

## Journal Club @ Sydney Sexual Health Centre (ASHM-SSHC Educational series)

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(Updated 18 Jan 2018)

Adapted from Dr Chris Bourne April 2014 after Dr Phil Read June 2011)

Journal club allows people to get a taste of what is being published in the field of sexual health because it is difficult to read all academic journals regularly. It allows staff of varying levels of expertise to practice and develop their critical appraisal skills.

Your intensive effort of reading and sharing your allocated journal contents with others is reciprocated when others do the same for you about another journal you may not have time or inclination to read.

It is not expected you will be an expert in all the topics you present but you should try to have a good understanding of the one publication you chose to critically appraise (optional step for less experienced staff).

Any **discussion** about current sexual health issues you raise is to be **encouraged**. You may not know all details about the issue you raise but others might have things to share. Remember you are learning, too, and practising presentation skills.

Some journals have lots of important and relevant papers, so scan the abstracts and read those of more interest in some detail to help you chose one paper for detailed presentation. For the other papers if there are many, you might only need to scan the abstract to share the important findings.

Some helpful tips on 'How to read a paper' in resources section below <http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-readers/publications/how-read-paper>

'Writing a (generic) critical review'- some very useful ideas at this UNSW student site (refresher for all of us!) <https://student.unsw.edu.au/writing-critical-review>

We encourage you to have an **opinion** on the papers you present: Phrases which might be useful when presenting or focusing your discussion

- "I like / did not like this paper **because...**"
- "This topic is relevant to us because"
- "This may/ may not change my clinical practice"

Your **task** is to:

1. highlight the most interesting papers published in all issues of the Journal allocated to you over the last few months, and
2. to critically analyse in depth one specific paper (**this step is optional for less experienced staff**)

**Allocated time:** 50 minutes

The **format** is roughly divided into two sections as below:

1. Highlight interesting papers (35 minutes)

Up to 10 papers of interest, with max 1 slide on each.

Provide the first author name only (use 'et al' for other other authors), title of paper, a quick synopsis of the study, critical findings (**no data tables unless really necessary**) and implications. The idea is to alert people to interesting papers to encourage them to go and read them in more detail if they are interested.

DO NOT clutter the slide in this section with too much detail and then read from the slide. The audience gets bored as you are simply saying what they can read. The slide is to prompt you and the audience will then listen to you. If you need more detailed prompts make separate notes.

Some journals have the papers tables/graphs recreated into PPT so you can download it clearly but be sure to highlight (circle or colour bold) the interesting bit/numbers of significance. Large tables with small font do not add anything to the presentation!

*Presentation tip:* look at the computer screen so your voice (and eyes) project to the audience and microphone NOT the projected image which is away from the audience and can muffle your voice. It's ok to periodically refer to the projection if highlighting a point.

*If you and your manager choose not to do the detailed critical analyses of one specific paper, then review some additional papers to complete approximately 50 minutes total presenting time – please consult with your manager*

2. Detailed critical appraisal of one specific paper (optional for less experienced staff) (15 minutes, mandatory for registrars)

There are many ways to critically appraise a paper, but the idea is that you not only describe the study, but each aspect of the study is reflected upon so as to determine the value and validity of the study and its conclusions. Remember critically analyse is not the same as criticise.

The study may be well conducted, but if it is, you should point out why. It is ok to disagree with the analysis, findings and conclusions even if it is a reputable journal. Be logical and structured using a framework of your choice (see below, for some ideas of how to structure). Noting the authors self-disclosed limitations of their paper is not a substitute for critical appraisal.

Use any one of the tools listed below, with headings to structure your appraisal presentation.

Please approach senior staff at your clinic for advice – this is part of the learning experience

Thanks again everyone who has contributed so far, and to those who are planning to do so later this year. We want this to be an academically challenging but worthwhile experience in a supportive environment.

Presentations will be recorded as a webinar and can be viewed on the ASHM website to encourage audience access to key references of interest

**Resources:**

1997 BMJ Education and Debate series, which has excerpts from a BMJ book 'How to read a paper'

<http://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-readers/publications/how-read-paper>

- [Papers that go beyond numbers \(qualitative research\)](#) Trisha Greenhalgh, Rod Taylor
- [Papers that summarise other papers \(systematic reviews and meta-analyses\)](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Papers that tell you what things cost \(economic analyses\)](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Papers that report diagnostic or screening tests](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Papers that report drug trials](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Statistics for the non-statistician. II: "Significant" relations and their pitfalls](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Statistics for the non-statistician](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Assessing the methodological quality of published papers](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [Getting your bearings \(deciding what the paper is about\)](#) Trisha Greenhalgh
- [The Medline database](#) Trisha Greenhalgh