

## JUDGING CRITERIA FOR SSM CONFERENCE ABSTRACT REVIEWERS

Please score the abstract according to the following guidelines. Scores are to be awarded in two parts: 0-10 points for the abstract '*structure & detail*' plus 0-5 points for '*interest, appeal & impact*'; reviewer variability in each score will be assessed. Only the 0-10 score will be used to rank the abstracts, though 0-5 score may be used inform decisions on tied scores or plenary selection amongst the top scoring abstracts.

Tables, charts or references should not be included in the abstract. The PICO format may be a helpful reference: <http://www.usc.edu/hsc/ebnet/ebframe/PICO.htm>.

Reviewers have the option to score 'zero' any abstract deemed to be seriously flawed; all zero scores will be reviewed by the SSM committee.

### **Title / Structured Headings / Overall Presentation: 0 – 1 point**

Is the title specific, adequate and concise? Does it accurately describe the population studied, the study design or method of data collection or analysis, the research objective or question?

### **Introduction/ Objectives / Hypotheses or Research Question(s): 0 – 1 points**

Is the context made clear? Is the scientific rationale clearly stated? Are the aims, objectives, hypotheses or research question(s) clearly stated?

### **Methods: 0 – 3 points**

**For all types of study**, are the Methods **clearly described**? Are the data sources clearly specified? Are the methods, analytical techniques and software tools specified? Are the methods appropriate to the question being investigated?

**For qualitative studies:** Are qualitative methods appropriate to answering the research questions/addressing research objectives? Are the recruitment method(s), sample population(s), methods of data collection, and methods of data analyses described and appropriate?

**For quantitative, observational experimental or modelling studies:** Are the sample frame(s), sampling method(s), sample population(s), intervention and control conditions, methods of data collection, main outcome measures, assumptions and statistical methods all clear and appropriate?

**For mixed methods:** Is there appropriate use of quantitative/qualitative methods, each clearly described, in an order that makes sense, and each appropriately integrated at the right stage of the analysis/interpretation?

**Systematic reviews:** Should state objectives; data sources; study eligibility criteria, search strategy (e.g. data/text mining), participants, and interventions; study appraisal and synthesis methods (e.g. meta-analysis, meta-regression, narrative synthesis, meta-ethnography). Has the risk of bias and quality of the included studies been considered?

### **Results: 0 – 3 points**

Are results available and described appropriately to be confident that sufficient material will be presented at the conference? Abstracts should not say only that 'results will be presented'.

**For quantitative, observational experimental or mixed methods studies:** Do data presented give a clear indication of precision, favouring confidence intervals over p-values? Do modelling studies present sensitivity analyses?

**For qualitative and mixed methods studies:** Are the sample characteristics described? Are themes and/or categories presented systematically and meaningfully? Is the context in which data were produced recognised in the language used, for example, are data recognised as reported?

**For mixed methods:** Describe the data resulting from each method as well as integrated analyses.

**Systematic reviews:** Should report search results at each stage plus main outcomes.

### **Conclusions: 0 – 2 points**

Are the conclusions clear and concise? Do they reflect the aims and objectives? Are they supported by the results presented? Are key study limitations acknowledged? Where appropriate, are the implications made clear for policy, practice and further research?

### **Interest, appeal and impact: 0 – 5 points**

Is it interesting? Would it appeal to a broad ASM audience? Does it have the potential to create impact (i.e. change clinical or public health practice or policy, improve health, reduce inequalities in health, change the course of science)? Is it novel/exciting/much better methodologically than other studies in the area?