



Clinical Laboratory Investigations: Case Studies for Laboratory Professionals

AUTHOR SUBMISSION INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

I. General Information

Clinical Laboratory Investigations: Case Studies for Laboratory Professionals is another opportunity for laboratory professionals to attain continuing education credit from ASCLS. The subscriber will read a peer-reviewed case study describing a clinical or management situation. A brief explanation of the case history and disease process or management problem will follow the case presentation. In order to receive CE credit, the subscriber will complete the online quiz which will be submitted to the ASCLS P.A.C.E.[®] coordinator. Upon successful completion, a certificate will be issued. Ordinarily the completion of one case will constitute one contact hour of continuing education credit. However, occasionally multiple smaller cases will be grouped together in order to fulfill the requirements of one contact hour of continuing education P.A.C.E.[®] credit.

All cases should be original and not published in other sources. Exceptions may be made for cases already published in ASCLS publications that have been revised for presentation in the online format. Cases can be either fictional or actual. Care must be taken to either omit or change any specifics in an actual case that would reveal the source of the case without seriously altering the impact of the case.

A. Presentation Categories

1. Clinical Case Study

A case study is a presentation that describes a problem and the means used to resolve the situation. The case may involve a patient or in rare cases, more than one patient, who presents with an unusual disease or a common disease with unusual clinical presentation, complication or outcome. The clinical diagnosis requires an extended battery of tests to confirm. Clinical diagnosis and laboratory findings relate to the patient's symptoms.

Submissions for a clinical case study should include:

- a description of the patient history/presentation/problem
- results from the physical examination of the patient
- significant diagnostic laboratory tests results
- the patient outcome
- a short description of the disease/condition
- laboratory tests used for disease or therapeutic monitoring and/or clinical practice guidelines

2. Management Case Study

A case in management may involve creative scheduling, compliance or personnel issues or an ethical dilemma. The case will describe the significance and implication of the problem to the clinical laboratory practice. The case also will present strategies utilized to resolve the dilemma.

Submissions for a management case study should include:

- a description of the problem or dilemma
- the underlying principle for resolving the issue
- a brief description of the strategy used
- the outcome or resolution

II. Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Preparation of cases

1. **Title:** Use a concise title (5 or 6 words, if possible) that reflects the case content. Capitalize all of the main words in the title. Underline scientific genus and species names of organisms. Do not use acronyms, abbreviations, and initials in a title.
2. **Author/Institution:** List the main author first, in boldface type. When multiple authors submit a case, clearly identify one contact author and provide complete contact information. Limit academic degrees to highest degree earned, master and doctoral degrees only. List author institution affiliation (excluding department or division information) below each author's name, followed by the city and state of the institution, except when authors share the same institutional affiliation.
3. **Text:** All cases must be double-spaced using Courier as the recommended font with a 12-point type. Text format is flush left with one inch margins on all sides. Use a single-space-return to separate title, author information, and the text. To encourage consistency in style, refer to guidelines in the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts*, available at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html.
 - a. The actual case history of the patient should be presented first and followed by a short explanation of the disease, its diagnosis, management and treatment involved in the presented case.
 - b. Alternatively, the author may break up the case description at various points to discuss the differential diagnosis after the primary presentation, then laboratory tests that were ordered along with their results.
 - c. This could be followed by a discussion of how the laboratory test results narrowed the differential diagnosis.
 - d. Finally, the definitive laboratory tests and results that confirmed the diagnosis could be discussed.
 - e. Additionally, follow-up laboratory tests that monitor efficacy of treatment can be presented as appropriate.

4. **Learning Objectives and CE Questions:** Authors must provide a minimum of 3 behavioral objectives that reflect the learning that readers of the case study are expected to achieve. Authors also should supply 10-15 multiple-choice questions that subscribers will answer to gain CE credit. Each of these questions must relate directly to one or more of the learning objectives. An answer key must be submitted. All questions should have four (4) response choices and one correct answer. Authors should avoid the use of “all of the above” or “none of the above” in the answer choices. For consistency, the choices should be ordered in terms of increasing answer length, with the shortest answer as the “a” answer and the longest as the “d” answer. The questions should address the major points of the case and the reader should be able to answer the questions by reading the case and not have to consult supplementary materials. In addition, at least half of the submitted questions should be at a higher taxonomic level than simple recall questions, *e.g.* application, analysis, or evaluation.
5. **References:** A list of references should accompany the case that supplement and support the information contained in the text. Authors should use the guidelines in the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts*, available at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html, in constructing the references. References should be numbered in the order they appear in the text and should be noted in the text with the corresponding number as a superscript in the appropriate place in the text. The majority of references should be from primary sources such as original research articles, conference proceedings, or survey reports. Avoid the use of websites (*e.g.* WebMD, mayoclinic.com, cancer.gov, etc.) as references since these sites primarily provide general medical information to the public.
6. **Photos:** The authors may submit applicable photos to be published with the case. The photos can be pictures of distinctive slides, cultures or patient specimens. Photos must be at least 300 dpi. The author must attest that the accompanying photos are his or her own or attain permission from the source for publishing the photos.
7. **Tables:** Tables will be numbered sequentially using roman numerals. Tables should be double-spaced in the same font type and size as the text. Each column should have a brief heading and abbreviations should be explained in a footnote.

B. Case Study Submission

1. All cases must be submitted electronically (Word or WordPerfect).
2. Only cases submitted electronically will be considered for review. Email the case and accompanying materials (*e.g.* photos) to Karrie Hovis, ASCLS Director of Professional Development and Project Management at karrieh@ascls.org.
3. Along with the case study, the author will submit a cover letter that will address the following:
 - a. if more than three authors are listed on the project, explain the contribution of each author.
 - b. Disclose any direct or indirect financial interest in the project. When applicable, authors may need to complete the CLS’s financial disclosure policy form.

- c. Specify the Scientific Assembly Section (*e.g.* Microbiology, Chemistry, Hematology, Immunohematology/Immunology, Molecular, etc.) to which the case applies.
4. Authors will also complete and submit a signed copyright agreement with each case study. The form is available at www.ascls.org/CLI.

C. Review, Acceptance, and Notification

Members of the ASCLS Case Study Review Board review all case study submissions. Authors will receive written notification of case acceptance/rejection as well as possible requests for revision. The letter of acceptance will include information on the proposed availability date of the case on-line.

All case studies will become the property of ASCLS.

D. Honorarium

Upon publication of a case study or case study set, the author or authors will receive an honorarium of \$100/case set. If more than one case study is used to complete, the set authors will receive a share of the honorarium.

E. Questions

Questions regarding these instructions should be directed to Karrie Hovis, ASCLS Director of Professional Development and Project Management at karrieh@ascls.org or 571.748.3775.