

Abstract Submission Guide

CPA Congress 2026

This guide outlines the submission requirements and review criteria for **1) Research Abstracts** and **2) Symposium Proposals** for Congress 2026.



Research Abstracts

Research abstracts relate to:

- **Original research studies** (e.g., clinical, quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, basic science, translational),
- **Research syntheses** (e.g., systematic reviews, scoping reviews, critical reviews), or
- **Other** research designs (e.g., case studies).

Presentation formats: Research submissions are invited for three presentation formats:

- **Poster Presentation:** Static presentations in which information is summarized using brief written statements and graphic materials, such as photographs, charts, graphs, and/or diagrams. Poster presenters will be assigned a specific date and time when they must be personally available for discussion with participants.
- **Rapid Fire Presentation (5 minutes):** Presentations that are designed to allow for a succinct overview of research purpose and methodology to a seated audience, often accompanied by a brief slide deck summarizing data presented. Audience is invited to the poster session to learn about results and conclusion. Presentation length is 5 minutes and 5 slides.
- **Podium Presentation (15 minutes):** Oral presentations to a seated audience, often accompanied by a brief slide deck summarizing data presented. Presentation length is 10 minutes, plus 3-5 minutes to answer audience questions.

Please note:

- Priority will be given to research that is already completed, however, abstracts for studies with preliminary data analysis will be considered. Congress 2026 welcomes submissions of research abstracts completed as part of Master's of Physiotherapy education and/or Doctorate (PhD) within the last 24 months.
- Podium and Poster Presentations hold equal standing and are judged by the same criteria. If a podium presentation is requested and accepted but there is no space in the program, presenters will be offered either a poster or rapid-fire presentation, both of which provide excellent opportunities for interaction with delegates.

1.1 Submission process and requirements

The following information will be required during the submission process. Incomplete submissions or those that do not follow the requested format will not be accepted.

Submission requirements for Research Abstracts		
1	Title	Maximum 20 words. The title should describe the abstract clearly. It should be brief and interesting and express the scope, content, and particular focus of your presentation.
2	Name(s) of Presenter and Co-Authors	
3	Contact details of all authors	Full name, organization/institution/city & country (as you would wish it to appear in the program), email, work telephone, and mailing address of submitter.
4	Biography of presenting author(s)	100 words maximum for each author.
5	Congress Topic	Select the topic (thematic/practice area) that relates best to your abstract submission.
6	Preferred presentation format	Choose the format that best fits your submission. Options for Research submissions are • Poster • Rapid fire presentation • Podium presentation. Note that the submission may be accepted for an alternate format at the discretion of the scientific review committee.
7	Summary	Maximum 60 words. Briefly summarize the abstract. Purpose of the summary: Abstract Summaries are reviewed by the Abstract Reviewers at the time of evaluation and, if accepted to the program, will be featured on the Congress website and app, to inform attendees about the session topic and details.
	NOTE: Research abstracts (items 8-13 below) must be a maximum of 300 words, and follow the format, headings, and specifications as outlined.	
8	Background	What was the context for the study/project? Why was it important that it was undertaken? Include current knowledge in relation to your work.

9	Purpose	What was the major reason for undertaking the study/project? Any secondary objectives? This may include a short statement of your hypothesis.
10	Methods	What principles, methods/methodological approaches, and materials did the project involve? Include what was done, by whom, who participated, and where. What measurements were taken and how were the data managed? The description of the methods must be concise.
11	Results	Summarize the main findings from your analysis. What did you find or discover? Results should be presented in an objective, academic, and unbiased way – without interpretation of the findings.
12	Conclusions	Logical, and clearly stated conclusions and inferences that can be made based on results and data analyses. Keep your conclusions reasonable and supportable. What are suggestions for future work?
13	Implications	What are the implications of the project and how will the results be translated into physical therapy practice/management/education/policy? Why is what you have done important for the profession and for society?
14	Keywords	Choose 3-5 words that concisely summarize the focus, themes, or methods of your submission, allowing readers to quickly assess its relevance to their interest.
15	Conflict of interest declaration	Please identify any potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest do not preclude the delivery of the talk or presentation, but should be explicitly declared. These may include financial interests (e.g. owning stocks of a related company, having received honoraria, consultancy fees), research interests (research support by grants or otherwise), organizational interests and gifts. If you have none to declare, please indicate, 'None'.

1.2 Review Process

All submitted research abstracts will be evaluated by a minimum of two independent reviewers, using the assessment criteria below. Each abstract will be scored based on its scientific merit and potential impact. Final decisions regarding acceptance or rejection will be made by the Scientific Review Committee (SRC).

