



UMLTA EDITORIAL GUIDE

STEPWISE GUIDE: WRITING A CONFERENCE ABSTRACT FROM ROUTINE MEDICAL LABORATORY WORK

Step 1: Identify a Focus Area

Begin by identifying a routine activity, improvement, or challenge in the medical laboratory that had measurable or significant outcomes. These can include process enhancements, quality improvements, or responses to operational challenges. Example topics include:

- Reduction in sample rejection rates
- Implementation of a new internal quality control (IQC) protocol
- Surge management in test volumes during outbreak periods
- Identification of unusual pathogen trends or antimicrobial resistance patterns

Step 2: Define the Type of Abstract

Depending on your focus, select an abstract type that best represents the work:

- Descriptive/Operational: Focus on workflow improvements or procedural changes
- Analytical/Research-based: Involves trend analysis, test utilization, or data evaluation
- Case-based: Presentation of unique laboratory findings or outbreak responses

Step 3: Draft the Abstract Structure

Most scientific conferences follow this structure:

Title: Clearly reflect the work's content and outcomes.

Background: Brief context or problem description (1–2 sentences).

Objective(s): State what the work aimed to achieve.

Methods: Describe actions taken, such as changes implemented, procedures adopted, or data analyzed.

Results: Summarize findings, preferably with numbers or measurable outcomes.

Conclusion: Provide insights or lessons learned and relevance to other settings.

Step 4: Keep it Concise and Scientific

Maintain a scientific tone while keeping the language clear and concise. Tips include:

- Respect word limits (typically 250–300 words)
- Use past tense (except in objectives)
- Avoid uncommon abbreviations
- Ensure ethical considerations and data anonymization
- Relate the abstract to the relevant conference track or theme

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Step 5: Review and Refine

After drafting, review the abstract for logical flow and clarity. Use peer feedback to:

- Check technical accuracy and grammar
- Ensure data presentation is consistent
- Verify alignment with abstract submission guidelines

Example Abstract (Summarized)

Title: Improving Sample Rejection Rates Through Daily Internal Audits at XYZ District Laboratory, Uganda

Background: High sample rejection rates disrupt diagnosis and patient care.

Objective: To assess the impact of daily internal audits on sample rejection rates.

Methods: From Jan–Jun 2024, we implemented a daily audit checklist for incoming samples. Rejection reasons were recorded and communicated to sample senders.

Results: Rejection rates decreased from 12% in Jan to 3.2% by Jun. Common reasons included hemolysis and labeling errors.

Conclusion: Routine audits significantly improved sample quality. Scaling such interventions can strengthen diagnostic efficiency in resource-limited settings.

References

1. World Health Organization (WHO). (2011). Laboratory Quality Management System Handbook.
2. Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI). GP26-A3: Application of a Quality Management System Model for Laboratory Services.
3. ISO 15189:2012 - Medical laboratories – Requirements for quality and competence.

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