International Society of
Oncology Pharmacy Practitioners

How to write an abstract for a scientific meeting

Writing an abstract for a scientific meeting might be a challenge, especially if this is your first experience.

An abstract needs to capture the attention of the reader and should be seen as a way to connect with other researchers and colleagues in the field of oncology pharmacy practice.

To guide you in the process of preparing a well-written abstract, here are some ‘tips and tricks’.

Before starting to write an abstract

Ask yourself:

- Does your project fit into an abstract category?
- Is your project worth being presented or published in a journal?
  (Tip: negative results are worth publishing too)
  - Is the project original or innovative?
  - Is there a new message? Does it expand or confirm existing knowledge?
  - What is the level of interest to pharmacists attending the conference?
- Who will you invite as co-authors?
- Has this poster been presented at another conference? Is it eligible for an Encore presentation?
- Will you be able to attend the conference? Is there funding available for poster presenters?

Abstract submission guidelines

Every conference provides distinct abstract submission guidelines.
Read them carefully.

Submission guidelines typically require the abstract to:

- Be organized in a certain format using headings
- Contain a set number of words
- List authors using a template
- Save the file as Word, PDF or other format

Failure to comply with style guidelines may lead to rejection of your abstract.
Read them carefully.

Example: ISOPP ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
(Refer to the ISOPP website for up-to-date abstract guidelines for the upcoming Symposium)

Content:

1. Objective / Purpose
2. Study Design / Methods
3. Results / Key Findings
4. Conclusion / Recommendations

Title: Maximum 150 characters

Length: Typically between 200 - 300 words, not including the title or names of the authors

Author information: Name, phone number, email address, affiliation, city, country, member / non-member

What is an abstract?

An abstract is a brief summary of your work / project that contains clear information for your target audience. It highlights major points, gives clear and condensed results and leads to a discussion.

Abstract content

Title

Should be brief and interesting, expressing the scope, content and focus of the abstract

Objective / Purpose

- Tell us about your research / project
- What was the background and context for the project? What is the current status?
- What was the main reason for the project? Why was it conducted? Why is it important?

Study Design / Methods

- The description of the study methods should be very concise
- What method was used? (Retrospective, prospective, single centre, multicenter, etc.)
- Who were the participating centres?
- How were participants selected?
- What criteria were applied? (Inclusion / exclusion criteria)
- What are the dates of data collection?
- How was the data managed?

Results / Key Findings

- Summarize and highlight the main findings from the analysis
- What did you discover? Provide exact results (#s, %, etc.)

Conclusion / Recommendations

- What could be concluded from your project?
- How could other pharmacists benefit from your work?
- Any impact or added-value for practice?
- Any message for the future?

How could other pharmacists benefit from your work?

