

Guidance for first time concurrent session presenters

Preparation of presentation

1. Know your audience:
 - a. The RCN International Nursing Research conference attracts a variety of nurses, and colleagues in related disciplines, involved in the development and use of knowledge that impacts on nursing practice or the context in which nurses practice.
 - b. You therefore need to make sure that your presentation has enough 'background' information that everyone will understand it.
2. Timings: Your presentation should be a maximum of 20 minutes in length so that there is time for questions at the end. Practice beforehand so you are sure it is the right length and so that you are very familiar with the content.
3. Make sure your slides:
 - a. Don't have too much detail in them – use bullet points which indicate the main points you are making, and then talk around these points.
 - b. Don't have too many slides – for a 20 minute presentation where you are presenting your main points on each slide you probably can only get through 7-10 slides (unless you are using some which are very quick to show – such as a picture of your hospital)
 - c. For your first presentation you might want to avoid using video clips etc. unless you have had expert advice about how to embed/include them. If you are including them, it is always best to have a back-up plan in case they don't play on the day (so when you practice, identify how you'll do the presentation without the video clip(s) playing)
 - d. Pictures and diagrams can 'liven up' a presentation and help illustrate the points you are making – take care that the detail can be seen if using graphs though.
4. Considerations for neurodivergent friendly presentation slides
 - a. RCN recommended font type is Public Sans, Montserrat and Verdana.
 - b. All fonts should be a minimum of 20pt.
 - c. Avoid using a white background as this can be too harsh.
 - d. Refrain from using pale colours for fonts, such as yellow, as they can be hard to read. White text on a red background and red text (in general) is not advised.
 - e. Do not use 'flashy' special effects. A simple transition to next slide works best for neurodiverse audience members.
5. Content of presentation – this will vary slightly according to your topic, but some general points apply to most if not all:
 - a. Introduce your topic clearly. Start by explaining what you will be talking about and what the audience can expect to learn. Clearly define any terms, acronyms, or concepts that may be unfamiliar.
 - b. Provide context early on. At the beginning of your presentation, give enough background so that all attendees can understand your role and perspective.

- Please bear in mind that many participants may be joining from overseas and may not be familiar with local systems or terminology.
- c. Share relevant, practical detail. Once the context is established, use the main part of your presentation to provide clear, structured information. This should help the audience understand whether your work or ideas could be relevant or applicable to their own role or area.
 - d. At the end, summarise your main points and the learning you want to get across.
6. When you first complete your presentation you might want to have very detailed notes to go with it, or even a script. However, as you practice and get familiar with the content, it's better to have some shorter notes to take to conference with you – you don't want to be reading out long notes during your presentation as this will be off putting for the audience. It may get tedious but the more you practice your presentation, the more familiar you will be with it and therefore more confident on the day.

Presenting at the conference

1. Ensure you have uploaded your presentation in advance, using our abstract management system Exordo. The deadline is 8 September. Log in to your [Exordo account](#) and follow the presentation upload prompt on your dashboard.
2. Alternatively, hand in a copy of your presentation at the Speaker Point when you arrive at conference, so they can load it onto the computer – it is often best to bring copies on a memory stick and also to e-mail it to yourself in case the memory stick does not work (or save it to online storage such as Dropbox)
3. If you have notes to go with your presentation, make sure you have more than one copy, in case you lose one.
4. Check out where and when you are presenting in advance – ideally when you first arrive at the conference.
5. If you are presenting a concurrent session – go to the room before your session of 2 or 3 presentations starts. This will allow you to introduce yourself to the chair of the session (and reassure them that you are around!) and check your presentation has loaded correctly.
6. It is a good idea to stay in for the other presentations in your session stream, especially if you are second or last. Session streams are generally themed so it will allow you to make any links to the other presentations during yours.
7. Presenting:
 - a. Remember you know more about your topic than anyone else in the room – be confident!
 - b. Switch your mobile off/to silent
 - c. Check at the beginning that people at the back can hear you
 - d. Don't announce you are very nervous or apologise that it's the first time you've presented – no-one need know, and if you have prepared you will be fine!
 - e. Don't turn your back on the audience to read the presentation on screen – its ok to do this occasionally but becomes off putting for the audience if you do it too much. It is better to look at it on the laptop – especially to check you have moved the slides on in your presentation.
 - f. Refer to your notes if you need to, but don't read them out – you lose eye contact with the audience.

- g. Eye contact is important – but do look at all the audience, as eye contact with just one or two people can be unnerving for them.
- h. If you lose your place or forget what you are going to say – relax – no-one else knows what you are going to say, so if you pause for a moment and say something relevant it doesn't matter if it's not exactly what you had planned/rehearsed.
- i. Keep to time (session chairs have the right to stop you at the end of your allotted time, whether you've finished or not). You might want to put your watch on the table near the laptop (the chair may also warn you when 5, 2 and 1 minutes are left).
- j. Once you've finished there will be a few minutes for questions – it's fine to ask for clarification if you don't understand what's being asked. If you don't know the answer then be upfront about this, but indicate how the questioner might find out the answer (or indicate how you will find out and let the questioner know).
- k. Even after questions have finished some people may still come up to you and ask you questions they didn't want to ask in front of the audience – so it's worth hanging round for a minute or two.
- l. Enjoy the feeling of having completed your presentation!