



TheMHS Learning Network Inc
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FEATURED SYMPOSIA

Goal of Featured Symposia (Invited Symposia)

To provide in-depth investigation of topics, by raising current issues and matters at the forefront of mental health service interest, exploring controversial topics and examining and disseminating current research in mental health and mental illness.

Intent of Featured Symposia is to provide sessions at the conference of special interest with regard to the following:

1. The topic is newsworthy – i.e. something “hot” or innovative
2. Relevant in the current political climate
3. Opportunity for in-depth analysis and discussion - audience discussion is encouraged and built into the session
4. Speakers have special expertise, qualifications, noteworthiness or qualities - it may be appropriate to include a keynote speaker in the symposium, but it is not essential
5. Maximum number of speakers for 1.5 hour symposium is 3 – 4, plus the chairperson. This is to allow more time for discussion and questions.

Number of Featured Symposia

There will be a maximum of 6 featured symposia through the 3-day conference – 3 commissioned by the Local Committee and 3 commissioned by TheMHS Board. It is better to have less featured symposia – but of high quality - than to feel obliged to fill up all 6 symposia of lesser quality.

Additionally TheMHS Board may ask members of TheMHS wider network to convene and organise a specialist invited symposium. Examples of past Featured Symposia are:

- Human Rights and Mental Health for Detainees;
- Recovery and Mental Health;
- Policy, Planning and Action: How to Reform Australian Mental Health Services

The final selection of Featured Symposia remains the responsibility of TheMHS Board.

Budget

TheMHS budget for these symposia is limited and must be approved by the TheMHS Conference Director. TheMHS can provide up to 2 complimentary registrations per symposium. If the complimentary registrations are not taken up, then a limited amount of travel expenses may be available. The total (of registrations and travel) must be of a value less than \$1,000. This funding is only to be sought if absolutely necessary. ***Funding is not transferable between symposia and local committee organisers should not seek to use all the money allocated unless it is absolutely necessary for the symposium to proceed.***



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Criteria for Allocating Complimentary Registrations

All presenters in the featured symposium must pay a registration fee in the usual way, however there is a minimal number of complimentary registrations (as above) which can provide assistance where necessary – see 'Budget' item above.

The criteria for allocating these complimentary places include:

- Specialist speakers who cannot afford to register;
- Specialist speakers for whom it would be impossible to ask them to speak and to also then ask them to pay for the privilege.

NOTE that some specialist speakers may fall into one of the complimentary registration categories that are allocated by the Local Committee - as outlined in TheMHS Information Kit. If so then they will not need a complimentary registration to be allocated through the Invited Symposium criteria. Please liaise with TheMHS Conference Director.

Communication and Paragraph for Registration Brochure Due Early April

Each committee i.e., the **Local Committee** and TheMHS Board, must allocate a contact person/organiser (from their committee) for each of their featured symposia. This person will organise speakers and a convenor or chair for the session (which may be the contact person or another person).

Topics and speakers for the featured symposia must be confirmed by the time the information is required for the registration flyer to go to print in April. For each symposium the contact person/organiser must provide the Conference Director with a title, a brief paragraph to summarise the content, and the names and affiliations of the speakers for inclusion in publicity.

Please complete the **Application for Featured Symposia (Information Sheet A5)** and return to the Conference Director.