Turning your thesis into an article for **Kai Tiaki Nursing Research**

**Turning your thesis or work project into an article for NZNO’s research magazine will ensure your findings reach a wider nursing audience.**

By Kai Tiaki Nursing Research
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NZNO’s research journal, **Kai Tiaki Nursing Research (KTNR)**, publishes research that has professional and clinical relevance for nurses in New Zealand. The journal is interested in research papers on clinical, education, management or health policy topics that contribute to the professional knowledge and evidence base for nursing.

With postgraduate-level study now the norm for many registered nurses (RNs) in New Zealand, we have much more local research being undertaken by nurses working in a wide range of professional roles. Whether a project is undertaken in your practice, or a dissertation or thesis produced as part of a programme of study, publication of the findings of your research as a journal article will reach a much larger audience.

**Pruning and prioritising**

Once you have completed research, as part of a postgraduate qualification, or as a project in your work role, it is important to publish your findings in a peer-reviewed journal to inspire and encourage other nurses and influence their practice. This article provides some recommendations on how to create an article from your research project, thesis or dissertation. **KTNR's** official guidelines for submitting articles, provide detailed information on the submission process, while former **KTNR** editor-in-chief Elizabeth Niven’s advice offers further ideas about how to approach writing for a research journal.

Research papers submitted to **KTNR** should be 3000-5000 words in length for the main text, excluding abstract, tables and references. A thesis is generally between 15,000 and 80,000 words, so the word count must be substantially reduced for publication as a research article. While the entire scope of a thesis is often too broad to report in a journal article, the rationale for the study, the research approach, findings and recommendations need to be clearly explained.

In extracting the key findings from the research that you want to communicate to **KTNR**’s readers, it is
important to “tell one clear story”. Concentrate or findings or themes that are clinically or professionally significant for nursing practice, education or management, or relevant to other researchers.

**Article framework**

**Title:**
The title should accurately reflect the content of the article. It may be slightly different to the title of your thesis, depending on the focus you have taken for the article, but should accurately reflect the key elements of the research being reported on.

**Abstract:**
A research abstract provides a summary or overview of the information included in the article. Again, this may look a little different to the abstract for your thesis because the article will reflect your “pared down” approach to the topic. For KTNR, the abstract will be approximately 250 words and include the following headings: Aims (of the paper), background, methods (including year of data collection), results/findings, and conclusion. Include up to six key words which appear within the abstract. The key words might relate to the topic, research approach, population studied, and application of the findings.

**Introduction/literature review:**
The introduction and literature review provide a brief background to the research, including the context and significance. Identify what is known about the issue your research addresses, what is not known, and why the research is important. Revisit the literature review to remove any sources that you have not included in the article and check whether any new research has been published since you completed the thesis or project. The literature review should be concise, contemporary, and focus on sources that are crucial to the focus for the research article.

**Research approach/methods:**
The methods section should provide sufficient information about the methodology to allow readers to appreciate the extent and need for the procedures described. Include a brief overview of the research approach, the participants or data sources, data collection methods, and a commentary on the procedures used for data analysis. Research involving patients or other participants that requires Health Research Council ethics approval or consultation must be documented in the article. Visit www.hrc.govt.nz/ethics-and-regulatory for guidance. Specific ethical considerations within the context of the research should also be noted.

**Concentrate on findings or themes that are clinically or professionally significant for nursing . . .**

**Findings:**
The findings section presents a pared down, clearly focused account of answers to the research question or hypothesis developed from the analysis of data. As previously stated, you will have decided which findings to present or emphasise within the scope of the article. It is a good idea to use tables to summarise the findings of both quantitative and qualitative findings, and present them with supporting statements. In qualitative studies, summarise data from interviews rather than using long quotes from participants, though brief quotes may usefully illustrate findings.

**Discussion:**
Discuss the implications of your research findings in relation to the literature you have cited; also discuss the evidential, professional or clinical questions the findings have generated. This section takes the reader back to the aim of the study and interprets the findings in relation to the issues identified in the introduction and literature review. Discuss any challenges found in the way the research was conducted and comment on alternative interpretations of the data, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

**Conclusions and recommendations:**
To conclude the article, briefly summarise the findings and discussion; include a summary of recommendations for clinical practice, nursing education, nursing management or future research.

**Other possibilities**
This article has focused on presenting findings from a thesis or research project as a research article, but there are other possibilities for presenting parts of the research for publication. For example, you could present the literature review as a meta-analysis of the findings of primary research. You could also write a reflexive account of the challenges and lessons learned in using a specific research approach; this could include examining your own assumptions as a researcher, and how they affect the research process.

**References**


