

Publishing Ethics in Pediatrics

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As the editor of *Pediatrics*' Ethics Rounds, I regularly get inquiries about potential cases or manuscripts. Thus I thought that it might be helpful to prospective authors to describe the section's format and submission process as well as other [article types](#) amenable to publishing ethics in *Pediatrics* with the hope you will consider submitting a manuscript.

Ethics Rounds usually consist of an abstract, brief introduction, a case followed by several commentaries, the outcome of the case, and Section Editor comments. The abstract should briefly describe the case and summarize the commentators' substantive conclusions. It is unstructured and should be 250 words or fewer. The case may involve clinical, research, or organizational ethics. It should conclude with an ethical dilemma or conflict, and the need for an individual or group to make a decision. Cases are typically 250 to 300 words in length. If the case is based on the care of an actual patient, informed consent should be obtained from the adult patient or the parents or guardian of a minor patient, or the case should be sufficiently anonymized that the participants cannot recognize it. Cases may also be a composite of the care of several actual patients.

The case is usually followed by 2-3 commentaries that are all included in the article. Each commentary usually has 1-2 authors. The author(s) of the case are typically among the commentators. The heading for each of the commentaries should include the authors' names and disciplines. If there are 2 commentaries, they should each be 1,200 or fewer words and, if there are 3, each should be 800 or fewer words. It is preferable that the commentaries' authors represent different institutions, disciplines, and/or perspectives. Commentaries should not introduce new information about the case and should not be repetitive. Ethics Rounds generally conclude with a description of the outcome of the case and a brief comment by the Section Editor. The entire manuscript should be 3,500 words or fewer.

Ethics Rounds welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Potential authors are strongly encouraged to review recently published Ethics Rounds to familiarize themselves with the format and topics that have already been covered. Editorial support is available to help less experienced authors evaluate the suitability of a case, refine the case, and/or identify potential commentators. Such editorial support may fulfill the criteria for authorship. This will be discussed with the corresponding author during the submission process. Submissions to Ethics Rounds by residents, fellows, and junior faculty are welcomed. The Section Editor may also originate manuscripts. All manuscripts undergo peer review.

Ethics Rounds is not the only article type in which to address ethical issues. Other relevant types are [Regular Articles](#), [Research Briefs](#), [Pediatric Perspectives](#), and [Special Articles](#). **Regular Articles** are original research that aims to inform clinical practice and includes interventional studies and surveys. These articles follow the typical introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion format. **Research Briefs** are also original research but, as the title suggests, shorter in length; 700 words or fewer compared to 3000 words or fewer. **Pediatric Perspectives** are opinion pieces addressing current topics in pediatrics including ethical issues. They should include a clear explanation of the issue and potential responses. They are limited to 1,200 words, 3 authors, and 7 references. **Special Articles** discuss pediatric health care topics or issues, including ethical issues, but do not utilize traditional study methodologies. They are limited to 4,000 or fewer words. Ethical issues may also be addressed in these other article types albeit less frequently.

I am happy to discuss potential submissions to Ethics Rounds or help you determine which article type would be the best fit for your topic. I may be reached at pediatricseitorial@aap.org.

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