



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

# Developing Abstracts for Conferences

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# What is an abstract

- Brief overview of research, practice development or case study
- Abstract should showcase the proposed presentation or poster
  - What you did
  - Why you did it
  - How you did it
  - What you found
  - What it means

# Conference or poster abstract

Submitted to a conference for consideration to present at a professional conference.

Primary audience is the conference review committee

- Need to plan the conference around specific themes - make explicit the link with the conference title and the theme
- Review against relevance and quality – will be in competition to other submissions
- Conference committee need to have confidence that the work is completed or will be completed within the timeframe
- Think about the abstract as stand alone precise

Conference attendees

- Need to know what the presentation is about and that is relevant and will provide new knowledge/discussion – many other presentations/posters competing for their attention.

# Which conference

Choose the right conference for abstract submission:

- Will the audience be interested
- Is there a theme to the conference and does my study/innovative practice/case study fit within the theme
- Where will the information have the most impact
- Which conference will provide the best networking/collaborating opportunities
- Which conference will best help advance my career
- Will my research be completed in time for the abstract deadline - conversely, will the abstract deadline serve as an incentive to help complete research/write up

# Starting Point

- What is the most important/interesting/astounding finding from my research study/practice development/case study
- How can I most beneficially share my research with conference committee and attendees presentation, poster (charts, graphs, photos, images)
- Will I present my paper/poster or is it stand alone poster
- How do I make my abstract relevant to the theme
- How do I make my abstract/paper/poster appealing

# PHE Annual Conference

- Abstracts invited that demonstrates
  - Evidence into action
  - Research findings
  - New ideas
  - Advances in public health practice and outcomes

# Public Health England Annual Conference Themes

## **Improving lives**

Alcohol harms and interventions  
Tobacco control  
Drug strategy  
Sugar reduction and obesity  
Mental health  
Children and young people's health and wellbeing  
Reducing dementia risk

## **Healthy places and communities**

Air pollution control  
Climate change and sustainable development  
Environmental hazards  
Working and health  
Integrating built and natural environment  
Life expectancy trends  
Engaging communities

## **Systems, politics and leadership**

Health economics and cost effective decisions  
Opportunities of devolution  
Public health workforce  
Sustainable development goals  
Think global act local  
International resilience and response

## **Early career scientist symposium**

Abstracts for pre-conference symposium presentation  
(oral and poster)

## **Protecting lives**

Immunisation  
Bowel cancer screening  
Outbreak investigation  
Sexual health, reproductive health and HIV  
Surveillance  
Genomics and innovation in microbiology  
Tackling antimicrobial resistance  
Reducing tuberculosis  
Health checks

## **Improving quality of lives**

Commissioning for public health  
Diabetes prevention  
Five Year Forward View  
Five Year Forward View for Mental Health  
Making Every Contact Count  
Prevention and the NHS  
Physical activity  
Reducing inequalities  
Improving health across the lifecourse  
Improving cancer outcomes

## **Horizon 2030 and behavioural change**

Technology and digital data  
Data science  
Public health of the future  
Screening  
Lifestyle factors  
Social marketing  
Behavioural change

# PHE Annual Conference

- Majority of submissions are selected for poster
- 250 words
- Conference advertised in April
- Deadline for submission of abstracts – 6<sup>th</sup> May
- Short title, clearly indicating the scope (title appears in programme)
- Do not include references or diagrammes

# Conference call

Provides clear instructions:

- Dates of submission and decisions
- Length of the abstract
- Special formatting requirements
- Guidance about referencing
- Whether the abstract/presentation will be published in conference proceedings

# Structure of abstract

- 250 words – approx layout
  - Introduction - 2- 4 lines
  - Objective - 2 – 4 lines
  - Method - 3 – 4 lines
  - Results - 4 – 5 lines
  - Conclusion - 2 – 3 lines

# Healthlines Study: digital technology to support long-term health care

**Introduction:** Telehealth offers new ways to improve access and care quality for long-term conditions (LTCs). However, evidence about the costs and effectiveness of telehealth initiatives is mixed. Implementing them on a wide scale has been problematic. NHS Direct provides an established platform which could integrate a range of technologies for LTCs.

**Objectives:** Through an NIHR-funded 5-year research programme, we will combine a systematic evidence synthesis, qualitative research and a patient survey to develop a theory about which types of intervention potentially delivered by NHS direct are most likely to be cost effective. We will then develop and test a programme of care within a randomised controlled trial with economic analysis.

**Methods:** The evidence synthesis updated an earlier review, paying particular attention to context (e.g. type of technology and patient). Qualitative research involved interviews with patients and health professionals, many involved in Birmingham Ownhealth. A postal survey of 3400 patients with LTCs from 34 general practices assessed patient factors and access factors associated with unmet need and willingness to use telehealth. Data were analysed to predict types of telehealth most likely to be acceptable to different patient groups.

**Results and conclusions:** Preliminary results will be presented at the conference.

# Tips for success

- Title, informative, simple and focussed. Brief but covering the scope, content and focus.
- Situate your paper/poster professionally
- Time your presentation – you will be stopped!
- Look at previous successful conference papers

# Tips for success

- Abstract selection will consider scientific merit, public health impact and innovative approaches and new learning, within the overarching theme of *Evidence into action*.
- Abstract selection will consider the fit of the abstract to the topics under discussion in the related session (please note that not all categories link to a session, but most do).
- Please select the most appropriate category and do not submit the same abstract in multiple categories.
- Accepted abstracts will be made available in the online programme.
- Local sign off according to procedure

# Poster tips

- Important information should be readable from about 8 - 10 feet away (PHE Conference ePoster)
- Title - short to draw interest
- Word count - about 300 to 800 words
- Text - clear and to the point
- Use of bullets, numbering, and headlines - make it easy to read
- Effective use of graphics, colour and fonts
- Consistent and clean layout
- Include acknowledgments, your name and institution

# Poster Software

- PowerPoint: popular, easy-to-use option
- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign: Feature-rich professional software that is good for posters including lots of high-resolution images, but they are more complex and expensive
- Open Source Alternatives

# Stylistic considerations

- Edit - be sure it meets the Four C's of abstract writing:
  - Complete — it covers the major parts of the project.
  - Concise — it contains no excess wordiness or unnecessary information.
  - Clear — it is readable, well organized, and not too jargon-laden.
  - Cohesive — it flows smoothly between the parts.

# Think about!

Cost of conference – attendance, expenses

Cost of poster printing if relevant

Time commitment to develop paper

Presenting to large audiences and  
responding positively to questions  
(sessions usually 20 – 30 minutes)

## Why would you do it!

- New knowledge
- Networking
- Feedback and discussion
- Opportunities
- Practice/skill development
- Route to publication

# Group Exercise

- Revise to ensure concise, informative title
  - The Wessex approach to raising the quality of staff training for the NHS Smoke Stop: Developing a more standardised approach through partnership working

## Alternatively

- Own abstract title

Thank You!

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