

Clinical Contribution to the Available Sources of Evidence (CASE) Reports Abstract Guidelines:

There are 4 evidence levels for Clinical CASE Reports based on the evidence generated and the case design. **For EATA, only Levels 1-3 (described below), which provide unique contributions to clinical practice, will be considered. Level 4 CASE Reports, which are used to describe typical presentations of rare events, will not be considered.** Please read the following carefully to determine the most appropriate format for cases to be submitted. Observational (risk factor, symptom prevalence), diagnostic, prognostic, therapeutic, etc. cases should all be considered.

LEVEL 1

Level 1 Evidence: Validation CASE Reports: The purpose of the Validation Case is to *test* the results of previously published research.

1. **Background:** 1-2 sentences on the background for the CASE report. For a Level 1 Validation CASE Study, the authors should provide a clear description of the Previously Reported Comparison Study (well-conducted systematic review, meta-analysis, individual study) and highlight the most important findings.
2. **Case Presentation:** Use PICO as a guide to the case presentation.
 - a. *Patient (P):* Provide a description of the patient including the following, where relevant:
 - i. The relevant patient characteristics (sex, age, sport, etc.).
 - ii. The chief complaint and relevant clinical events that led the patient to seek out the care.
 - iii. The process that led to the diagnosis of the condition. This should include relevant findings from the clinical examination, any diagnostic imaging, and other relevant tests that were used to form the basis of the differential diagnosis, and ultimately, the diagnosis.
 - b. *Intervention (I):* Describe the case management. Report the assessments or interventions used, the timeline for progression to final outcome in the case, and the specific time points when the outcomes were assessed. Include a description of assessments or interventions used from the previously reported comparison study.
 - c. *Comparative Outcome (CO):* Describe the primary outcomes or results of the case. Compare and contrast the outcome from the current case to the outcome of the previously reported comparison study. *Did the patient respond similarly to the participants within the study?*
3. **Conclusions:** Interpret the findings of the study. Interpret the findings from the current case in the context with the previously reported comparison study. How do the findings of this case contribute to what is known about a condition or treatment? **Examples of key discussion points include:**
 - A discussion of the agreement of the outcomes in the case with the outcomes of the comparison study (external validation)
 - A discussion of the similarities / differences of the patient in the case to the patients / participants in the comparison study
 - Challenges associated with implementing the intervention from the comparison study “in real life”. This may include, for example, a discussion of *population validity* (was the case patient similar to participants in the comparison study) or *ecological validity* (was the clinical environment conducive to implementing the intervention). Other issues that may have affected the outcomes (e.g. compliance) can also be discussed.
 - Recommendations for the continued use of the assessment or intervention tested in the case for the recognition, rehabilitation, or prevention of the condition.
 - Commentary on considerations for future research and practice based on the current findings of the case.
4. **Clinical Bottom Line:** Provide an overall statement of the most important clinical point(s) that can be gleaned from the current CASE study.

LEVEL 2 and LEVEL 3

Level 2 Evidence - Exploration CASE Series Report and Level 3 Evidence - Exploration CASE Study Report:

The purpose of the Exploration CASE Series and CASE Study is to report on unique cases. A key feature of a case series /study is an alternate or irregular presentations of **either** *common* (highly prevalent) **or** *uncommon* conditions. A CASE Study (Level3) is a report of a *single unique case*, while a CASE Series (Level 2) is used to report on *several unique cases* with a similar defining feature that links the series cases together.

1. **Background:** The introduction should build the case for the importance of the case study. Authors are encouraged to use available sources of evidence to support the presentation of the case report. **Examples of key background points include:**
 - Provide an overview of the condition of interest using available epidemiological or etiological evidence, where appropriate. *How prevalent is the condition? What are the major factors that contribute to its development?*
 - Briefly provide background in regards to what is known about the condition of interest. *What are the most important key features for the recognition of this condition? Are there any intervention strategies that have shown promise in altering the natural prognosis?*
 - For Level 2 & 3 Exploration CASE Studies / CASE Series, the purpose of the exploratory case series /study is to clearly describe an alternate, unique, or irregular presentations of **either** *common* (highly prevalent) **or** *uncommon* conditions when compared to the available evidence.
2. **Case Presentation:** Using the PICO as a guide to the case presentation
 - a. *Patient (P):* Provide a description of the patient, including the following, where relevant:
 - i. The patient's characteristics (sex, age, sport, etc.). For Level 2 Exploration CASE Series, a description of the case similarities should be included.
 - ii. The chief complaint and relevant clinical events that led the patient to seek out the care.
 - iii. The process that led to the diagnosis of the condition, including relevant findings from the clinical examination, any diagnostic imaging, and other tests that were used to form the basis of the differential diagnosis, and ultimately, the diagnosis. For Level 2 Exploration CASE Series, evidence that all included patients did, if fact, have the same diagnosis or other key features should be presented.
 - b. *Intervention (I):* Describe the case management. Report the assessment or intervention strategies used, the timeline for progression to final outcome in the case, and the specific time points when the outcomes were assessed. Compare and contrast the interventions used in the Level 2 or 3 Exploration CASE Studies / CASE Series with the typical presentation of the condition as described in the literature.
 - c. *Comparative Outcome (CO):* Describe the primary outcomes or results of the case. Compare / contrast the outcomes used in the Level 2 or Level 3 Exploration CASE Studies / CASE Series with the typical presentation of the condition as previously described. For Case Series, report whether all patients responded similarly to each other. For this, it is important to ensure that similar outcome measures were used.
3. **Conclusions:** Interpret the findings of the study. Compare / contrast the atypical presentation with what has been previously established as typical presentation or intervention. **Examples of key discussion points include:**
 - Challenges associated with the case(s) due to the atypical presentation.
 - Recommendations for whether the atypical presentation reported in the case study /case series should be considered as an alternative presentation or outcome for the condition, highlighting recommendations for recognition, rehabilitation, outcome measures, etc.
4. **Clinical Bottom Line:** Provide an overall statement of the most important clinical points that can be gleaned from the current CASE study.