

Nursing Symposium: Writing Good Abstracts

Many abstracts are submitted to the State-of-the-Science Stroke Nursing Symposium each year. The following suggestions may improve the chances of your work being selected for presentation at the annual symposium.

Suggestions for writing a better abstract:

Title: To the extent the data permits, make the title dynamic and conclusive, rather than descriptive. For example, "Hypoxia inhibits Kv1.5 channels in rat carotid artery smooth muscle cells" is preferable to "Effects of hypoxia on Kv1.5 channels." Explicit titles denoting the findings should be used (not "Investigations of...", "Studies of...", etc.)

Structure: A good Nursing Symposium abstract should have these identifiable sections: Background, Purposes, Methods, Results, Conclusions.

Category: Be sure to select the correct abstract category. Category selection determines which review team grades the abstract. You MAY also select a "Secondary Category"; **the additional category is optional**. Do NOT select an additional, secondary category if it does not fit your submission. If you select the appropriate category, your abstract will be blindly graded by experts familiar with the science of the category.

Abbreviations: Abbreviations may be used after they are spelled out or defined. Use generic, not commercial, names for all therapeutic agents.

Proofread your work: Be sure to proofread your work carefully including the author block. If accepted, your abstract will be printed as submitted. **No changes will be allowed to the abstract or the author block after the deadline of August 18, 2026, 11:59 pm CDT/UTC-5.**

Common mistakes

1. Failure to state the purpose. It is advisable to formally state: "The purpose of this trial/study/program is..."
2. Failure to state a conclusion. Use a final sentence that reads: "In conclusion,..."
3. Failure to state sample size. The reviewer wants to assess the quality of the data - they need a mean SEM and a sample size.
4. Excessive use of abbreviations. All but the most standard abbreviations should be defined and most abstracts should have < 3 abbreviations.

Traps to avoid

1. Typographical errors.
2. References cited in the abstract.
3. Not providing content/statement of relevance that states the rationale for your study.
4. Using complex graphics. Simple line or bar graphs work best. Make sure the font is adequate on each axis to be seen. Check a printed version of the abstract before submission. Tables must be submitted as graphics.
5. Leaving abstract writing until the 11th hour - this increases stress and leads to errors.
6. Duplicated work.

How to avoid rejection

Make sure your abstract is clear, concise and follows all rules. Show your abstract to a colleague prior to submission and modify accordingly.

Nursing Symposium Abstract Requirements

1. Abstracts must be an original idea, concept, an improvement or revision of an old idea.
2. Abstracts must be submitted in the final format. NO changes to content will be made after receipt of submission. Abstracts may not represent a work in progress.
3. Abstracts that have been presented or will be presented at any national or international meeting prior to February 12, 2027 or have been submitted to more than one category of the Nursing Symposium will not be considered.
4. The same abstract may be submitted for both ISC and the Stroke Nursing Symposium, but it can only be accepted for and presented at either ISC or the Nursing Symposium.

Abstract Grading Criteria

Nursing Symposium abstract grading will be based on the following:

The judging criteria for abstract acceptance/non-acceptance is as follows:	
Scientific Merit: The topic is pertinent to the development of knowledge related to stroke clinical practice and is relevant to the purpose of the State-of-the-Science Stroke Nursing Symposium.	
Practicality: The abstract enhances the foundation for clinical decision-making or stimulates thinking about practice applications when caring for the stroke patient.	
Organization: Overall, the abstract is readable and accurately presented and conclusion valid.	
Presentation: The presentation demonstrates an insightful application or/a creative and original solution to a clinical practice issue or problem in caring for the stroke patient.	
Technical quality: The abstract must include complete information or outcomes and have scientific backing. (Mentioning that the results will be presented at the meeting is unsatisfactory.)	
Research-Based Abstracts	Clinical Practice/Program/QI Project Abstracts
Background: Description of the problem.	Background and Issues: A short summary of the issue(s), problem, or specific clinical challenges or controversy, with relevant background and contextual information.
Purpose: Research questions or hypothesis.	Purpose: Clear statement of goal of project is described.
Methods: Study design, including a description of participants, procedures, measures, and appropriate statistical analyses.	Methods: Description of the project or program, clinical intervention(s), analysis plan or criteria used to guide analysis.
Results: Specific results in summary form.	Results: Lessons Learned: A brief description of the findings or lessons learned as a result of the project.
Conclusions: Major findings are presented with interpretation and implications for stroke management and nursing practice.	Conclusions: A brief description of recommended position or approach, or specific recommendations related to the original problem or questions identified.