Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I get started?

A: Hospital staff (i.e. physicians, nurses, pharmacists) initiating a research project begin the process by contacting the DORE Research Administrator. This person will determine the best path to route your project, depending on the scope of your proposed study and the level of involvement of human participants.

Medical students, interns, and residents begin the research process by making an appointment to meet with his/her program director. Upon gaining approval from program director to proceed, the next step is to contact the CORE Research Director. This person will determine the best path to route your project, depending on the scope of your proposed study and the level of involvement of human participants.

Q: What if my study is sponsored by industry?

A: If your study is sponsored by an outside-source (i.e. pharmaceutical or device companies) contact the DORE Research Administrator. This person will determine the best path to route your project, including navigating the IRB process.

Q: How do I write a case report?

A: Case reports play a very special role in medical research. Though not generalizeable to a larger population, case reports serve to document interesting or rare events. The general formula for a typical case report includes the following four sections:

1. Background, which usually includes:

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A general introduction of the topic at hand

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Finding from searching the literature

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Conveyance of importance and/or relevance of this case

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Note: this section introduces the reader to the main issues of the target case/problem. It also serves to establish the credibility of the author. By providing supporting information obtained from a thorough and relevant search of the literature, the author provides background information for the reader while also establishing the relevance of the case at hand.

2. Introduction of the target case/problem

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Be specific. For example, a 47 year old Caucasian male presented to the ER with severe and evident trauma to the right lumbar.... Describe the situation, but take care not to provide so much information that anonymity is breached. You may want to include the diagnostic or treatment challenges associated with this case.

3. Conclusion

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Provide an endpoint for the paper. How was the case/problem resolved? Relevant outcomes should be mentioned in the paper.

4. Bibliography

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Include all sources of information used to produce your case report, even if that source is not directly mentioned in your paper

Click here for more information regarding case reports.

Q: How do I write a protocol?

A: A Quick Start Guide to Research (hyperlink) has been created to help you prepare your research protocol. The DORE Research Administrator and/or Biostatistician can also help guide you through protocol development. Research protocols function as a blueprint for your study. Each protocol provides specific information about that study and addresses key questions, such as Who, What, How, When, Where, and Why.

In general, clinical-based research protocols contain 3 sections: an introduction, a section on methodology, and a bibliography. Details of each of these sections are outlined in the above-mentioned guide.

Q: How do I search the literature?

A: A good site to conduct a general search is MEDLINE/PubMed ,a source of Biomedical journal literature. Other sources of information are:

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PubMed CentralTM: A digital archive of life sciences journal literature

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NLM Gateway: A single Web interface that searches multiple National Library of Medicine retrieval systems

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Health Services Research and Public Health

Q: How do I navigate the institutional review process?

A: Hospital staff (i.e. physicians, nurses, pharmacists) begin by contacting the IRB Compliance Officer for Doctors Hospital. In conjunction with the DORE Biostatistician and depending on the specific nature and design of your study, an action plan regarding institutional review will be formulated. If your project is determined to not require formal IRB review, then a letter stating so will be mailed to you. If your work is determined to require IRB review, then you will be advised accordingly. Do not submit any materials to the IRB for review without first contacting the DORE Biostatistician.

Medical students, interns, and residents should continue to follow the direction of the CORE Research Director. This person will advise you according to your local/hospital IRB (or to the OU IRB). Do not submit any materials to your local/hospital IRB (or to the OU IRB) without first contacting the CORE Research Director.

Q: How do I create a research poster?

A: When preparing an academic poster, it is very important to check the guidelines for the particular venue to which you are applying. Considerations such as dimensions, font size and font style tend to change across venues, whereas staple elements (key parts of the poster) are somewhat standardized. Keep in mind when preparing a poster that judges and other viewers will need to read your poster's text from about 5 feet away, so be sure to use large enough text to make reading possible. You can find basic poster templates and submission guidelines under Dissemination and Opportunities (hyperlink)

Q: How do I write a research paper?

A: A general approach to writing a research paper is to "grow" the protocol into a paper. To take this approach, a couple of things need to be done. First, word tense has to be changed since protocols are written in future tense whereas papers are written in past tense. Also, where protocols include three sections of content (Introduction, Methodology, and Bibliography), papers include five (Introduction, Methodology, Results, Conclusions/Discussion, and References). A third difference between protocols and papers is found between a bibliography and a list of references. Bibliographies contain all sources of information used to produce the protocol, whereas reference sections only contain sources directly cited in the final paper.

Q: What are acceptable publication styles?

A: Acceptable publication styles will vary from journal to journal (or venue to venue). Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals and the American Medical Association Manual of Style 9th edition (1998). While some venues and agencies will accept documents prepared in alignment with other style guides, such as MLA or APA guidelines, you should check carefully beforehand to make sure that alternative styles will be acted. The AOA has helpful information on their website regarding this issue. Please refer to http://www.jaoa.org/misc/ifora.shtml#msprep for details.

Again, be sure to check style and format requirements before going to the trouble of formatting a paper. There are software packages that automatically convert documents from one style format to another. The style manuals mentioned above are available at reasonable prices and can be purchase from most academic bookstores (as well as many online vendors).