1.2.1 Research Abstract Review Criteria

Domain	Guiding questions for scoring each domain	Weighting
Background & rationale	1) Do the background and rationale explain the context and importance of the study? 2) Is the need/gap in our knowledge elucidated?	10%
Purpose/Research objectives	1) Were the purpose and objectives or research question clearly articulated? 2) Do the study purpose, objectives/research questions link with the rationale?	10%
Methods	1) Were the methods and rationale for procedures described in a way that reviewer has a clear idea of what happened? 2) Do the methods demonstrate scientific rigour? 3) Are the methods appropriate for objectives/research question?	20%
Results	1) Are the results clear and related to the objectives/research question? 2) Have the results been presented and interpreted appropriately?	15%
Conclusions	1) Can the conclusions be supported by the results?	20%
Potential impact, relevance, and innovation in PT, PTA, or PRT practice, education, or research	1) What is the potential impact of the study and how well will it translate into PT/PTA/Phys.T practice, programs, policy, or education? 2) Does this study have implications for future physiotherapy research?	15%
General impression	1) Are the findings presented in a way that is understandable? (Writing is clear, error-free, coherent, logical, not too much jargon, no undefined abbreviations, easily understood by someone with general science knowledge but not content/area expertise)	10%

PT: physiotherapist; PTA: physiotherapy assistant; Phys. T: physiotherapy technologist/le technologue en physiothérapie (T. phys.)

1.2.2 Scoring Guide

Each of the domains will be scored using the following scale:

Score	Impact	Additional guidance regarding strengths and weaknesses
2	Strong	Criteria are fully met; negligible minor weaknesses or no weaknesses
1	Medium	Criteria are partially met; one or more moderate weakness
0	Weak	Criteria are not met; one or more significant weakness

1.2.3 Examples of highly scored research abstracts

https://physiotherapy.ca/app/uploads/2023/10/Sample_CPA_abstracts.pdf

1.3 Helpful hints from reviewers (adapted from CAOT Conference Submission Guidelines):

- Read the submission guidelines thoroughly before you begin your abstract.
- Always have someone else proof your abstract before submitting it for grammar and typos.
- Use the headings provided.
- Ensure that the contents of each section are clearly linked to one another. For example, the session content should support achievement of the learning objectives and demonstrate impact for the attendee or profession. Conclusions should align with the learning objectives.
- Ensure your submission is free from commercial content and bias.
- Use all of the words available (i.e., 300 words for abstract, 60 words for summary)
- Ensure the topic is relevant to physiotherapy.

Not sure about something? Have questions about the process? We are here to help! Contact information@physiotherapy.ca and include 'Congress 2026 Submission' in the subject line.

Symposia Submissions

Symposium proposals can encompass a variety of formats, such as focussed presentations, workshops, or roundtable or panel discussions. These sessions should address topics of clinical or practical relevance, including clinical best practices, innovative initiatives, quality improvement projects, physiotherapy education, knowledge mobilization, or emerging trends in the profession.

Submissions that encourage participant engagement and reflect thought leadership or the advancement of the profession are strongly encouraged.

Formats include:

- a. **Focussed Presentation:** Presenter(s) are experts in the field who can lead a session to highlight the latest practice, research, education, and professional issues. Relevant topics, implications of the latest research, and thinking as well as laying the foundation for future interactions and initiatives.
- b. **Panel:** Panels should include two to four presenters addressing a common issue or topic from different perspectives followed by an interactive discussion. Each panel must also provide a moderator.
- c. **Workshop:** Workshops are presenter-led sessions designed to teach specific skills or share expertise on a focused topic. These hands-on sessions emphasize active learning through demonstrations, guided exercises, or skill-building activities led by one or more presenters. While participants may engage in discussions or Q&A, the primary focus remains on learning from the presenter(s). The room setup facilitates individual or small-group activities.
- d. **Roundtable Discussion:** Roundtable discussions are collaborative sessions that center on open dialogue among participants to explore specific themes or challenges. Moderators or facilitators guide the conversation, but the emphasis is on peer-to-peer engagement and sharing diverse perspectives. These sessions encourage deep discussions, brainstorming, and problem-solving in a group setting, with participants seated around tables to promote interaction and equal contributions.

2.1 Submission process and requirements

The following information will be required during the submission process. Incomplete submissions or those that do not follow the requested format will not be accepted.

Submission requirements for Symposium Proposals		
1	Title	Maximum 20 words. The title should describe the session abstract clearly. It should be brief and interesting and express scope, content, and particular focus of your presentation.

