

## **GUIDELINES FOR LEAD FACILITATORS FOR THEMATIC POSTER SESSIONS**

### **GOALS**

- foster and encourage discussion of important scientific and clinical questions relevant to the major themes of the session
- ensure that all posters in the session are viewed and discussed by at least one facilitator. This requires your careful attention during the poster session and monitoring of the other facilitators
- offer specific feedback to the authors concerning their data and its interpretation
- foster interchange between the presenters and observers of the poster material

### **BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

Thematic Poster Sessions include related abstracts which are presented in a poster format. Posters are programmed together under one or several themes. Authors are given a specific time to be present at their posters, when the viewers can discuss the work with them on a one-on-one or small group basis. There is no formal discussion period; however, facilitators will be expected to attend the session during the viewing time and foster discussion among the authors and the audience. Since the majority of abstracts presented at the Conference will be scheduled in this format, the role of the facilitator is extremely important.

### **PREPARATION BEFORE THE CONFERENCE**

Multiple facilitators will be assigned to each thematic poster session. Facilitators will have some degree of expertise in the theme being presented. Each facilitator, including the Lead Facilitator, will be assigned 7-10 abstracts to oversee. Although each facilitator is directly responsible for 7-10 abstracts, it is highly recommended that the facilitators be familiar with all the abstracts, especially to identify those abstracts which focus on the same or related issues. All the abstracts to be presented during the thematic poster session will be sent to the facilitators prior to the Conference.

#### **Lead Facilitator Responsibilities:**

- oversee the abstracts to be presented
- provide guidance to the other facilitators assigned to this session
- contact each facilitator to discuss the abstracts and strategies for fostering discussion at the session
- contact colleagues who have an expertise in the topic being addressed and ask that they attend the session with the intent of participation

### **DURING THE THEMATIC POSTER SESSION**

#### **Lead Facilitator Role:**

- Monitor the other facilitators to be sure that the best possible author-audience interaction is being encouraged.

#### **Facilitator Role:**

- **11:15-12:00:** time for authors to interact with the attendees. Facilitators should plan to have contact with each poster author in their group during this time
- **12:00-1:00:** time for facilitators to foster group discussion with the authors and attendees
- encourage scientific exchange and point out the similarities and differences between posters by interacting with the authors and audience
- one suggested method is to conduct walk around, where each facilitator and the authors visit each poster with the group. This could be an effective method for stimulating discussion.
- encourage viewers' participation and discussion
- guide experts to posters so that they may give the authors feedback on their work and presentation