

Northwest Chapter
The American Association of Physicists in Medicine



Chapter Meeting Organizer's Handbook

Introduction

Welcome! Thank you for taking on the challenging and rewarding task of organizing a meeting for the NW Chapter of the AAPM. Through your work you will have the opportunity to interact with some of the most forethinking professionals in the medical physics community and to bring new ideas to improve patient care throughout the NW region.

There are four major components which must come together for a successful meeting. They are:

- Location
- Speakers
- Vendors
- Education Credits

Each of these areas takes significant time and work to coordinate. We highly recommend you work with partners to delegate these tasks. Most successful meetings have two organizers who share the responsibilities of location scouting and speaker recruitment. Other members of the Chapter Board or volunteers from the Chapter's membership can help recruit vendors or submit the applications for CAMPEP and MDCB credits. Having a professional assistant such as a department office administrator or even a professional event organizer assist with the on-the-ground details such as name badges and meeting packets is also enormously helpful.

Most critically, you must be clear who is responsible for each task and follow up regularly to ensure all aspects of the meeting plan are completed on schedule. It is far better to recognize early if your meeting co-organizers need help than to deal with the consequences if their tasks are not completed on time.

This handbook outlines the major steps necessary to organize a successful meeting, with tips and tricks to help you along the way.

Good luck!

Miriam Lambert

NW AAPM Chapter President-Elect, 2017

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Organization Timeline for a Successful Meeting

5 months prior to meeting:

- Meeting Organizer kick-off meeting with chapter board members and volunteers
- Scout venues
- Determine a meeting date

4 months out:

- Finalize venue
- Pick hotel and reach agreement on discounted hotel rooms
- Determine a theme for the meeting
- Begin to contact possible high profile keynote speakers from outside the NW region

3 months out:

- Finalize keynote speakers
- Send a "Save the Date" e-mail blast to the chapter membership
- Send the first request for abstract submissions to the chapter membership
- Determine location for a post meeting event/happy hour
- Post the meeting date on the AAPM website
- Send out save-the-date notices to vendors and the national AAPM chapter meeting registry
- Post basic information about the meeting on the chapter website
- Determine the number of vendors that you can host comfortably
- Setup the vendor registration meeting registration on the website
- Determine if you will have young investigator session

10 weeks out:

- Send a second request for abstract submissions from members
- Request young investigator submissions from residents and graduate students if you have having a YI session
- Set up website for attendee registration
- Send an e-mail blast to the chapter membership announcing meeting date, location, and theme with a link to the website registration page
- Post a link to the hotel reservation website with instructions for accessing the group rate

8 weeks out:

- Write meeting agenda and post on website
- Request speakers' CVs, learning objectives, and abstracts for CAMPEP and MDCB credits
- Send requests for meeting sponsorship to vendors
- Put together a basic budget based on venue costs, catering costs, expected vendor sponsorships, faculty dinner costs, and registration money.
- Send a second e-mail blast to the chapter membership

5 weeks out:

- Submit speaker information for CAMPEP and MDCB credits
- Select a location for the speakers' dinner the night before the meeting

- Select a location for the “Night Out” social gathering after the meeting
- Provide the vendors with the contact information of someone associated with the venue to coordinate supply delivery and setup
- Request speakers send a copy of their presentation to you by the week prior to the meeting

4 weeks out:

- Design and order prints of a “Vendor Passport” for raffle drawing
- Verify that you have stamps for all attending vendors. Order additional stamps as needed.
- Order a prize for the raffle drawing
- Determine catering needs for the meeting
- Assign a volunteer to create speaker and meeting evaluation forms for CAMPEP and MDCB credits
- Assign a volunteer to create attendance sheets for physicists (CAMPEP) and therapists/dosimetrists (MDCB).

