

Guidelines for Controversy Session (CON)

This format shall allow to give a critical overview of the current and most recent advances on a key topic, share knowledge, stimulate debate and forge opinions on controversial issues of clinical care, research, educational practice and therapy and thus to improve the quality of medical decisions



45 min

SESSION FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

Duration: 45 minutes for 1 pair

The session proposer is responsible for the selection of speakers, topics to be presented and the overall quality/content of the controversy sessions, including defining times for each speaker and for discussion. The chairperson should NOT be one of the speakers in order to maintain an objective/neutral view of the discussion and may be replaced by an alternative at the discretion of the programme committee. Ideally, the chairperson is already elsewhere on the congress programme, and thus financially covered. If this is not the case, the committee decides if the chair can be reimbursed similar to a speaker on a case-to-case basis.

Topics should relate to the pathophysiology, diagnosis, management or public health aspects of a neurological disorder, or symptoms clusters where there is genuine uncertainty/conflicting evidence or new evidence informing practice that might not yet be widely appreciated. Organizers are encouraged to consider inviting speakers from other specialities who may offer a different perspective on issues of relevance to neurological practice (e.g. cardiology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, neuro-paediatrics, family medicine, emergency medicine).

Controversy sessions must have 2 lecturers. There will typically be two topics, each with two opposing speakers; Organisers may choose topics that are related, or completely unrelated.

The Chair will introduce the topic and speakers and start by seeking an audience vote on their position prior to the session. Voting may be undertaken by a show of hands or Chairs estimate. The chair is responsible for strict timing of the sessions, and must be prepared to articulate brief summary of the discussion/key points prior to audience voting at the end (e.g. "this house believes ..."), taking care to emphasise preference for the topic/academic content, not the individual speaker.

The Chair should also ensure 5 minutes at the end of the course for attendees to complete evaluation forms via the EAN app

An illustrative timescale for one topic might be:

- 3 min introduction (incl. audience voting)
- 9 min speaking time speaker(s) "Pro", followed
- 9 min speaking time speaker (s) "Con"
- 10 min (5 min each) speaker questioning the other
- 7 min questions from audience
- 5 min chair summary, audience vote & close

- Controversy sessions must be of a very high standard and the lecturers internationally well-known experts. In principle, the controversy session lecturers should come from different European countries. In no case should there be a non-European speaker.
- At the end of the “controversy session” the audience should have a clear understanding of key arguments and evidence relating to the topic, to optimise strategic and medical decision making in relation to both medical care for the individual, and public health.
- Each speaker must prepare a question related to the presentation for self-testing of the audience. The question will be shown at the beginning and again at the end of each lecture to test their learning curve. The speakers provide the audience with the correct answer during their lecture.

ATTENDEES

Unlimited number. Controversy sessions are aimed primarily at a post-graduate audience, and should have clear learning objectives, which can inform clinical practice, specifically including therapy. No level is defined for these sessions, as they should be of interest to, and generate debate at all levels of experience and expertise.

BENEFITS

Speakers will be offered free registration to the congress, a travel grant and up to two nights of hotel accommodation.

PARTNER SOCIETIES

EAN has Memoranda of Understanding with several societies. Their session proposals will be developed together with the panels by the societies’ representative.

For societies without representative, the proposal will be forwarded to the panel in charge for consideration.

Each partner society will be invited to label one of the accepted sessions as joint session.

Final decision on all sessions, lectures and speakers is with the Programme Committee.