Commissioning letter for Best Practice Papers

Best Practice papers sit in the Education and Practice (E&P) section of Archives of Disease in Childhood, and give a concise, definitive, evidence-based review of how to deal with a particular situation in paediatrics.

There are a number of possible styles of paper. Good recent examples include:

This paper was good because:
- it had an engaging authorial style
- it took readers on a helpful journey through from some quite pure science to pragmatic day to day care
- it made good use of illustrations

15 minute consultation: a structured approach to the management of facial paralysis in a child, Vikas Malik, Vineeta Joshi, Kevin M J Green, Iain A Bruce Arch Dis Child Educ Pract Ed 2012;97:82-85 [Full text]
This paper was good because:
- it took an extremely practical approach, structured around the 15 minute consultation
- it was brief and to the point
- it drew attention to controversies, while giving the reader a guidance on what to do, despite the controversy
- it could clearly be used at 0300 by a tired but intelligent doctor to make the right decisions.

Specific instructions:
- Please feel free to include other authors provided their contribution is significant and adds value
- Word count should not be more than 1500, and definitely no more than 2000 words, excluding references and MCQs. Remember: “I’m sorry I wrote such a long letter; I didn’t have time to write a shorter one” - Abraham Lincoln, and take a look at this paper which changed the world in around 650 words: http://www.nature.com/nature/dna50/watsoncrick.pdf
- No more than 20 references - strictly enforced.
- Include search strategies for the evidence base as an appendix or box where appropriate
- Please include at least two, and preferably more, boxes, table and figures, and make use of full colour. The submission instructions mention a charge for colour; this is not applicable in E&P.
- A common pitfall is to write a textbook chapter. Clues that you are doing this will include an overlong article, getting stuck in detail that only very expert readers need to appreciate, and the need for very many references. If you’re falling into this trap, and want help, then your commissioning editor should be able to assist you.
- A specific comment about the 15 minute consultation style; the 15 minutes refers to the time that you, the expert, have with the reader, not the time that the reader has with the patient.
- Journal instructions regarding conflict of interest and other statements would of course apply
- Please provide five extending matching multiple choice questions based on the content of your article, with which readers can test their understanding of your paper. Please include the answers. None of this is included in your word count.
- Your article will need to be submitted through the ScholarOne system. If you have been commissioned, please follow the instructions.

Please note that as a peer reviewed journal, your article will undergo peer review. This allows us to ensure we are publishing high quality work, and our peer reviewers almost invariably help to improve papers.