Public Health Post

Write for Public Health Post!

Why Write for PHP?
Are you looking to translate findings from your research to a broad audience? Are you itching to write about your work in a creative and engaging way? Do you have a view on a public health topic of the moment that needs airing? Many universities now consider general media impact of research findings as part of the promotion process and PHP brings your material to a new world of readers.

Who Reads PHP?
Our readers are policymakers, journalists, activists, other researchers, and others who care about public health. They design, implement, and evaluate public health interventions. They are teachers who assign PHP articles to their students. And they are students eager for exposure to broad array of public health perspectives and research findings as they chart their plan their professional path.

Our Mission
PHP strives to facilitate an ideas-first dialogue around public health without jargon or hype. We highlight and explain new and exciting public health research findings that can contribute to the creation of evidence-based health policies and interventions.

What We Publish
Public Health Post welcomes proposals for short Research and Viewpoint articles. We are always looking for new ideas and original perspectives. We publish one article a day, five days a week. The following guidelines explain the process for pitching your ideas for articles and writing your first draft.

Our readers want articles that are engaging, clearly written, and easy to understand. Scientific and professional language should be minimal. Acronyms should be sparse. Articles should always answer the question: *so what*?

Articles should be **600 words or less**. When appropriate, they may be as short 400 words.

Research articles focus on one or two aspects of your recent work to explain the most interesting or important finding. Research articles can focus on findings you have published in a peer-reviewed journal or they can describe a research project. Authors can use first person to make it clear you did the study and have authority to write about it.

Viewpoint articles are an opportunity to write about some aspect of population health from your own perspective. Viewpoints tell a story about a public health challenge and combine

personal experience, contextual detail, and evidence or research. The goal of a viewpoint is to highlight a public health challenge with the goal of educating and persuading. Sometimes you are simply trying to make readers to care about a topic that you care about fiercely. Sometimes you are trying to change their mind on a controversial subject.

How to Pitch an Article
Proposals for new articles should be submitted to Nicholas Diamond, PHP's Managing Editor, at njd15@bu.edu. Proposals should be no longer than 150 words and written in clear language that engages readers from a wide variety of backgrounds. Before you write your proposal, be sure to read a selection of PHP articles to get a better understanding of the types of articles we publish.

Please include the following:
- Proposed title (Six words or less, should catch readers' attention)
- Article focus and type (Research or Viewpoint)
- Primary objective or message and relevance to public health policy or practice
- Significance or timeliness of topic
- Similarity to or divergence from other PHP articles. If your topic is similar to other articles we have published on (for example, gun violence, the Affordable Care Act, the opioid epidemic), what will you be adding? If your topic has not been covered by PHP or only covered minimally, what gaps will your article fill?
- Key points to be covered.

Process for Reviewing Pitches
All pitches will be reviewed by PHP editorial staff. Decisions will be based on clarity of language, similarity to recently published articles (we strive to avoid duplication and over-emphasis of popular topics), and public health relevance or timeliness.

Writing Your Article (approximately 600 words)
PHP wants to engage readers, get them excited and give them new ideas. No matter what type of article you are writing or your topic, be sure to use clear language.

Some ideas for organizing your article follow. We offer these as a guide, but feel free to deviate if you have a better plan.

Research Article:
- What is the public health problem and research question? Start with something that will pull the reader in. For instance, a news hook or attention-grabbing statistic. Researcher authors should establish their authority to write on this topic upfront.
- What is the context and significance? Why is this an important line of inquiry?

- What methods were used (briefly) and what were the key findings?
- How do these findings contribute to the broader scholarly and policy conversation? Do these findings fill a gap? Tell us something new? Contradict other findings? Complement other findings?
- What next? What could be done with these findings in terms or informing and improving policy, health systems, social context, knowledge and understanding?

Viewpoint:
- Anecdote about a specific situation or person OR narrative that grabs the reader's attention and pulls them into a story.
- What is the policy debate or public health topic you are going to talk about? What is your authority? What is your objective for the piece? What is your opinion? You may not want to fully reveal your opinion as you want your audience to keep reading. But you are setting the stage and building the reader's interest.
- Three main points with specific details or evidence
- Acknowledge and discuss opposing perspectives or evidence, if relevant
- Conclusion: Return to your opening paragraph and objective. What needs to be done next to make x happen? Be sure you have answered these key questions: So what? Why should we care?

Editorial Process
Pitches or articles should be emailed to Nicholas Diamond, PHP's Managing Editor, at njd15@bu.edu. If accepted, our editorial staff will work with you to polish your article. Final drafts are completed 2 weeks before publication. You can request an approximate publication date, so your writing does not feel rushed.

Publication & Social Media
Once your article is scheduled for publication, we will ask you for Twitter handles and hashtags we can include in social media posts to push your article out to a broad audience. We will also ask you to retweet and share with your networks.