Abstract reviews

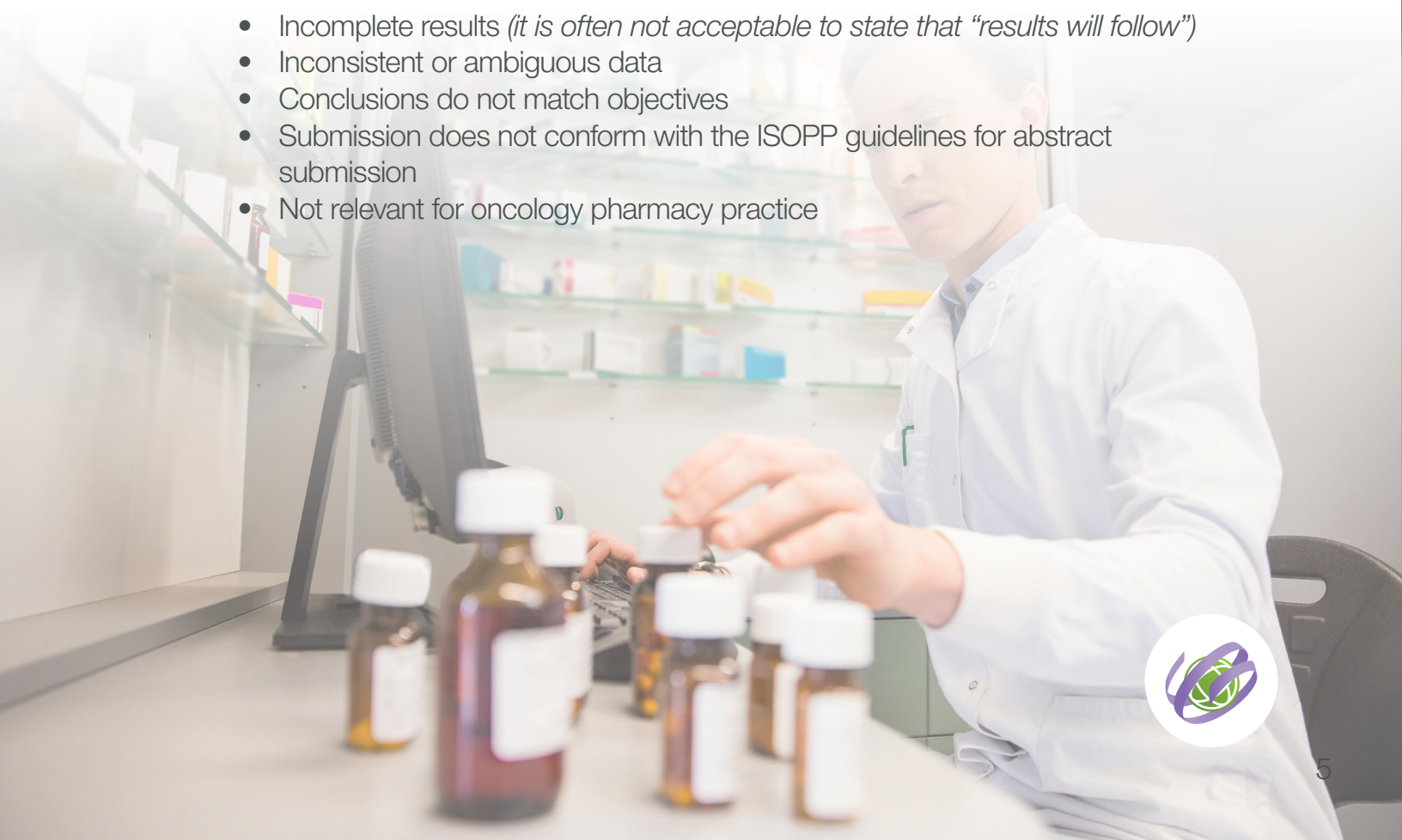
Review criteria

ISOPP abstract reviewers take different items into account when judging an abstract:

- Originality of research, contribution to pharmacy practice
- Relevance / importance to pharmacy practice
- Quality of writing
- Scientific merit

Common reasons for rejection

- Misleading title
- Commercial tone or biased conclusion
- Inadequate / insufficient or misleading data which does not permit the abstract to be evaluated
- Poor quality of research methodology, methods are not reproducible
- Lack of data or measurable outcomes
- Incomplete results *(it is often not acceptable to state that "results will follow")*
- Inconsistent or ambiguous data
- Conclusions do not match objectives
- Submission does not conform with the ISOPP guidelines for abstract submission
- Not relevant for oncology pharmacy practice



Sample abstract

Frequency and rationale of chemotherapy protocol deviation at a major metropolitan cancer center

Michelle Hong, Marliese Alexander, Senthil Lingaratnam, *Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne, Australia*

Objective / Purpose: Implementation of a continuous audit system to evaluate the incidence and nature of deviations from standard chemotherapy protocols with the aim of ensuring adherence to treatment guidelines and improving documentation of clinical justification where there is need to deviate from standard.

Study Design / Methods: Three audits of protocol modifications were reviewed at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne Australia between 11 January 2017 and September 2017. The audit focused on (1) changes to day of treatment, dose, or dose frequency and (2) dose increase or reduction for reason other than weight change. Inappropriate documentation was defined as no documentation or as confirmed by consultant but with no other clinical justification. Results were fed back to prescribers after the baseline audit (audit 1) with aim to educate and modify practice.

Results / Key Findings: Modifications to standard chemotherapy protocols were common - audit 1: 661 modifications, audit 2: 604 modifications, and audit 3: 649 modifications. Inappropriate documentation of protocol deviation was 23% at baseline, but reduced significantly in audits 2 (23% versus 6%, $p < 0.01$) and audit 3 (23% versus 4%, $p < 0.01$). Of protocols with modifications, these occurred most frequently for gastrointestinal cancers (27– 28%), lymphoma (20–25%), breast cancer (10– 11%), leukemia (5–10%), gynecological cancers (6– 7%), myeloma (3–5%); presented as a range over the three audit periods.

Conclusion / Recommendations: Institutional performance monitoring with real-time feedback and education resulted in significant clinical practice improvements for the documentation of clinical rationale for chemotherapy protocol modifications. This is a simple, efficient, and effective mechanism to prevent systemic error and inappropriate prescribing.

External links

- How to write an abstract – online support
- A brief on writing a successful abstract
- Top tips for abstract submissions
- How to write an abstract & make a great poster

References

- **Happell B.** *Conference presentations: a guide to writing the abstract.* **Nurse Res.** 2008;15(4):79-87
- **Happell B.** *Hitting the target! A no tears approach to writing an abstract for a conference presentation.* **Int J Ment Health Nurs.** 2007 Dec;16(6):447-52
- **Dubé CE**, **Lapane KL.** *Lay abstracts and summaries: writing advice for scientists.* **J Cancer Educ.** 2014 Sep;29(3):577-9
- **Writing an abstract for a WCPT congress** (Accessed June 2018)
- **How to write a good abstract for a conference paper** (Accessed June 2018)

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ISOPP Scientific Symposia

ISOPP Symposia offer oncology pharmacy experts informative, engaging and cutting edge programming in world-class locations.

There are topical plenary sessions, concurrent sessions with three streams (Clinical, Research and Fundamental), poster presentations and, of course, numerous opportunities to network and connect with old friends and new colleagues.

In this new age of anticancer therapy, there is no better place to establish and build relationships with oncology pharmacist colleagues with a wealth of local, regional, national and international experience.

Consider submitting an abstract for an upcoming ISOPP Symposium.
Find out more at **www.ISOPP.org**.

ISOPP
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