

External Conference Attendance and Presentation

Policy Number 2.013

Policy Function Leadership and Management

Issue Date 26 February 2021

Summary This policy has been developed to ensure equitable access and clear guidelines for staff wishing to attend or present at conferences external to the Network.

Responsible Officer Executive Director, Corporate Services

Applicable Sites

- Administration Centres
- Community Sites (e.g. Court Liaison Service, Community Integration Team, etc.)
- Health Centres (Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells)
- Health Centres (Juvenile Justice Centres)
- Long Bay Hospital
- Forensic Hospital

Previous Issue(s) Policy 2.013 (Jun 2019)

Change Summary

- Reviewed against updated policy directives
- Updated brief template

TRIM Reference POLJH/2013

Authorised by Chief Executive, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

1. Preface

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (the Network) is committed to providing learning and professional development opportunities for staff, including conference participation. This policy has been developed to establish clear guidelines for obtaining approval to attend and present at conferences.

- ‘Conferences’ are broadly defined as workshops, seminars and symposiums, and may or may not involve a registration fee;
- ‘External’ refers to any event/organisation/audience/forum/agency or group outside of the Network;
- ‘Presentation’ refers to any material delivered by a Network staff member at, or in association with the above.

This policy *does not apply* to Staff Specialists attending and/or presenting at conferences as part of their Training, Education and Study Leave (TESL) Award entitlements. Staff Specialists who are entitled to TESL should review eligibility and application provisions outlined in the Network policy [3.165 TESL – Training Education and Study Leave](#). Presentations to be delivered during TESL leave will be approved according to the requirements of the TESL Policy.

This policy therefore applies to all other Network staff intending to participate in a conference in their Network capacity, including presenters receiving third party sponsorship and benefits. This requirement applies in all circumstances, including presentations made during official Network duties and/or when representing the Network, or during approved Conference Leave, Annual Leave, or at any other time.

Both permanent and temporary employees (whether full-time or part-time) are eligible to apply for conference leave. Part-time employees are granted leave on a pro-rata basis. Casual employees and contingent workers are not eligible for education and training leave.

2. Policy Content

Conference attendance supports the development of a highly trained, skilled and innovative workforce, better prepared to respond to the needs of our patients. Managers should ensure that all staff can access appropriate learning activities in line with their position descriptions and professional development requirements. Annual staff Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) are an opportunity for staff to discuss future conference participation, and provide feedback on any presentations in the previous year.

2.1 Mandatory requirements

Approval to attend a conference must be obtained from the relevant Service Director, the Network Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services (NDoN&MS), Deputy Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, Co-Director (Clinical or Operations) or the Executive Director, as outlined in policy [2.022 Delegations Authority](#).

Leave provisions, including Conference Leave, must also be in accordance with:

- NSW Ministry of Health (the Ministry) policy directive [PD2019_010](#) *Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service*; and
- The Network policy [3.110](#) *Study and Professional Development Leave*.

Approval to present at a conference must be obtained from the NDoN&MS, Co-Director (Clinical or Operations) or Executive Director. Approvals must take into consideration any associated costs, such as travel, accommodation, per diem allowances and leave days. Approval from the Chief Executive must be obtained if:

- Conference fees exceed \$1,000; or
- More than five days conference leave is requested; or
- Domestic travel expenses exceed \$5,000; or
- The conference is overseas.

2.2 Implementation – Roles and Responsibilities

Staff requesting to attend/present at a conference are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are up to date with their mandatory and CE directed training prior to requesting attendance at a conference;
- Abiding by the Codes of Conduct described by the [Ministry](#) and the [Network](#);
- Promoting and protecting the interests of NSW Health and the Network;
- Ensuring the External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Feedback Form ([EMP142](#)) is completed within two weeks of attending a conference;
- Only providing official comments on matters related to NSW Health or the Network if authorised to do so;
- If presenting, ensuring that the Network [presentation template](#) is utilised, corporate identity requirements have been maintained and only approved images are used. Full details on corporate identity requirements are available via The Network's [Style and Branding guides](#);
- Only presenting information that has been approved by the Network NDoN&MS, Co-Director (Clinical or Operations) or Executive Director.

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Discussing professional development opportunities at annual PDR meetings, including attendance at appropriate conferences;
- Ensuring staff attending and/or presenting at conferences are up to date with their mandatory and CE directed training.
- Supporting appropriate access for staff to attend and present at conferences;
- Considering any financial implications, as part of the subsequent approval process;
- Ensuring conference attendance feedback reports are reviewed and discussed;
- Ensuring the conference presentation is aligned with the Network's Values and Code of Conduct;

- Ensuring the Network has been appropriately acknowledged in the presentation;
- Ensuring currency and accuracy of content/subject matter within the presentation;
- Confirming that corporate identity requirements have been adhered to;
- Considering processes to share information and key learnings from conferences, such as through team meetings, in-services, Grand Rounds, publications and other methods.

