



FOCUS26 | Conference
Pullman, Cairns
15-17 October
Elevating practices, empowering physiotherapy



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES



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Submit your abstract now for an opportunity to present!

CONTENTS

Invitation to submit	3
Key dates	4
Abstract submission requirements	4
Types of presentations	4
Recommended format	5
Online submission requirements	5
Post abstract submission	6
Selection criteria	6
Reviewing/Scoring	6
General information	7



VENUE

Pullman Cairns International,
17 Abbott Street, Cairns, QLD, 4870, Australia

Submissions open:

8 am AEST Thursday 29 January 2026

Submissions close:

5 pm AEST Monday 27 April 2026

Please read this information carefully before proceeding to the online submission form.

Submit your abstract online at: [FOCUS26 - Abstract Submission](#)

The Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) is calling for abstract submissions for FOCUS26, to be held at Pullman Cairns International from Thursday 15 October to Saturday 17 October 2026.

FOCUS26 is built around the core theme 'Elevating practices and empowering physiotherapy'. This theme underpins the entire event, providing a dynamic platform for professionals to share innovative techniques, adopt advanced educational approaches, and explore business strategies that lift the standard of care and strengthen industry expertise.

Attendees will gain practical insights and tools to improve patient outcomes, enhance business performance, and confidently step into leadership roles within their practices.

When submitting, please ensure you have **something current, new and relevant to share** with your peers. The committee welcomes a mix of **non-scientific research**, 'How To' presentations, and case studies. This document provides guidance and information for submitting abstracts for both 15-minute free papers and 30-minute 'How To' presentations, both presented in an oral format. Please ensure that you have read these abstract submission guidelines.

Please note: the information delivered must have an educational informative basis and must not specifically or overtly advertise or promote a specific business or service.

INVITATION TO SUBMIT

Abstracts must be submitted as either:

- **Oral presentation:** 15-minute oral presentation including question time or a ...
- **'How To' presentation:** 30-minute oral presentation including question time and be aligned as per above.

You may submit up to a maximum of two (2) abstracts only.

When making your submission consider theme selection and key word guidance below:

Theme
<p>Please aim for relevance to one of the four themes below under which presentations will be classified and select the theme that best fits your presentation.</p> <p>Practice: Practical application or use of an idea, belief, or method within how and where we practice physiotherapy.</p> <p>Business: Focusing on how, where and why, not what we practice. All the elements that go toward making it profitable, successful, compliant and future ready.</p> <p>Management and leadership: Within a physiotherapy business, community setting or workplace.</p> <p>Education: Building expert skills in the areas of learning, teaching, placement, supervision and research with a focus on both patient and professional education.</p>

Please be guided and inspired by, but not restricted to, the following key words and phrases:

Key Words/Phrases			
Climate change/ Sustainability/ Environment	People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental health/Wellness - Burn out - Retention - Career pathway 	Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk - Data privacy - Policy - Insurance 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision - Placements - Student readiness - Simulated placement
Workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning/Shortage - Rural workforce - New generation - Skills framework 	Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AI/Social media - Data analytics - Robotics/Exoskeletons - Simulation - Cyber security 	Leadership and skills training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public - Private practice - Corporate - Future ready leaders 	Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public/Private - Not for profit - Financial management - Activity based funding
Diversity and inclusion	Practice management	Innovation/Future readiness	Value based healthcare models
Allied health debate	Corporate – managing multidisciplinary teams	Culture	Occupational health

The APA encourages submissions including First Nations, Torres Strait Islander and LGBTQIA+ perspectives and from First Nations, Torres Strait Islander and LGBTQIA+ authors.

KEY DATES

29 January	Abstract submissions open (from 8 am AEST)
27 April	Abstract submissions close (at 5 pm AEST)
From 25 June	Submitting authors notified of submission outcomes
1 July	Acceptance deadline for abstract authors
From 13 July	Authors contacted with presentation time
20 July	Deadline for authors to accept presentation offer
12 August	Deadline for all presenters to be registered in order for presentation details to be included in printed materials
15-17 October	FOCUS26

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

By submitting an abstract you agree to the following:

- The title must be no more than twelve (12) words.
- Your abstract must be no more than 250 words (including sub-headings).
- Abstracts must be print ready.
- Acceptance of an abstract does not imply provision of travel, accommodation, or registration for the conference, nor any other costs associated with preparation or presentation of the abstract.
- The presenting author must register and pay to attend the conference by 12 midnight AEST, Wednesday 12 August 2026.
- You give permission for your accepted abstract submission to be published in the conference handbook and conference app.
- You confirm that the submission has been approved by all authors.

All submitted abstracts will be peer-reviewed by a panel. Accepted abstracts will be allocated in the relevant session/s. This review process allows for a fair and equitable process, building the integrity of the program.

Please note: You are NOT required to register as a delegate in order to submit an abstract. Once accepted the presenting authors MUST register as a delegate by 12 August 2026.

TYPES OF PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations: 15 minutes including question time at the end of the session (maximum question time 2 minutes).

‘How To’ presentations: 30 minutes including a maximum question time of 5 minutes (not designed to be practical in nature but may include demonstrations or video, answering the proposition of how to do or achieve something within a physiotherapy practice or educational setting).

RECOMMENDED FORMAT

Title: Must be no more than 12 words.

Authors and affiliations: Authors must be listed where indicated in the online submission process and should be presented as first and last name. All affiliations must be listed where indicated in the online submission process and added to the authors as appropriate.

ORAL PRESENTATION

Project/Concept description: Details the significance of the work to physiotherapy particularly leadership and management, practice, education and business. How new is the project/concept? Does it break new ground?

