

How to write a winning abstract for UK Kidney Week 2018

Innovative practice is taking place across the UK and many kidney care professionals take the opportunity to share their work in the form of an abstract for a national conference. However, there are several points to take into consideration before submitting a successful abstract. Karen Jenkins outlines what should be included and avoided when presenting research data and findings.

■ writing ■ research ■ abstract ■ conference

This year's annual conference is being jointly hosted by the British Renal Society (BRS) and the UK Renal Association during UK Kidney Week (UKKW) 2018 (19–21 June). This is a great opportunity for multiprofessional teams and individuals to share innovations in clinical practice alongside scientific findings from formal research studies.

What to include

A conference abstract is a sales tool: the author is selling their ideas, first to the programme committee, and then to the conference delegates. Make sure the abstract is as fascinating and enticing as possible. Make it different and reflect on these key questions:

- What kinds of presentations is UKKW conference most likely to attract?
- How can the presentation be made more appealing?
- What has been done that is different to other units?
- How has the author been innovative in practice?
- What new piece of research can be shared?
- What topics are the conference organisers looking for?
- Is the work relevant to the kidney care community?

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Writing the abstract

Write clearly and concisely. Include a purpose or objectives, patient numbers (where relevant), an intervention or change of practice, and the findings and results. Think how this work will be of interest to others in the field.

Use simple statements, precise language, numerals for numbers and well-known abbreviations where possible. Tables and graphs may be accommodated within the space allowed. Authors should not identify themselves or their workplace in the abstract; keep it anonymous.

Have the work reviewed and get feedback from colleagues. It is also helpful to ask someone who does not know anything about the topic to read it, to check it makes sense.

The following headings can be used as a guide for the content: problem, purpose, design, findings, conclusion, and relevance. The programme committee suggests writing two or three well-constructed sentences per heading. Remember—this is only a guide

Problem

Define the research idea. Look to the problems of everyday practice, which cause confusion or concern. Follow any natural instincts in wishing to improve the standard of care for patients and the standards of practice for the staff. Authors should not be fooled by the 'routineness' of their everyday work.

Purpose

If the problem is what is being investigated, then the purpose is the why. The purpose indicates, by using performance words,

the reason why the research has been conducted; for example to compare, identify and define outcomes. It should be written in a clear, concise manner, which is easy and interesting to read. It will tell the reader why the project has been undertaken and is to be learned from the data collected.

Design

A research design is the framework for investigating the defined problem. Summarise all the important information related to strategy and methodology, and describe the instruments used, such as a pilot study and questionnaires. It is sufficient to briefly summarise how the problem has been approached, by describing the sample group, data collection methods and analysis procedures.

Findings

Results should be concisely and objectively listed in a logical sequence.

Conclusion

Interpret the findings and make some suggestions about solutions to the stated problem. The conclusion should also contain an evaluation, generalisation and projection of new insights into the work that has been presented. Describe any improved policy or practice.

Relevance

In simple language, explain the significance of the findings and conclusions to kidney care, to nursing, to technology, or to the individual area of practice. This is the

chance for the author(s) to 'sell' their abstract to the markers.

How is an abstract marked?

Each abstract is sent anonymously to a group of multiprofessional experts in the area that has been researched or discussed, and is marked by a minimum of three people. If a marker has submitted an abstract into the category they are marking, they have to declare this and are not able to mark the abstract.

Marking criteria

Abstracts are marked out of 10 as follows, with 10 being the highest:

- Quality and clarity (3)
- Overall quality and originality of work (4)
- Contribution to kidney care practice and knowledge (3).

Marks are awarded for originality, statistical significance, relevance, impact and transferability to other units, Abstracts are marked down if poorly written or constructed, or if there is poor statistical analysis, low impact, relevance or interest to other units, Abstracts with no intervention or results are usually marked lower.

The following points are considered when marking the abstract:

- Does it meet the requirements of the guidelines set out for abstract submission?
- Is the purpose or objective clear, achievable and realistic?
- Are the methods used appropriate, valid, well thought out to meet the purpose or objectives?
- Does the author state the dates of the work and are they recent?
- Are the results clearly presented and do they meet the purpose or objectives?
- Are the implications of the results for practice made clear?
- Is the work reproducible and sustainable?
- Is the work relevant and does it strengthen existing evidence base or bring new evidence to the topic?
- Does the work have impact on patient safety, care and efficiencies?

Why are some abstracts presented orally and others as posters?

Unfortunately, UKKW 2018 is restricted to the number of oral presentations that can be included in the conference programme. Authors are given a preference when

submitting their abstract and, where possible, the programme committee will honour this. Sometimes, depending on the content and findings, the committee may invite authors to give an oral presentation rather than a poster or vice versa.

Conclusion

To maximise chances of success when submitting an abstract, authors should:

- Make their abstract fascinating, enticing, and different
- Write the abstract well, using plain English wherever possible
- Not write in the future tense if this can be avoided. If this must be done, specify what will happen and when
- Explain the research and give an explanation of what will be included in the presentation. **JKC**

To view abstracts from previous BRS/UKKW conferences, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y74jd7un>.

Further information

Gloyn N. How to write a conference abstract. 2011. <https://tinyurl.com/y9ex94v4> (accessed 15 January 2018)

Kara H. How to write a killer conference abstract: the first step towards an engaging presentation. <https://tinyurl.com/hla7zz2> 2015. (accessed 15 January 2018)

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