

## Standardized Checklist for Arthritis Conference Planning

### Hotel Selection:

*As hotel staff is not always familiar with the specific needs of people with arthritis, it is always a good idea to have a person with the disease attend the site visit with the meeting planner.*

Does the hotel have wheelchair accessible rooms? Yes No  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Will any attendee require wheelchair accessibility? Yes No

How many rooms are required which are  
wheel chair accessible? \_\_\_\_\_

Can the required number of wheelchair accessible  
rooms be reserved for conference use? Yes No

Can users of regular wheelchairs:  
Negotiate carpets or corridors  
without assistance? Yes No

Open doors and enter rooms alone? Yes No

Use tables and facilities with ease? Yes No

Negotiate between tables etc. with ease? Yes No

Do elevator doors stay open long enough  
for wheelchair users to go in and out? Y Yes No

Do rooms not modified for disabled persons  
have grab bars in tubs/showers? Yes No

Are there rooms with handicapped accessible toilets? Yes No

Height appropriate toilets? Yes No

Are doors to room & public toilets and cubicles  
wide enough for wheelchairs or scooters? Yes No

Have bathtubs in modified and non-modified rooms been "skid-proofed"? Yes No

Are there any rooms with shower stalls? Yes No

Are faucets/taps of sink and bath/shower easily turned on and off? Yes No

**Hotel Layout:**

Will the hotel reserve rooms near elevators for those with difficulty walking? Yes No

If stair elevators are to be used:  
Must they be operated by hotel staff? Yes No

Will staff be readily available without delay? Yes No

Distance of restrooms from event room \_\_\_\_\_

Distance between event rooms \_\_\_\_\_

Can doors be opened easily throughout hotel/meeting area? Yes No

Are all rooms to be used for meeting wheelchair and scooter accessible? Yes No

Are speakers platforms wheelchair accessible? Yes No

Can doors be opened automatically? Yes No

If No, is the handle placement adequate for those in a wheelchair? Yes No

Do doors swing in to allow easy wheelchair access? Yes No

Door weight and effort to open? (this is open to interpretation as "able bodies" don't usually find doors heavy.)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Do bedroom doors have lever handles? (key or card access?) Yes No

**Hotel & travel reservations:**

*Ticket/travel reservations should be flagged to indicate that the person has mobility challenges or limitations, or that they are traveling with an enabler or traveling companion, etc.*

Procedure to follow-up on special requirements/requests to ensure they are in place? Yes No  
Designated individual? Yes No  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Will individual require companion/aid/enabler to travel/attend meeting? Yes No  
Are arrangements and costs of enabler/aid/companion covered?  
    For travel? Yes No  
    For meals and accommodation? Yes No  
Who covers these costs? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have arrangements been completed? Yes No

**Meals:**

*The type of food served and the style of service affects people with arthritis. Foods to try to avoid are thick sandwiches (over 1”), hard or difficult to chew bread or rolls, meats that are difficult to cut, etc. Meals that are served are preferred to buffet style. Self-serve coffee breaks or snack breaks are fine. If water is placed on tables in jugs arthritics may not be able to handle the weight. If bottled water is used it is a good idea to loosen caps. Staff should be on hand to assist if needed. Type of glass is important as big, fat glasses often cannot be gripped.*

Will meals be:  
    Buffet style \_\_\_\_\_  
    Sit down, served \_\_\_\_\_

Coffee and/or snack breaks:  
    Buffet style \_\_\_\_\_  
    Sit down, served \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-conference planning considerations:**

Is the conference planning committee membership representative of those attending the meeting and their interests? Yes No

Will conference include consumers? Yes No

If Yes, will there be a separate consumer program? Yes No

Will there be a separate planning committee for the consumer program? Yes No

Are numbers of attendees limited? Yes No

If Yes, what is the limit?:

For scientific conference \_\_\_\_\_

For consumer conference \_\_\_\_\_ (if applicable)

Will there be networking functions (eg. wine and cheese) as part of the conference?

The night before the conference begins? Yes No

Some other time during conference? Yes No

Attendees will:

Be invited Yes No

Apply for spot Yes No

Open to all registrants Yes No

Time frame to register/respond? \_\_\_\_\_

Registration will be by:

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Electronic \_\_\_\_\_

Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Are sponsorships available for consumers? Yes No

Who is responsible for arrangements/applications? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the time frame for application? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the time frame for selection? \_\_\_\_\_

Time frame for notification? \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: To facilitate personal schedules, travel arrangements and hotel reservations, notification should occur two-three weeks prior to event.*

**Communication about conference with community of interest:**

Adequate and timely communication is essential for effective event planning and follow-up.

Type and method of communication?

Hard copy? \_\_\_\_\_  
Electronic? \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone? \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax? \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) responsible \_\_\_\_\_

Will there be:

Information brochures? \_\_\_\_\_  
Letters? \_\_\_\_\_  
Verbal communication? \_\_\_\_\_  
Invitations? \_\_\_\_\_  
Advertising? \_\_\_\_\_  
Articles/press release? \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) responsible: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated spokesperson?(if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Person to whom all questions are referred (if different from above):

\_\_\_\_\_

Information provided before and at conference:

On speakers \_\_\_\_\_  
On agenda \_\_\_\_\_  
On web \_\_\_\_\_  
On reservations/hotel \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibility for each of above?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Time frame:

Agenda planning \_\_\_\_\_  
Accommodation planning \_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker invitation/verification \_\_\_\_\_

Will there be a website?	Yes	No
Up and running before conference?	Yes	No
When? _____		
Responsibility of? _____		

Conference room(s):		
Are there tables and chairs?	Yes	No
Are chairs relatively easy to move in & out from the table?	Yes	No
Adequate space at & between tables?	Yes	No
Can people request seating to accommodate health problems?	Yes	No
Is room temperature readily adjustable?	Yes	No

**Program agenda planning:**

*The conference program should not run longer than 7-7 ½ hours each day (eg. 8:30 am to 3:30 or 4:00 pm).*

Do <u>all</u> conference speakers have bios in the program?	Yes	No
If not, why not? _____		

Will program, bios, presentations etc. be available as handouts/in binders?	Yes	No
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Will presentations be made available in CD form?	Yes	No
For both consumer and scientific meetings?	Yes	No
When? _____		

Will presentations be made available in print form?	Yes	No
For both consumer and scientific meetings?	Yes	No
When? _____		

Presentations available on website?	Yes	No
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Measures to ensure that no one who helped plan or carry out the conference is forgotten in public acknowledgments?	Yes	No
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## **Presentations/audio visual:**

General comments:

All speakers should have a lapel microphone on the side to which they turn when looking at the video screen.

Podium microphone must be adjustable to comfortably accommodate both tall and short speakers. A step riser may also be required for short speakers.

Hand held, cordless microphones must have fresh batteries and be available throughout the room with minimum delay.

Audio Visual personnel must be in sufficient number and up to speed in setting up and cuing each PowerPoint presentation. Delays are not acceptable.

Dinner speakers should be advised to 'keep it short' – 15 minutes in length.

Does the speaker need assistance on and off the stage?

This checklist was created by four Canadian arthritis advocates to assist organizations in planning successful meetings, workshops and conferences that are accessible to all. We are all members of The Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) and many other arthritis related organizations, notably Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) and Patient Partners ® in Arthritis. Comments and suggestions are welcome and should be sent to the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) at: [capavoices@arthritis.ca](mailto:capavoices@arthritis.ca)

