

Experts Arthritis

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING AN “Experts in Arthritis” SESSION

The United States Bone and Joint Initiative (USBJI), the U.S. National Action Network of the worldwide Bone and Joint Decade, is delighted to partner with you to offer the *Experts in Arthritis* program. Thank you so much for your participation. Highlighted below is a suggested timeline of activities as well as general information as you organize the session.

Please contact the USBJI Office (847-430-5054/847-430-5052, usbji@usbji.org) with comments or questions as you move forward. Many thanks and here’s to a wonderful and “healthy” event!

A. Registration Form

Complete and return the Registration Form to the USBJI (>4 weeks prior to session). The key elements to setting up a program are confirming the date, time, location and presenter. If you do not have a presenter, the USBJI will find and confirm one for you. If you do not have a location, the USBJI may suggest approaching the local public library, or provide other suggestions.

B. Event Promotion, Press Material and Distribution

1. Let us know how you intend to promote the event (flyers, bookmarks, posters, notices, emails, mailings, etc.). Many organizers/venues have a system and in-house or available resources.

2. The Initiative can provide you with a promotional notice (flyer/poster) with the main elements of the program and speaker name you can use to promote the *Experts in Arthritis* session. We have templates developed for flyers/posters and just need to know what you need, and when. We will make up the flyers/posters for you, but you print them out on your office printer or locally. We can also make up bookmarks and print them for you. (For libraries using the program: *Experts in Arthritis @ your library*). We can provide a media alert for you to complete and distribute to local media.

3. Depending on the nature of the venue, you might wish to consider the following:

- Distribution of a flyer to members of your community group, public library, church, company employees, at other community venues 2-4 weeks ahead of the event
- Distribution of bookmarks (ex. at libraries, inserted in all books taken out of library one week prior to session)
- Poster display at host venue and other community venues
- Letters of invitation to employees, members, patrons

4. Reach out to the local Arthritis Foundation Chapter, local hospitals, health systems and practices, as collaborators for your event. As part of their collaboration, ask them to distribute your flyer to their members, or in the case of healthcare organizations, ask their physicians and healthcare professionals to hand the flyer to their patients with arthritis and encourage them to attend. You should acknowledge collaborators at the event, and you could offer to do so on promotional materials. You could also invite them to distribute materials at the session.

5. The host organization and any other collaborating organization for the event should consider sending out special invitations to the session and to promote the session to key local health officials, offices, civic leaders or organizations.

6. If you are reaching out to the media, we have found it best to send the media alert three weeks in advance and follow up accordingly with health, lifestyle, and sports media at local print outlets, and to news directors, assignment editors, health and sports producers and assignment editors at local TV and radio. Also, we have found it worthwhile to contact your local Associated Press bureaus to encourage their coverage. We can provide a press release template for dissemination on-site the day of the event and to media who were not able to attend.

B. Pre and On-Site Logistics/Hand-Outs

1. Having set the date and time for the session and confirmed the presenter(s), USBJI will coordinate arrangements with you. Most venues allow 60 minutes for a session.

2. Confirm all A/V equipment (laptop, LCD projector, screen, podium, microphones, and signage).

3. Confirm with USBJI that all relevant collateral material to be handed out at the session has arrived and is in your possession. These materials should be placed on a table for participants to pick up as they come in. You may wish also to offer some suitable light refreshments.

- *Experts in Arthritis* handouts, from USBJI
- Materials from the Arthritis Foundation
- Materials from the Arthritis Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Question cards: Provide to all participants as they register
- Evaluation Form: Copy enough for all participants

You can also consider distributing:

- Materials from Regional Medical Libraries, or other suitable materials
- A collection of your arthritis resources, if you are a library
- Materials from collaborating organizations

4. Review additional on-site needs including skirted tables for collateral material, a podium sign.

5. Arrange for photos to be taken during the session for you and for the USBJI.

Timing: Confirm quantities and review on-site logistics four weeks prior to event or earlier.

C. Speaker Selection

1. The presenter of an *Experts in Arthritis* session must be a Health Care Professional (HCP) able to present and answer questions on arthritis. An organizer can also be the presenter, as long as they are a health care professional. If you do not have a presenter, the USBJI will identify and confirm one for you.

2. Confirm the representative(s) from the host organization.

3. It is highly recommended that the HCP presenter should identify and invite a local person with arthritis to “put a face” and present the section “The Role of the Patient.” If no patient HCP presents.

4. The HCP presenter will represent the USBJI, unless someone else from the Initiative is especially invited to attend and make a few introductory comments.

D. Program Scenario

The primary goal of the program is to enable patients to interact directly with the presenter expert(s). This is the main attraction of the program to participants, so it is most important not to overrun the presentation part of the program and to allow the full allocated time to the Q&A session.

The second goal is to emphasize to patients that they themselves must play a leading role in managing the disease. Hence the presentations at the start on “The Role of the Patient in Disease Management” and “The Role of Nutrition and Exercise in Disease Management.” The program is deliberately structured to raise these issues before the Q&A session and to underline their importance.

It is preferable that a patient present “The Role of the Patient in Disease Management.” There are prepared slides for them to follow, but it would be ideal if they can introduce their own story and experience, explain how they have taken control, and “connect” with participants.

1. Host representative introduces session. Timing 2 minutes
2. Health care professional takes over, and presents program. Timing 25 minutes.
 - Brief introduction about the Initiative
 - Brief overview about arthritis (Tailor to audience level of knowledge. The higher level of knowledge, the less needs to be said.)
 - The Role of the Patient in Disease Management (ideally delivered by a patient)
 - The Role of Nutrition and Exercise in Disease Management
3. Questions and answers. Questions cards should be collected by the organizer or other staff and handed to the lead presenter. Timing 25+ minutes
4. Thanks and adjournment. Collect evaluation forms.

To respect published session timing, presentations should be given within the allocated 25 minutes, allowing a full 30 minutes for the Q&A session. The Q&A session is the part participants have come for and it should not be shortened. Most presenters manage to take some questions during their presentation which provides for a more lively interactive session, but care should be taken not to allow questions to run on. Allowing questions to run on is unfair to the presenter, and the audience, and in sessions where there are several presenters, unfair to the following speakers.

It is advisable to officially close the session after the announced time. If time allows, invite those that wish, to stay on and continue discussions with the presenter(s).

E. Photographs, Evaluations, and Short Write-Up

If photographs are taken during the event, the USBJI would appreciate a copy as well as a short write up on the session to include on www.usbji.org, and in the Initiative’s Newsletter.

Please return participant evaluation forms to USBJI, along with your completed evaluation form as the organizer.