

Physiotherapy UK 2017: Platform Preparation and Presentation Guidance

The following types of presentations are available at Physiotherapy UK 2017 (your invitation email will indicate which style of presentation you have been offered):

Platform: A platform presentation of 10 minutes with 5 minutes allocated for Q and A session.

Rapid 5: A platform presentation of 5 minutes with 5 slides covering key points followed by 10 minutes poster viewing and discussion at points around the room and a further 10 minutes of moderated discussion drawing all presenters back together. Please note that you will also need to prepare a poster and there are separate guidelines relating to preparing a poster.

Preparation

Below are some tips to help you plan and prepare your presentation, ensuring that it is accessible to all delegates. They are presented for guidance only and the responsibility for the presentation rests with the presenter.

Remember that the audience will only have one chance to hear the important messages that you are delivering so it is essential to deliver those messages clearly and concisely.

Preparing the content

All presentations must have a beginning, middle, and end and be given in English.

You should:

- Inform the audience of what you are going to cover
- Inform them of what you want them to know / take away from your presentation
- Conclude your work with the message you want the audience to take away

For research being presented it is common to include the following:

- Background
- Purpose
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions
- Implications

Presentation length

Think about the length of your presentation and do not try to fit too much in to the presentation. It is better that the audience is given key messages clearly.

The purpose of presentations is the interactive transfer of information. All of the session formats allow for question and answer time.

Draft the outline of the presentation and develop it in full if you prefer to. However, consider that the language and delivery used in a verbal presentation is different from that used in writing.

Include case studies, examples, quotations, analogies, questions and interesting statistics as appropriate to the topic and the audience.

Preparing visual aids

Microsoft PowerPoint should be an adjunct to the verbal presentation, not a replacement. The following gives guidance for developing your PowerPoint:

Structure

- The title of the presentation should be the same as on your abstract.
- Consider using the headings given in the guidance for abstracts for research and special interest papers. However, many presenters simplify this to introduction, purpose, participants, methods/materials, results, discussion/conclusions and implications/recommendations.
- References should be included, if used, but try to keep them to a minimum.
- Have an acknowledgments slide where you acknowledge contributors and funding organisations. Ethics approval, if appropriate, should also be mentioned and the appropriate committee/body acknowledged.
- Provide information about where/how you can be contacted on the final slide.

Text

- Keep slides simple but interesting. The title slide should be attractive and stimulate interest in the topic.
- PowerPoint may provide for greater creativity and formatting, but the temptation is to have too many slides; a rule of thumb is one slide per minute.
(For Rapid 5 sessions the presenter is restricted to 5 slides)
- Limit the amount of information on any one slide. Try to use keywords and phrases and include no more than 4-5 points per slide. This will help your audience to concentrate on what you are saying.
- The layout of the slide should have light and empty space. Too much information on one slide makes it difficult to read and attracts the attention to the slide rather than the speaker.
- The text, tables and graphics should look integrated. Words and illustrations should go together.
- Leave space between lines of text.

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- Place the text in the top 2/3 of the slide so the audience at the back can view the text.
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points.
- Font size for headings should be no less than 48pt.
- Font size for text should be no less than 24pt.
- Use sans-serif fonts that are easy to read, such as Arial.
- Use upper and lower case and avoid using too many style changes e.g. shadow, bold, italics, etc.
- Text should be left justified (with the right side ragged) as this is easier to read.

Colour

Keep in mind that your audience might include people with visual impairments.

- Select colours with high visibility and high contrast. Note: using colours for decoration may be distracting.
- Use colours that will stand out and be easy on the eyes (dark backgrounds and light text is best).
- Limit the use of colour to 2 – 4 shades/colours. Check if your institution has a house style that must be followed.
- Keep a common theme throughout the presentation.

Images, graphs and charts

- Use only appropriate graphs, charts and images that closely follow or complement the concept expressed in each slide.
- Diagrams, graphs and charts are a good visual aid; they also tend to hold interest better than text.

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- Don't overcrowd your slides, and label them fully.
- Graphics should tend toward the horizontal, greater in width than height, ideally 50 percent wider than tall.
- Use colours to distinguish different data groups in graphs and avoid using patterns or open bars in histograms.
- Lines in data graphics should be thin but sufficiently wide to allow discrimination among different lines.
- Labels should be placed on the graphics itself; no legend is usually required.
- Remove all non-essential information from graphs and tables.
- Focus on principal results.
- Illustrate your point by verbally discussing the graph or chart.

Sound and animation

- If you elect to use animation use MPEG2 for video files and MP3 for audio files.
- Use sounds only if they help convey, complement, or enhance the message. Sounds can be distracting and can make your presentation less effective.
- Use animation only to make a point and not to make your presentation more interesting – use content and delivery style to do that!
- Use animation judiciously and be consistent with the animation, which you use.

Transitions

- Keep transitions to a minimum; too much movement will distract your audience.
- Use the same transition or a variation of the transition throughout your presentation.

Final check

Here are some questions to help you check the final presentation.

- Have you made the relevance of your presentation to your allocated conference theme clear?
- Is the message of your presentation clear?
- Do the key points stand out?
- Is there a good balance between verbal presentation and visual aids?
- Is the sequence of your talk clear?
- Is the visual material appropriate?
- Do the colours you've chosen work together and are accessible from the back of the room?

Acknowledgement: Adapted from the following sources:

ERWCPT 2016: Platform Preparation and Presentation Guidance, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy: London, UK with permission of CSP

PTUK 2015: Platform presentation tips. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy: London, UK with permission of CSP

WCPT (2014) WCPT Congress 2015: Platform presentation tips. World Confederation for Physical Therapy: London, UK with permission of WCPT.