

Improving primary care research reporting

Introducing the Consensus Reporting Items for Studies in Primary Care checklist

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Canadian Family Physician (CFP) begins 2025 by introducing the Consensus Reporting Items for Studies in Primary Care (CRISP) checklist to its tools for journal authors and peer reviewers. What is CRISP and why is it important to CFP and its research contributors, peer reviewers, and readers?

The CRISP checklist is built upon a 5-year program of rigorous research that engaged the worldwide, interprofessional, interdisciplinary community of primary care. Background studies used by CRISP included 596 individuals from 29 countries and actively engaged underrepresented voices and divergent views.¹ The studies used by CRISP reported that primary care practitioners frequently read original research articles, but often find articles do not adequately describe study findings in a way that makes it easy to apply them to patient care in practice settings.²

The CRISP initiative charted a new pathway to create research reporting guidelines. Instead of relying on an elite group of methodologists dictating the proper content of reports, CRISP considered the creators and users of primary care research to be the experts, including researchers, clinical practitioners, patients, communities, editors, peer reviewers, educators, policy-makers, and funders.³ A Delphi study prioritized recommendations and integrated them into the CRISP checklist of 24 items to include in primary care research reports. Each item is listed because the primary care community believed it was essential to make study reports valid and applicable to different primary care settings and patient populations.⁴

The CRISP checklist is flexible and accommodates a variety of primary care research methods, study designs, patient populations, topics, and systems of care. Not all items apply to all study reports. Authors and editors make final decisions on content and form. Nothing restricts creative and effective reporting. The CRISP statement also summarizes the research program and provides guidance on using the checklist, with explanations and examples.⁵

The CRISP checklist was designed to improve reporting of primary care research, but is also valuable for reviewing manuscripts, designing studies,

and teaching research methods. The checklist applies to all primary care research. This includes not only research done by primary care investigators, but also research done by other professionals studying primary care settings, patients, and problems, and all research intended to influence the practice and organization of primary care.

Finally, the CRISP statement is published in the *Annals of Family Medicine*⁵ and endorsed by the North American Primary Care Research Group (the global organization for primary care research) and the World Organization of Family Doctors.

To access the CRISP checklist on the CFP website, visit <https://ow.ly/7OQm50UrY2u>. 

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Competing interests

None declared

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