2 weeks out:

- Send a reminder e-mail requesting speakers’ presentations
- Finalize catering order
- Assign a volunteer to bring vendor passports, stamps, and raffle prize to the meeting
- Assign a volunteer to print out and bring copies of the attendance sheets, speaker, and meeting evaluation forms for CAMPEP and MDCB credits
- Assign volunteers to staff the meeting registration desk and distribute meeting materials to attendees

Final week out:

- Assemble meeting packet for attendees
- Load all speakers’ presentations on the venue’s computer and verify functionality of each presentation with the venue’s audio/visual system

Day of meeting:

- Volunteers should arrive at least an hour prior to the meeting start time to lay out meeting packets, name badges, and evaluation forms on the registration table.
- Chapter president gives a brief welcoming address at the opening of the meeting.
- Meeting organizer serves as a moderator for the meeting, introducing speakers and encouraging audience participation.
- Chapter president provides an agenda and runs the business meeting during lunch.
- Chapter secretary collects all meeting evaluation forms at the end of the meeting.
- Attend the social hour, and relax. You did it!

Meeting Follow-up:

- Submit CAMPEP and MDCB credit forms
- Send thank you letters and honorariums (\$100 each) to the speakers
- Reimburse the keynote speaker(s) travel and lodging expenses
- Thank the volunteers who helped you organize the meeting

Choosing a Date

The NW Chapter traditionally holds two one-day meetings a year, on a Friday in the Spring and the Fall. The Spring Chapter meeting is usually in mid-April to mid-May, the Fall meeting in late September to mid-October. There are many factors to consider when choosing a date.

Spring Meeting Conflicts – What to Avoid

- Spring Break (check Seattle and Portland school calendars)
- Religious holidays (Passover, Good Friday, Eid al-Fitr, etc.)
- Memorial Day Weekend
- AAPM Spring Clinical Meeting

Fall Meeting Conflicts – What to Avoid

- Religious holidays (several important Jewish holidays fall between mid-September and mid-October)
- Labor Day Weekend
- ASTRO annual meeting

Tip: Google religious holidays to see a list of religious observances and the dates on which they fall in any given year. Islamic and Jewish holidays follow a lunar calendar, meaning the date changes from year to year.

Choosing a Meeting Venue

The Spring meeting is usually held in or near Portland, OR. The Fall meeting is usually held in or near Seattle, WA. The meeting location may be a hotel, a university, a museum, etc. – but a successful meeting venue must have the following features.

- Meeting Room
 - Large enough to accommodate approximately 80 attendees seated at tables
 - Good quality projection and sound system (test this when scouting venues by hooking a laptop to the AV system and playing a short video clip)
 - On-site computer connected to AV system
 - On-site technical support during the meeting
 - Cordless microphone for questions from the audience
- Vendor Room
 - Immediately adjacent to or near the meeting room
 - Large enough to accommodate at least 16 5-foot long vendor tables AND the lunch buffet/coffee break tables AND tables for the attendees to eat lunch in the room with the vendors, ideally.
 - Power strips for all vendor tables
 - Wi-Fi access
 - Meeting registration table immediately outside the vendor room
- Business Meeting Room
 - Separate room for board members and interested attendees to hold the business meeting during the lunch break. This does not have to be adjacent to the meeting/vendor rooms, but should be within a 5-minute walk.
 - Large enough to accommodate 12-15 attendees. Does not have to include refreshments.
- Overnight Accommodation
 - The meeting does not have to be held in the hotel where overnight attendees stay, but should be within a 5 to 10-minute walk from that location.
- Parking
 - Ideally the venue will provide free parking for meeting attendees. Parking does not have to be on site, but should be within a 5-minute walk of the meeting location.
- Night Out Location
 - A relaxed space for after-meeting drinks and light refreshments. This can be a courtyard or near-by attraction such as a museum or river cruise ship.
 - Should be within a 5 to 10-minute walk from the meeting location.
- Catering
 - On-site catering for breakfast, lunch, and two coffee breaks must be provided.
 - Food should be served in the vendor room.
 - Catering for the Night Out can be provided by the meeting venue or a separate venue if appropriate.

