Chair information

Thank you very much for agreeing to chair at Rheumatology 2015. The role of session chairs is critical to the success of any conference and your contribution to Rheumatology 2015 is very much appreciated.

To help you with your role, please find below an outline of your main responsibilities and suggested tips for the efficient running of your session as well as some information that may be helpful to you whilst at conference. The events and BSR team will be on hand throughout the conference to deal with any unexpected issues that may arise.

Prior to the conference

Familiarise yourself with the session. If you wish to be put in touch with any of the speakers please contact the BSR's events team.

If you are chairing an abstract session, familiarise yourself with the abstract titles and authors.

At the conference

Check in at the Speaker/Chair desk at registration on arrival. Check the programme for any last minute changes to your session.

Meet with all your speakers 15 minutes before the start of your session. At that time, it is advisable to make any needed first introductions and help them feel comfortable with the room arrangements and fellow participants. Discuss their positions at the lectern and remind them of their time limitations. Have all your speakers try out their PowerPoint presentations and test the microphone to determine any required assistance and to ensure a reasonable comfort level.

Describe to your speakers the method you will use to **notify** them when they are nearing their presentation time limit and how you will **interrupt** them if they have reached the end of their allotted time. A session will run more smoothly if you let all the speakers know how you plan to run your session. Try to leave time for pertinent questions and answers (especially if the talk is particularly inspiring or controversial). **Try to have at least one general question ready** for each speaker in order to help get the discussion off the ground, should the audience be reticent. You could ask each speaker for a potential "seed" question for you to ask should the opportunity be available.

During the session

Please be aware that it is the role of the chair to start the session on time. There will not necessarily be a member of the events team to give the green light to your session, so do start proceedings as near to the indicated session start time as possible.

Probably the main role of the session chair is to **keep the meeting running on time**. Some speakers will talk much faster than normal and finish a talk in half the expected time. Others will be unaware that time is running over and they have only just finished their introduction. Timing is important to ensure that a meeting runs smoothly. If all time has expired for a speaker, it is acceptable to ask the audience to discuss issues with that speaker after the end of the session. It is up to **you as the**

Session Chair to ensure that **ALL** speakers receive their allotted time and that the audience has opportunity for their questions and comments.

Be prepared to give a short introduction to the session, and, of course, introduce yourself as well. Where possible, be sure to review the abstracts of the talks and then give a succinct summary of what will be presented. It is your job to excite people at the session and have them stay in the session room. Regarding the speakers, introduce each one before they begin. Speakers will appreciate being properly introduced and the audience likes to feel they know the person speaking. Nonetheless, for the sake of both the timing of the session and your speakers, keep it brief.

Always write down the start and finish times of speakers throughout the session. If you don't know what time a speaker started, it is difficult to know when to ask them to stop.

During question and answer sessions, it is difficult for the session chair to keep things on time if the speaker is in control of taking questions. Make sure you are the one who selects the next questioner. Also, be prepared to step in if the speaker and questioner are getting into a long-winded, technical discussion.

Abstracts session: introduce the paper by providing the names of the authors and their affiliations and the title. If the presenter differs from the first named author, then identify which of the authors will be doing the presentation. Parsimonious introductions are preferred, as the introductions also cut into the paper's presentation time and the Q&A.

Please note it is BSR's policy that no corporate branding or selling of any product is permitted within a session and we ask that you step in should it occur. BSR event organisers will be on hand throughout the conference should they be needed in a session, please ask one of Manchester Central stewards to contact us on the registration desk if necessary.

After the session

Please advise BSR's events team of any technical problems or room maintenance issues that require attention.

Reporting of the session

Please be advised that as chair of the session you will be required to provide a short summary of the session, which may be included in the post conference report. Further details will be supplied to you nearer the time of the conference but to view a sample from 2014's conference please click here.

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