How to write a conference abstract...and beyond!

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Disclosures

- I work part-time for Bioquell.
- I have received payment for producing educational material for 3M and ACIPC.
- Research funding from Pfizer and the Guy’s & St Thomas’ Charity.
Overview

1. Plan and do the work
2. Prepare abstract
3. Present poster / oral presentation at ACIPC 2014
4. (Finish the work)
5. Write the paper
Why publish your work?

It is important to:

- Prevent the re-invention of the wheel.
- Share and stimulate changes in practice.
- Challenge the status quo.
- Disseminate your research or quality improvement initiatives.
- Develop your professional skills.
- Requirement of your clinical or academic role.
Publication process

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What to publish?

Consider publishing information that is:

- Important to practice or service delivery.
- Something new.
- Innovative.
- Transferable.
- Relevant and accessible to the audience.
Ethics, conflicts of interest, authorship, formatting, structure, content

‘Hurdles start’ by Robert Voors, creative commons licence.
Hurdles: ethics

“Guidelines on good publication practice” from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

Available free at www.publicationethics.org.uk
Hurdles: conflict of interest

- A conflict of interest exists when a person has an affiliation that is not transparent to the reader or editor but which may affect his or her impartiality.
- Always declare a conflict of interest.
- If the work has links to industry, that’s fine provided the work was performed impartially and the link is declared.
- If you’re not sure whether you have a conflict or interest or not, seek advice from the conference before submission. Transparency is better than embarrassment.
Hurdles: authorship

Authorship should be based only on a substantial contribution to:

- Conception and design or analysis and interpretation of data and;
- Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content and;
- Final approval of the version to be published.

(International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)
Hurdles: formatting

- Structure (IMRD or other)
- Word count
- House style (e.g. fonts, spacing)
- Referencing system
- Knowing what is expected could save you a lot of time later
- Large conferences will reject your abstract if you don’t meet their formatting requirements
Hurdles: the title (the hook)

- Keep it short and to the point (10 to 15 word max)
- Use the key words in the title
- Be interesting and creative…
- …but don’t be too obscure.
### Good vs. Not so good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Not so good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To “Urgh” is Human... Exploring Inherent and Elective Hand Hygiene Triggers: A pilot study in the NHS</td>
<td>An outbreak of a new mupirocin-resistant meticillin-resistant <em>Staphylococcus aureus</em> (MRSA) clone at a district general hospital in a large acute NHS Trust in the South-East of England in 2011-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A handle on infection: novel technology to improve hand hygiene in healthcare settings</td>
<td>MRSA – “The battle is on”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is our current cleaning method effective against <em>Clostridium difficile</em>?</td>
<td>Infection control audit in a tertiary referral elective hospital.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hurdles: structure

- Spend time selecting the appropriate structure for the content and the reader:
  - Scientific (IMRaD)
  - Quality Improvement
  - Systematic Review
- Good structure is like a good Sat Nav – effortlessly leads you through the paper
- Requires planning, discipline, patience and experience.
Hurdles: introduction

- Background and context
  - Setting
  - Literature, policy and other key studies
  - Rationale and hypothesis
- Keep it short and succinct
Hurdles: methods

- How you went about your study, outbreak investigation or review
  - Describe how participants were selected and excluded
  - Intervention
  - Data collection tools
  - Laboratory tests
  - Measurement techniques
  - Statistical methods
  - Ethics, approval and consent
Hurdles: results

- Relevance is key
- Descriptive and statistical data
- Themes and categories
- Use a balance of text, tables and figures
- Don’t use text to describe numbers or graphical data
- Remember pictures and graphs can “paint 1000 words”
Hurdles: discussion

- Findings – don’t overegg the outcomes
- Strengths and weaknesses, remember nothing is perfect
- How might the design or execution be improved?
- Relationship of your study to other studies
- Particularly any differences in outcomes
- Negative findings are important
- What are the implications for practitioners, managers or policymakers, if any?
- Further research priorities
DOs and DON’Ts

**DO**
- Have an interesting, creative title. (The title is the ‘hook’.)
- Have good spelling and grammar.
- Use short words, sentences and paragraphs.
- Use plain English.
- Run the draft by some colleagues that have not been involved in the project. If they don’t understand it, nobody else will.

**DON’T**
- Have an obscure title.
- Use jargon.
- Use too many abbreviations.
- Use slang and cliché.
- Use poor spelling and grammar.
Abstract peer-review

- Submitted abstracts will undergo peer review to assess their content and presentation.
- A small proportion of abstracts will be selected to be presented as oral presentations. The majority of abstracts will be presented as posters.
- Some abstracts will be rejected. We will give you some feedback as to why the abstract was rejected.
## Abstract assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Originality</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Data analysis / synthesis</th>
<th>Results / conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outstanding</strong></td>
<td>Crystal clear</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Rigorous</td>
<td>Spot on</td>
<td>Practice changing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td>Clear and concise</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Valid and appropriate</td>
<td>Clear and applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>Lacks clarity</td>
<td>Lacks novelty</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Could be better</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>Flawed</td>
<td>Old hat</td>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>Inappropriate</td>
<td>Confusing</td>
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Publication process

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What makes a good poster?

