

THE PUBLICATION OF ABSTRACTS FROM THE BRITISH LYMPHOLOGY SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN THE JOURNAL OF LYMPHOEDEMA.

Background

In recent years the British Lymphology Society (BLS) has been keen to encourage its members to present work at its annual conference, either in the form of a poster or an oral presentation. There have been a growing number of members who have taken up this challenge and in the last few years a Research Advisory Board (RAB) has been formed, one of whose functions is to review the abstracts submitted for presentation at the annual conference.

Up until now, those abstracts which have been accepted for presentation have been printed in a booklet available to delegates attending the conference. However, with the increasing number of abstracts submitted and the launch of the Journal of Lymphoedema at last year's annual conference, it seems an opportune time to look at the publication of selected abstracts in the Journal.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the possibility of publication of the abstracts will encourage more members to submit their work, including those working in the basic science aspects of lymphoedema.

The process

In order to ensure that the quality of those abstracts which are published is high, the RAB together with the editor of the Journal of Lymphoedema have developed a set of criteria upon which abstracts will be selected for publication. It is proposed that, following each conference, the RAB will review the presentations made at the conference and select work for consideration for subsequent publication.

The criteria agreed are set out in Table 1.

1.	Research studies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• These can be concerning basic science or clinical aspects of lymphoedema / chronic oedema.• They can be of qualitative or quantitative type.• The content should be described as per the BLS Abstract Guidelines.• Studies should be completed with results as presented at the Conference.
2.	Audits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abstracts on audits should describe an audit which has completed the full “audit cycle”.• Contents should be as described in the BLS Abstract Guidelines.
3.	Service development initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• These should be described as per the BLS Guidelines.• Initiatives should have been completed and include evaluation, preferably by users.
4.	Educational initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• These should be described as per the BLS Abstract Guidelines.• Initiatives should have been completed and include evaluation / feedback from participants.
5.	Case reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abstracts of case reports will not be published in JoL but authors who submit case reports at the BLS Conference will be encouraged to write them up for inclusion in the JoL.
6.	Literature reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authors of literature reviews will be encouraged to submit them for publication to the JoL. Abstracts will not be published in JoL.

As can be seen, the emphasis is based upon completed work in the various categories and therefore authors will be given the opportunity to update the abstracts which were submitted prior to the conference to include the latest results and conclusions

BLS is keen to continue to encourage its members to share work which may be at an earlier stage of development, in the form of poster and oral presentations at the conference. All

abstracts submitted prior to the conference will, therefore, continue to be produced in a booklet for delegates attending the conference.

It is hoped that those presenting work at an earlier stage of development will go on to complete it and submit it for publication in the future.

Submission of an abstract for BLS Conference

The procedure for submitting an abstract will continue as before. A call for abstracts will be made along with the notification of the dates and programme of the annual conference. For the 2007 conference the deadline for abstract submission is 15 June 2007.

Abstracts are submitted on line. The procedure for submitting an abstract is included in Table 2.

Table 2 - Details for submitting abstracts for BLS Conference

- Abstracts should be submitted electronically.
- Contact details: BLS Admin (Tel: 01959 525 5245 / e-mail: admin@blsac.demon.co.uk).
- Abstracts should be limited to 350 words in Times new Roman, 11 font and 1.5 line spacing.
- Deadline for submission: 15th June 2007.

Abstracts may be submitted on:

- i) Research Studies
- ii) Audits
- iii) Case Reports
- iv) Service Developments / Initiatives including user involvement
- v) Literature Reviews.

The criteria for acceptance are that submissions are shown to:

- Be relevant to BLS, i.e. related to chronic oedema and its treatment
 - Fit one of the categories above
 - Be clearly and concisely presented and follow the suggested structure (see below) where appropriate
 - Be reporting work that has been approved by an appropriate body, e.g. Research Ethics Committee, Trust R&D, Local Audit Committee.
 - Demonstrate that the method is appropriate to the aims and should include statistics where relevant.
- Suggested structure for abstracts

Research Studies (quantitative or qualitative) These should include:

- Introduction / Background

- Aims of study
- Methods (including statistics and confirmation that ethics committee approval has been given)
- Results
- Conclusions, i.e. what does the study add to existing knowledge

Studies should preferably be completed before presentation at the conference. However it is recognised that sometimes, where the methodology is complex, it is worth sharing this at an earlier stage.

Audits These should include:

- Introduction
- Aim of audit
- Standards being audited
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions, i.e. in relation to any changes in practice or revision of standards

There should also be confirmation that approval was granted by an appropriate committee.

Case Reports These should include:

- Reason for report
- Cases(s) description (confirm consent)
- Discussion e.g. compare with previous reports; implications for practice.

Service Development Initiatives These should include:

- Aims
- Description
- Evaluation, indicating any user involvement

Educational Initiatives These should include:

- Introduction
- Aims
- Rationale
- Description
- Evaluation

Literature Reviews These should include:

- Aim
- Search method, with inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Results
- Conclusion / Discussion, with critical analysis.

Conclusion

The BLS RAB is delighted that this formal arrangement has been established with the Journal of Lymphoedema and sees it as a major step forward in the development of BLS and studies of lymphoedema and chronic oedema in the UK. We encourage BLS members and others to consider submitting their work to the annual conference and hope that the possibility of publication of their work will be an added stimulus for this.

Vaughan Keeley
Chair of BLS RAB