possible, a short 1-2 sentence **introduction**.
- Some **sub-headings** dividing the text where appropriate.
- The **names and job titles/positions/workplaces** of all authors to be included in the byline.
- **Postal addresses** for any authors who are not BGS members but wish to receive a copy of the printed issue.

What if I can no longer meet the deadline?

We understand that life sometimes gets in the way and that our authors have demanding day jobs that take priority. If you feel you can no longer commit to submitting your agreed article, please let the Publications Editor know as **early as possible**. It may be feasible to extend the deadline, defer to a later edition or arrange for someone else to take over the writing. The earlier you are able to let us know, the fewer problems it causes. We will always try and be flexible and accomodating to authors who are upfront and honest.

What happens after I submit?

Once your article has been submitted it will be checked by the Publications Editor for suitability and edited for spelling, punctuation, grammar and clarity. If there are any queries at this stage, we will let you know. We do not ordinarily supply proofs unless there have been any significant changes to the text or there is something that needs to be checked again by the author. However if you have a strong desire to see a proof, let the Publications Editor know and this can be arranged. Please note that there may be a very short deadline to check your proof so please ensure you are available to do so as we are not able to delay publication.

I have another idea for an article!

Fantastic - let the Publications Editor know what your idea is and we can work together to come up with a suitable brief and deadline. Likewise, if you think your article would work better as a series of articles, get in touch and we can agree a timetable for these.

Contact and submission information

Please email the BGS Publications Editor, Amy Brewerton, at editor@bgs.org.uk with any queries or issues. The completed article should also be sent to this address.

Happy writing!