

Checklist for Evaluation of an Outbreak Investigation

Score	Description
5 = Excellent	The element is present, consistent with the standard described in guidelines, and is of a remarkable/outstanding quality.
4 = Good	The element is present and consistent with the standard described in the guidelines.
3 = Satisfactory	The element is present and may be used even though it may not completely follow the standard described in the instructions and provided in the classroom.
2 = Poor	The element is present but flawed or of poor quality.
1 = Absent	The element is absent from the report.
N/A = not applicable	The element is not relevant to this outbreak investigation.

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Comments
Author Line	Authors and affiliations correctly formatted?							
	Includes all investigation team members and contributors, including institutions?							
Abstract	Abstract is clear, concise and in IMRAD format?							
Introduction	Describes the organism or illness (agent, clinical characteristics, endemicity or seasonality)?							
	Explains relevance for specific setting?							
	Describes the events that led to the outbreak/how was the outbreak initially reported/how the team was put together/when the investigation began?							
	Describes the situation (person, place, time)?							
	Explains the public health importance of investigating							

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Comments
	the outbreak or specifies investigation hypothesis?							
	Lists what team members make up the investigation team, for example, doctor, environmental health specialist, veterinarian, etc.?							
	Clearly describes the objectives of the outbreak investigation?							
Methods	States study design and temporality, for example, retrospective, case control, etc.?							
	Includes a case definition and eligibility criteria?							
	Describes the methods of case finding /subject recruitment?							
	Explains the type of sampling and calculates the sample size?							
	Describes the method of collecting data from participants?							
	Explains any potential biases in data collection?							
	Explains data analysis procedure, including statistical methods and software used?							
	Describes the clinical, environmental sampling and laboratory test methods?							
	Includes the process used to protect human subjects (confidentiality, risks, informed consent)?							
Results	Provides the number of participants with the							

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Comments
	response rate, if appropriate?							
	The information is descriptive and clinical, including place/geographic distribution?							
	Provides the epidemiologic curve or a description by time?							
	Provides the attack rates by age, sex and other relevant variables?							
	Demonstrates the effect size with measures of precision (confidence intervals) and adjusted for confounding, if appropriate?							
Discussion	Key findings are based on results?							
	Conclusion is supported by the literature: explains data that do not support the conclusion?							
	Describes the limitations of the data, the study design, the location of the investigation, noting possible biases?							
	Reports short, intermediate and long term control measures used for prevention?							
	Discusses the feasibility and sustainability of a long term intervention?							
	Discusses the external validity of intervention study findings, for example, to what degree can the results be generalized to other populations or places?							

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Comments
	Recommendations are based on the findings							
	Makes suggestions for additional studies needed to resolve the current outbreak/prevent future outbreaks							
References	References are numbered and in the order they appear in the text?							
	The number of references is appropriate for the content of the paper?							
	The references are up-to-date and related to the content?							
Title of paper	Title is brief and accurately reflects the outbreak?							
Format& clarity	Uses correct spelling, punctuation and grammar?							
	The writing is clear and concise?							
	There a logical sequence and cohesiveness in all sections?							
	Work is original and there is no evidence of plagiarism?							
	Information is not repeated in any section using the exact words?							
	The article is written in paragraph form, and does not use bullets?							
	Spells out acronyms first before they are used throughout document?							