



CASE REPORTS

Definition

Case reports are professional narratives that outline the diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes of the medical problems of patients. Information from case reports provide feedback on clinical practice guidelines and offer a framework for early signals of effectiveness adverse events, and cost. They can be shared for medical, scientific, or educational purposes. (*CARE*)

Case report

A detailed report of the diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of an individual patient. Case reports also contain some demographic information about the patient (for example, age, gender, ethnic origin). (*NIH National Cancer Institute*)

Case series

A group or series of case reports involving patients who were given similar treatment. Reports of case series usually contain detailed information about the individual patients. This includes demographic information (for example, age, gender, ethnic origin) and information on diagnosis, treatment, response to treatment, and follow-up after treatment. (*NIH National Cancer Institute*)

Ethical considerations

The review of patients to report as a case study or case series is considered anecdotal and can proceed without Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) review.

While HREC review is not necessary, staff must give due consideration to relevant ethical issues. Where a patient/client case study is undertaken *informed consent* from the individual/s studied must be obtained. Care must also be taken to ensure *confidentiality is maintained* during collation of data and preparation of the manuscript.

- Informed consent should be obtained from the patient. Consent should be written, and the consent form filed in the patient medical record.
- Any identifying information must be removed from written text, diagrams, images or photos. Importantly, attention must be paid to removing any risk of *incidental* identification of the patient. Avoid including too much specific background information (geographic location, date of injury/car) or unnecessary personal information (e.g., race) that when put together might theoretically allow someone to identify the patient.

EMHS Research Hub

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- The patient should be given the opportunity to receive a copy of the publication.
- Requirements of the journal to which the manuscript will be submitted (if known) should be met.

Useful documents and links

- EMHS Template case study information sheet and consent form
- The CARE Guidelines: <http://www.care-statement.org/>

Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact the **EMHS Research Hub**:

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