

# Writing an Editorial— You Can Do This!

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# Writing an Editorial--Outline

1. Why write one?
2. How to write one
3. How to pitch one
4. Your turn to write one!

# Acknowledgements

- Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations
- The Op-Ed project ([theopedproject.org](http://theopedproject.org))
- Catherine Cubbine's 2017 presentation at APHA

# Who am I?

Not an expert, but LOTS of experience:

- Over 100 publications written with a variety of writing teams
- Over a dozen editorials
- Two books and several book chapters
- Journal editor for past six years

Still get emails with “revise and resubmit” or “reject”

# WHY WRITE?

- Spread far and wide the unique experiences and contributions of nurses, ESPECIALLY public health nurses!!

# Editorial? Op-ed? “Clinical article”? Blog?

- Editorials
  - Opinion essay for professional journal
  - Goals: inform, stimulate thinking, ideally move reader to action
  - Can also introduce/summary journal issue
  - OR can praise a luminary in the field, past or present
- Op-Ed
  - For local or national (!) newspaper
- Clinical/thought article
  - Longer, perhaps less persuasive, goal more to inform/consider
- Blog piece
  - Less competitive; nice starting place

# Who's Writing?

- Are you sure you want to do this alone?
- Partner or team helps to get you out of your own head

# For whom/what are you writing?

- Pick your journal or newspaper
- Match your topic with target journal
- Word count will be determined by this—generally 500-1500 words
- Word choice will also be determined by this—avoid jargon!!

# Getting Started

- Have your facts/statistics ready
- Line up your target journal
- Allocate time
- Shut off your email!
- Set a goal for your session (I'm going to write the first three sentences of an initial draft)
- Finish with noting a task with which to start your next session
- Perfection is the ban of productivity

# HOW TO WRITE?

- Title
- General structure
  - Opener
  - Solutions
  - Call to action

# Title

- Start with this
- Use it to keep your focus
- Revise for catchy-ness factor at the end

# Opener

- Present the problem with strong opening sentence (relevant catchy quotation, question, statistic to grab reader's attention)
- Really try to avoid jargon
- Make it personal
  - Who you are
  - A story illustrating the issue
- Data + personal = POWER
- Closing sentence to this section might hint at solution/idea that this problem preventable—transition to next section

# Solutions/Alternatives

- What can be done?
- What is being done?
- Why would these actions be effective?
- Perhaps start with restatement of problem and possible solution
- Provide examples of solutions, where they have worked
- Consider solutions on multiple levels—individual, local community, school/university, profession
- Must also include counter-argument—what others are saying, why this will not work

# Call to Action

- My favorite. And most frustrating
- Solving most problems takes time, dedication, cooperation
- Invite readers to be part of the solution

# Review

- Look for flow—each sentence should have some connection to the previous
- Check grammar, punctuation
- Ensure jargon level appropriate for audience
- Give it to a cold reader
- Reconsider your journal
- Review a final time before submission (start reading from the middle)

# HOW TO PITCH?

- Query letter to editor
- If no response, submit anyway
- If negative response, consider another journal
- If negative response x2, get a new cold reader to review
- Consider blog alternatives

# You're Published!!

- Do NOT stop here
- Disseminate your work
  - Professional organizations
  - Social media
  - Worksite

Questions?

Write me with your ideas—really!

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