2	Name(s) of Presenter and Co-Authors	
3	Contact details of all authors	Full name, organization/institution/city & country (as you would wish it to appear in the program), email, work telephone, and mailing address of submitter.
4	Biography of presenting author(s)	100 words maximum for each author.
5	Congress Topic	Select the topic (thematic/practice area) that relates best to your abstract submission.
6	Preferred presentation format	a) Choose the format that best fits your submission. Options for Symposium Proposals are focussed presentation, panel, workshop, roundtable discussion and other. b) Preferred length of session Note that the submission may be accepted for an alternate format at the discretion of the scientific review committee.
7	Summary	Maximum 60 words. Briefly summarize the abstract. Purpose of the summary: Abstract Summaries are reviewed by the Abstract Reviewers at the time of evaluation and, if accepted to the program, will be featured on the Congress website and app, to inform attendees about the session topic and details.
	NOTE: Symposium proposals (items 8-12 below) must be a maximum of 300 words, and follow the format, headings, and specifications as outlined.	
8	Learning Objectives	Learning Objectives: List up to 3 learning objectives describing the purpose of the presentation in terms of what attendees will learn.
9	Session Content	Provide an overview of the information that will be included in the presentation. Include specific population that the session is targeted to (e.g., clinicians, managers, educators, etc.).
10	Relevance	Describe how the information/topic is relevant and important to physiotherapy.
11	Description of Supporting Evidence	Provide a descriptive overview of the literature that the topic is based on, as well as level of supporting evidence. If there is a gap or lack of evidence for your topic, please provide an explanation.

12	Conclusions and Implications	Provide concluding information and implications for the physiotherapy profession.
13	Conflict of interest declaration	Please identify any potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest do not preclude the delivery of the talk or presentation, but should be explicitly declared. These may include financial interests (e.g. owning stocks of a related company, having received honoraria, consultancy fees), research interests (research support by grants or otherwise), organizational interests and gifts. If you have none to declare, please indicate, 'None'.

2.2 Review Process

All submitted research abstracts will be evaluated by a minimum of two independent reviewers, using the criteria below. Each abstract will be scored based on its merit and potential impact. The Scientific Review Committee (SRC) will make the final decision on acceptance or rejection, in cooperation with the Division Chairs Committee (DCC).

2.2.1 Symposium Submission Review Criteria

Domain	Guiding questions for scoring each domain	Weighting
Learning objectives	- Are the learning objectives clear? - Do the learning objectives respond to the learning needs of PTs, Phys.Ts, and/or PTAs?	10%
Session content	- Does the session content demonstrate that the learning objectives would be attained? - Has the author prepared the information and learning objectives for a relevant target audience (PTs, PRTs, and/or PTAs)?	20%
Supporting evidence, rationale, and learning objectives	- Is the content based on evidence, policy, or educational principles? - Are relevant citations provided?	10%
Conclusions and implications	- Do the conclusions align with the learning objectives and session content? - Does the author state how the session's learning outcomes will benefit participants' practice?	20%
Relevance, impact, and innovation in PT, PTA, or PRT practice, education, or research	- Are the session's learning objectives relevant to PT, PTA, or PRT clinical practice, education, or research? - Are the objectives or implications novel or innovative? - Is the session likely to impact PT practice, education, research, or advance the profession in a meaningful way?	25%

General impression	Is the submission presented in a way that is understandable? (Writing is clear, coherent, logical, not too much jargon, no undefined abbreviations, easily understood by someone with general science knowledge but not content/area expertise)	15%
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PT: physiotherapist; PTA: physiotherapy assistant, Phys. T: physiotherapy technologist/le technologue en physiothérapie (T. phys.)

2.2.2 Scoring Guide

Each of the domains will be scored using the following scale:

Score	Impact	Additional guidance regarding strengths and weaknesses
2	Strong	Criteria are fully met; negligible minor weaknesses or no weaknesses
1	Medium	Criteria are partially met; one or more moderate weakness
0	Weak	Criteria are not met; one or more significant weakness

2.2.3 Examples of highly scored symposium proposals

2.3 Helpful hints from reviewers (adapted from CAOT Conference Submission Guidelines):

- Read the submission guidelines thoroughly before you begin your abstract.
 - Always have someone else proof your abstract before submitting it for grammar and typos.
 - Use the headings provided.
 - Ensure that the contents of each section are clearly linked to one another. For example, the session content should support achievement of the learning objectives and demonstrate impact for the attendee or profession. Conclusions should align with the learning objectives.
 - Ensure your submission is free from commercial content and bias.
 - Use all of the words available (i.e., 300 words for abstract, 60 words for summary)
 - Ensure the topic is relevant to physiotherapy.
- Review the Abstract Examples for guidance:
https://physiotherapy.ca/app/uploads/2023/10/Sample_CPA_abstracts.pdf

Need guidance to draft your proposal? Click below to review examples of submissions that were previously accepted for presentation at Congress. A reminder that all submissions for Congress 2026 should follow the guidelines presented above, first and foremost.

Not sure about something? Have questions about the process? We are here to help!
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