Guide to Abstract submission – BSS Virtual Sleep 2021

Rules

- There is a 300 word limit including references (not including title and authors). Abstracts over this limit will not be accepted. The abstract should be structured thus: Title, Authors, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion.
- A maximum of 2 tables / figures will be allowed, these are not included in the word limit. Please do not use a table for text that should be in the main section.
- The following formats will be accepted – Microsoft word or pdf.
- Research must adhere to good medical practice. See UK Research Integrity Office advice (https://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/UKRIO-Recommended-Checklist-for-Researchers.pdf).
- Abstracts must be submitted in their final format. Please ensure that all the information provided with the abstract (Including author names and affiliations) is complete and accurate.
- Once your abstract is submitted, no further changes can be made and this will be the version sent on for publication to the BMJ ORR, if accepted.
- By submitting to this conference you are giving your consent for any accepted abstracts to be published in the BMJ Open Respiratory Research.
- The deadline for abstract submission is 9am on 10th September 2021.
- Submitting authors will be notified w/c 27th September 2021.
- It is expected that at least one author will register and attend the virtual conference. Posters will not be displayed unaccompanied.
- Your poster will be available to view throughout the virtual conference.
- There will be a prize for the best abstract submitted by an early-career researcher or clinical professional author (defined as within 5 years of their sleep research or clinical career: a letter from a supervisor / line manager confirming this early stage status will be required).
- There will be also be prizes for Best Paediatric, Best Clinical and Best Research Poster.
- Any difficulties with abstract submission should be emailed to events@sleepsociety.org.uk

How to write a good abstract and get it accepted
Much of the advice for successful abstract submission is generic and therefore a lot of this text has been borrowed from the European Respiratory Societies' guidance.

The aim of the British Sleep society's biennial scientific meeting (BSS Virtual Sleep 2021) is to support exchange of knowledge amongst the sleep community both within the UK and within Europe. Writing an abstract for BSS Virtual Sleep 2021 is a way for you to communicate your scientific research or clinical practice with your peers and colleagues. An abstract can also detail good practice within a unit, describe the results of an audit, essentially anything that the author (and the reviewers) deem interesting enough to display to up to 400 attendees.
Each abstract will be evaluated by three independent reviewers and scored on its content and scientific merit.

Why write an abstract
- An abstract is a shortened version of the first draft of a paper. It is important for several reasons:
  - it provides the first chance for you to announce and cite the preliminary findings of your study;
  - it allows you to communicate your findings to your colleagues and get their feedback.

The optimal structure for an abstract
Please bear in mind the following is just guidance and not all of it will be applicable to every abstract.

Title
The title should be an accurate promise of the abstract's contents. It should explain as much as possible about the context and the aims of the study. Ideally, the title should be about 25 words long, and should include the scope of the investigation, the study design and the goal. In general, it is preferable to make the title a description of what was investigated rather than a statement of the results or conclusions. The abstract's title should be easy for the reader to understand and should not include jargon or unfamiliar acronyms or abbreviations. The title should not be in capital letters.

Authors
The list of authors should be restricted to those individuals who carried out the study, conceived it, designed it, gathered the data, analysed the numbers and wrote the abstract. The author who will present the abstract should be listed first. Every listed author should read and approve the abstract before it is submitted.

Main text
A good abstract should address the four following questions in the relevant sections:

1. "Why did you start and what did you try to do?" – Introduction
You should summarise, preferably in one sentence, the current knowledge, or state-of-the-art, specifically in relation to the work you are presenting. Your aims and objectives should also be included in the Introduction, stating the aim of the study, and ideally include a short statement of the study hypothesis. A legitimate scientific study is not done "to prove that something is true" but rather" to find out whether it is true." The difference may seem small, but it makes a huge difference. A formal hypothesis shows that you were objective.

2. "What did you do?" – Method
In an abstract, the description of the methods has to be concise, and much of the details of what was done must be omitted. However, in a few short sentences, you can give the reader a good idea of the design of the study, the context in which it was done, and the types of patients or measurements that were included.

3. "What did you find?" – Results
It is important to give the main results of the study, not just in subjective terms ("We found device X to be superior to device Y") but also in the form of some real data. You will need to choose which findings to report here: it should be the most important data in your study, and the findings on which your conclusions will be based. Do not include a table or figure unless you need it to show your results.

4. "What does it mean?" – Discussion
Here, space limitations generally limit you to a single sentence of why you think your findings are important, and their potential implications. Keep your conclusions reasonable and supportable by the findings of your study. Remember that if your study was restricted to certain patients, or a particular therapy, or a specific device, its results may not extend beyond these restrictions.

Thank you for submitting an abstract to BSS Virtual Sleep 2021