With this issue of *Journal of Clinical Microbiology* (JCM), we are very pleased to introduce a new feature, The Brief Case. (Thanks to our friend Dr. Michael Dunne for suggesting the name.) The Brief Case is an educational resource that we hope will be useful to everyone in clinical microbiology; it is intended to be particularly valuable for trainees, technologists, and early-career microbiologists. The format of these articles is designed with this in mind. Instructions for formatting and submitting an article for The Brief Case will be published in the April 2016 issue of JCM.

We will review the format and goals of this feature in a little more detail here.

Each Brief Case will consist of two parts. The first part will include a case presentation, a discussion, and self-assessment questions. The case presentation will be only 300 to 500 words long and may include a total of two figures and/or tables. This should provide a short summary of the patient’s history and physical exam and laboratory results, including the microbiological testing that led to identification of the causal organism. If there were any challenges in the laboratory testing, these should be included and resolved in the case presentation. The discussion will be 800 to 1,100 words long. It should include the important points about identification of the relevant organism, including any practical laboratory tips, and should explain in detail how any laboratory challenges were resolved. The discussion should also include consideration of the organisms that commonly cause the relevant infection and germane risk factors. Finally, three multiple-choice self-assessment questions will be provided. The second part of the Brief Case (“Closing the Brief Case”) will include the answers to the self-assessment questions, with a brief explanation provided for each answer, followed by three to five bulleted, brief take-home points. The two parts are submitted to the journal separately.

There are some things you should not pack in The Brief Case. First, although similar to the now-discontinued Case Reports, The Brief Case is not a forum to present once-in-a-lifetime rarities in microbiology (1). The subject matter for The Brief Case (e.g., organisms, serological patterns, and antimicrobial resistance results) should be things that will be routinely, although perhaps infrequently, encountered in clinical laboratory practice. Second, these are not “unknown” presentations. If the subject is an interesting organism, for example, the identity of the organism can be included in the title and should be included in the case presentation section. Third, although pictures may be included, a terrific picture should not be the primary focus of The Brief Case. Terrific pictures belong in the Photo Quiz feature, published on the cover of JCM. Finally, an extensive literature review should not be included, and so the number of references is limited to six.

Do not wait! Start writing your submission for The Brief Case now, before you click on the next article or flip the page. We look forward to reading it.

**REFERENCE**