NDoN&MS, Co-Directors and Executive Directors are responsible for:

- Approving appropriate attendance at conferences;
- Considering financial implications and funding availability during the approval process;
- Ensuring material or information to be presented at a conference:
 - Appropriately acknowledges and represents the Network,
 - Is reviewed for accuracy and alignment with the Network's values and policies,
- Escalation to the Chief Executive for approval if required;
- Considering how key information and learnings might be shared within teams, specialties, and the Network more broadly.
- Ensuring registrars have discussed their presentations with their medical supervisor before submitting to the Co-Director (Clinical).
- Involving the Director of Medical Services as a third party in any disagreements or conflicts of interest regarding approvals for medical staff or the Executive Director/Chief Executive for all other staff.
- Alerting the Communications team to any speaking engagements or topics which may present opportunities for proactive news coverage or become contentious.

Aboriginal Culture and Strategy Unit is responsible for:

- Providing advice on the cultural sensitivity requirements of presentations.

3. Procedures

3.1 Performance Development and Review

Staff should, where possible, discuss plans for attending or presenting at a conference with their line manager as part of their annual PDR, although staff may request attendance at appropriate conferences at any time. Details should be documented in the Professional Development Plan section of the PDR. Any Conference Feedback Forms from the previous year should also be tabled, discussed and documented (see Network policy [3.132 Performance Development & Review](#)).

3.2 Conference Attendance Approval and Feedback Process

To facilitate attendance at a conference, staff must complete *External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Application Form* ([EMP150](#)).

After the conference, staff must complete the electronic External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Feedback Form ([EMP142](#)) within two weeks, summarising key learnings from the event. This form is automatically emailed to the staff member's line manager.

3.3 Conference Presentation Approval

If staff are proposing to present at a conference, *Brief for Executive Director/Co-Director/ NDoN&MS – Abstract Submission* ([CORP019](#)) must be completed (as soon as possible, but at least two weeks prior to the abstract submission deadline). Attach to the brief any material or information proposed to be presented at the conference. This could include:

- a) The final presentation itself (if completed), or;
- b) The abstract of the presentation/research, or;
- c) A summary of the proposed presentation.

Once confirmation is received from conference organisers that the submitted abstract has been approved (as soon as possible, but at least 4 weeks prior to a domestic conference and 8 weeks for an international conference):

- Complete *External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Application Form* ([EMP150](#)).

If applicable:

- Complete *Travel Application Form* ([FIN401](#)) to document domestic travel arrangements;
- Complete the forms found at Attachment 1 and 3 in the Ministry policy directive [PD2016_010](#) Official Travel if travelling overseas and include a detailed Itinerary;
- Complete a Conflict of Interest Statement ([CORP091](#)) detailing third party payments, gifts or benefits (refer to section 3.4 below).

If staff are going to attend the conference, regardless of whether their abstract is approved, the above processes can be completed in one step.

3.4 Third Party Payment, Gifts or Benefits for Conference Presentations

Third party payment, gifts and/or benefits that could reasonably be perceived by an impartial observer as intended to result in a conflict of interest must be avoided in all situations. For guidance in these situations, staff should refer to:

- The Network policy [2.004](#) Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Benefits, and
- Ministry policy directive [PD2015_045](#) Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Benefits.

4. Definitions

Must

Indicates a mandatory action or requirement.

Should

Indicates a recommended action to be followed unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

5. Legislation and Related Documents

NSW Health Policy Documents

[PD2005_415](#) *Sponsorships Policy - NSW Health*
[PD2015_045](#) *Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Benefits.*
[PD2015_049](#) *Code of Conduct*
[PD2019_010](#) *Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service*
[PD2016_010](#) *Official Travel*

Network Policies and Forms

[2.022](#) *Delegations Authority*
[2.010](#) *Code of Conduct*
[3.110](#) *Study and Professional Development Leave*
[3.132](#) *Performance Development & Review*
[3.134](#) *Mandatory Training and Chief Executive Directed Training*
[3.165](#) *Training, Education and Study Leave (TESL)*
[2.004](#) *Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Benefits*
[EMP142](#) *External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Feedback Form*
[EMP150](#) *External Conference, Seminar or Short Course Application Form*
[EMP163](#) *Application for TESL Fund (Staff Specialist (State) Award Entitlement)*
[FIN401](#) *Travel Application Form*

Related Documents

[Advice on Outside Employment](#)
NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)

External Sources

[NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption \(ICAC\)](#)