A good poster:
✓ Eye catching – draws the viewer in
✓ Graphical, not text based
✓ Not cluttered
✓ Good use of colour
✓ Clear ‘flow’ from one section to the next
✓ Key findings communicated clearly
  • Use of arrows / boxes to highlight clear areas
✓ Contains more detailed information for those that want it
✓ Correct size for the board (check the guidelines!)
✓ Not an essay / epic; it’s designed to stimulate discussion
✓ No intricate fonts that are difficult to read
✓ Watch out for fuzzy low-res graphics
✓ You can’t include all your data – be selective
How can attitudes, beliefs and knowledge contribute to a reduce, re-use and recycle approach to healthcare waste management?

Janet Richardson, Andy Nichols, Jane Grose, Sabine Pahl, Maria Bennallack
Faculty of Health, Education & Society, Plymouth University, Devon, UK

This project aims to understand attitudes, beliefs and knowledge of healthcare waste management in the NHS in the South West of England.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

The literature indicated the need for:
• an understanding of the mindset of individuals
• recognition that NHS employees who recycled at home were also more likely to do so at work
• recognition that self-reports of behaviour do not necessarily translate into actual behaviour
• behaviour change is needed at an organisational level

METHODS

Qualitative interviews – stakeholders from one Acute Trust in Cornwall, the Local Authority, a Primary Care Trust, the Environment Agency and from the Health Protection Agency, who are responsible for the safe management of healthcare waste, took part in qualitative interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. Participants were asked about their attitudes, behaviour, knowledge and practice regarding healthcare waste. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Framework analysis was used to analyse the transcripts and themes were developed which reflected the participants understanding and met the aim of the study.

The NHS has a growing waste problem and the way it manages waste harms the environment and consumes resources. In 2005 the NHS produced 408,218 tonnes of waste. Of this, 29% was healthcare waste, and nearly £75m was spent on its disposal. Much of this waste is incinerated although a portion of it may potentially be recyclable. It has been argued that healthcare waste could be managed in a more sustainable fashion by employing a reduce, reuse, recycle philosophy, thus reducing costs and releasing funds that could be invested in patient care.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Systems breakdown:
‘I think certain wards will do it one way and certain wards will do it another way. It creates confusion.’ 8.227

External pressures:
‘Because there’s pressures to reduce transport which means, you know, in healthcare cramping more waste onto a truck with less packaging and so the risks go up.’ 6.216

Lack of resources:
‘So it’s all very well having headline strategies with it and it could be with legislation, but unless somebody actually puts resources in to enforce it, and there’s a consequence if you don’t do it, I don’t think – on this basis I don’t think people are that motivated.’ 3.523

Individual awareness: ‘And also the lack of need to think about, you know, once you’ve put your rubbish out on the doorstep it’s just gone. For you it’s the end of the process but actually it’s the beginning of a process for that material.’ 1.262

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact: janet.richardson@plymouth.ac.uk

With Plymouth University
Basic poster template for you to adapt

Your Name (email)
Your institution

1. Introduction
- Use bullet points to break up the text
- Text
- Text
- Text
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- Text

2. Methods
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http://www.ips.uk.net/education-events/annual-conference/abstracts/poster-presentations/
What makes good slides?

Good slides:

✓ Eye catching – draws the viewer in
✓ Graphical, not text based
✓ Not cluttered
✓ Good use of colour
✓ No intricate fonts that are difficult to read
✓ No death by powerpoint – not too many slides with the same format
Tips for oral presentations

Good presenters:
✓ Have enough notes so that you’re comfortable, but try to speak, rather than read, to the audience
✓ Make sure you have a copy of the slides in case there are AV issues
✓ Visit the room that you will be presenting in before your talk so that you’re familiar with where you will be speaking from
✓ Practice to colleagues / family / pets / the mirror…but not too much
✓ Leave some time for questions from the audience
✓ If you get some questions, have a pen and paper to hand so that you can note them down as they’re asked – it’s embarrassing if you forget what was asked!
✓ Remember, you’re the expert and know your stuff
✓ You will be nervous, but try to channel the nervous energy!
Publication process

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Selecting a journal

- Check out information for authors
- Focus on scope of the Journal
- Word count / scope of your work
- If you are not sure, contact the Editor to discuss your idea
Relevant Journals

- Healthcare Infection
- Journal of Infection Prevention
- Journal of Hospital Infection
- Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology
- American Journal of Infection Control
Peer review

- Manuscripts sent to 2-3 independent reviewers
- Provide perspective on the quality of the paper
  - Objective
  - Subjective
- Reviewers and editors will improve what is submitted, but they won’t re-write a poor paper
Publication process

Plan and do the work → Prepare abstract → Present poster / oral presentation at IPS 2012 → (Finish the work) → Write the paper

“Post-publication peer-review”: how does the professional community receive your paper?
Further information

**ACIPC abstract submission site** (deadline 15\textsuperscript{th} August)

**Infection Prevention Society (IPS) resources for abstracts, posters and oral presentations**
Acknowledgements

I used some slides with permission from Prof Heather Loveday.
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