Relevance to conference themes: How does the abstract relate to the overall conference proposition 'FOCUS26 - Elevating practices and empowering physiotherapy' and to the selected theme (Practice, Leadership and Management, Business or Education)?

Background: Describe the content of the presentation outlining the study/research/project/business success etc. and how it relates and adds to current knowledge.

Conclusion/Outcome: Describe and evaluate the conclusions/outcomes/recommendations based on the presented information.

Take home messages: Provide three to five take home messages that can be translated into practice.

'HOW TO' PRESENTATION

Background: Provide a concise statement which places the 'How To' session in context including any assumptions of participants' prior knowledge.

Relevance to conference themes: How does the abstract relate to the overall conference proposition FOCUS26 - Elevating practices and empowering physiotherapy and to the selected theme (Practice, Leadership and Management, Business or Education)?

Aims/Objectives: State the aim and objectives of the session and a statement of learning objectives in the form of knowledge, skills, techniques/competencies participants should be expected to acquire.

Take home messages: Provide three to five take home messages that can be translated into practice.

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Abstracts will only be accepted online via the conference 2026 website. To ensure that all abstracts are submitted to publishable standard, authors must adhere to the requirements detailed below.

Abstracts that do not adhere to these requirements may not be reviewed or accepted.

Correspondence will be with the submitting author only. The presenting author does not have to be the submitting author, or the first named author listed on the abstract.

For those submitting from a saved draft, please ensure you log back in to the portal to hit submit.

Word limit: Abstracts will be a maximum of 250 words (not including title/authors/affiliations).

Biography: A brief, maximum 100 word biography of the presenting author will be requested during the submission process.

POST ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Confirmation: Once an abstract is successfully uploaded, an automatically generated confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided on the online submission form. As Abstract correspondence is system generated, **we ask that you regularly check your junk email during this process.**

Review process: All submitted abstracts will go through the same review process, with acceptance contingent on the extent to which the abstract meets the topics and theme of the program.

Notification: Submitting authors will be notified of the outcome of their submission/s late June early July 2026.

Final presentation notification: Submitting authors will be emailed final notification including date of presentation/session details/instructions on how to confirm your registration from 13 July 2026.

Registration: Presenting authors are required to register as a delegate by Wednesday 12 August 2026 for their presentation to be included in the program. Presenters not registered will not be included in the program and the abstract will be withdrawn.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Written clearly and concisely
- Title clearly describes the work being presented
- A clear purpose is stated
- Relevance to the nominated conference 2026 themes and key words
- Method/Approach applied appropriate to aims
- Evaluation/Analysis and results appropriately applied and interpreted
- Relevance and implications to physiotherapy clearly expressed

NB. Submissions are NOT required to be research-based, we invite you to share your idea, initiative, skill, concept, achievement, or research.

REVIEWING/SCORING

The following criteria will be used to score your submission:

Innovation and significance: Significance of work to knowledge base of physiotherapy particularly leadership and management, practice, education and business. How new is the project/concept? Does it break new ground?

Theme relevance: How does the abstract relate to the conference themes?

Background: Is the content of the work clear and appropriate to the topic?

Conclusion/Outcome: Are the outcomes/results/recommendations clear based on the presented information?

Take home messages: Relevance of the three to five take home messages identified to practice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

When completing the on-line submission process you will be asked to confirm that you have read and understood the general guidelines/information and the requirements you are expected to fulfil.

1. The conference 2026 language is English and all abstracts and presentations must be made in English.
2. A written abstract must be submitted for each proposed presentation.
3. Abstract submission will only be accepted via the conference 2026 website.
4. The abstract submission site will be open until Monday 27 April at 5 pm AEST. Any papers received after this date will not be accepted.
5. It is the author's responsibility to submit a correct abstract. Any errors in spelling, grammar or scientific fact will be reproduced as typed by the author.
6. All submissions should be related to at least one of the nominated themes. Please choose the theme which best relates to the subject of your abstract.
7. Only one presenting author per paper is permitted. Only one author may present the abstract. If no author is available to present the abstract will be withdrawn. Any changes to the presenting author will need to be notified directly to the APA. Changes will be incorporated into the final program if there is sufficient time, but thereafter no further changes will be reflected in the program.
8. Notification of outcome will be sent to the submitting author. Please note that only the submitting author will receive email correspondence concerning the abstract and is responsible for informing all co-authors of the status of the abstract.
9. Speakers are responsible for providing all copyright permissions for material included in their abstracts and presentations.
10. The author presenting the paper must register to attend the conference 2026 and be available to participate in the program at the time scheduled. Please ensure when booking travel that you make allowance for cancellations and take out appropriate travel insurance. Refunds will not be provided for missed or cancelled flights.
11. The scheduling of all presentations will be determined by the Conference Committee to ensure the best fit with the overall conference 2026 program. Any requests for specific dates and times will not be considered.
12. PowerPoint is the preferred format for all presentations and a FOCUS26 slide deck will be provided for your presentation.
13. Please note that some sessions may be video recorded and or photographed by the APA for promotional purposes.
14. Accepted abstracts will be published in the conference 2026 electronic abstract book and app.
15. All presentations during conference 2026 must include the same content and follow the same outline as what was submitted.
16. In keeping with APA policy, honorarium, fee or payment of expenses will not be provided for abstract presentations.
17. Any source of funding or support for the work being presented should be acknowledged.
18. All decisions of the Conference Program Committee are **final**.
19. The APA reserves the right to make amendments to abstract guidelines at any time.

We look forward to receiving your submission.

For any enquiries please contact events@australian.physio