Choosing a Hotel

Ideally, a hotel for overnight attendees, speakers, and vendors should be within a ten-minute walk of the meeting location and a 30-minute drive from an airport. Factors to consider when choosing a hotel include:

- Shuttle service to and from airport (ideal but not required).
- Nearby restaurant options for the Thursday night Speakers' dinner.
- Group rate (anticipate reserving a block of 35 rooms for overnight attendees, speakers, and vendors).
- Upgraded suite options for keynote speaker(s).
- Wi-Fi service (ideally included in room rate).
- Parking availability and expense.

Recruiting Speakers

A successful meeting will have a slate of 9 to 11 speakers with presentations ranging from 25 minutes to an hour. While most chapter members work in therapeutic physics, it is important to include talks that appeal to our colleagues in imaging and nuclear medicine physics as well.

- Talks should be clinically relevant. No theoretical research in computer algorithms or Monte Carlo modeling outside of a Young Investigator symposium.
- At least one prominent keynote speaker from outside the NW region.
- At least one presentation on advances in imaging physics or nuclear medicine.
- Presentations should not be vendor specific. Speaking about clinical work that uses a vendor's product is fine if it includes options for alternative vendor products that do the same thing.
- An effort should be made to recruit a diverse lineup of speakers, including women and people of color. The AAPM Women's Professional Sub-Committee and the Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee can serve as resources to recruit accomplished keynote speakers.

Options to consider:

- A Point/Counterpoint debate between two speakers on a topic of current interest.
- A SAMS presentation (this will require the speaker to submit questions well in advance, and necessitate a method of collecting audience answers during the presentation. Consult with AAPM headquarters for suggestions on how to make this work.)
- Invite a board member of the ABR or AAPM to speak on changes to certification requirements or similar topics of interest to board certified physicists.
- A Young Investigators symposium for graduate students or residents to present their work.
- A slate of 3 or 4 speakers on a single topic over the course of an hour.
- A non-medical physicist to discuss advances that affect cancer treatment but are outside most physicists' experience. Examples include immunotherapy or genomic testing.

Recruiting speakers is the most time-consuming and important task of organizing a chapter meeting. Begin early with an e-mail blast encouraging chapter members to submit an abstract for consideration, and follow up with at least one or two reminder e-mails in the months prior to the meeting.

Applying for CAMPEP and MDCB Credits

To apply for CAMPEP and MDCB credits, the following must be submitted no later than 4 weeks prior to the meeting:

- A CV, abstract, and 4 learning objectives for each speaker.
- 4 learning objectives for the meeting as a whole.
- A CAMPEP agreement to participate (available on the CAMPEP website).

Sample meeting and speaker evaluation forms are also available on the CAMPEP website.

<http://www.campep.org>

Recruiting Vendor Support

Vendors make up the backbone of our chapter meetings. Member registration fees cannot cover the expense of hosting a meeting, so you need to recruit vendors to send representatives to the meeting.

There are three tiers of vendor support for a chapter meeting.

- Bronze Level Sponsor -- \$700
 - 6 ft long table
 - Registration for one vendor representative
 - Attendance at the Thursday night speakers' dinner.
- Silver Level Sponsor -- \$1,500 (2 silver level sponsorships available)
 - 6 ft long table
 - Registration for two vendor representatives
 - Recognition in the meeting program for sponsoring a coffee break (we have two)
 - Attendance at the Thursday night speakers' dinner.
- Gold Level Sponsor -- \$2,500 (2 gold level sponsorships available)
 - 6 ft long table
 - Registration for four vendor representatives
 - Opportunity to give a ten-minute talk prior to a coffee break. This is NOT a product commercial, but rather a look at future technologies. Talk may be given by a vendor rep or a physicist in the community.
 - Recognition in the meeting program for sponsoring the lunch or the after meeting social.
 - Attendance at the Thursday night speakers' dinner.

A balance must be maintained between the number of vendors attending the meeting (more vendors = more income), and the value the meeting provides for each vendor. We want the vendors to feel they have quality time interacting with their customers at the meeting, so they will return for future meetings. Therefore, we can't crowd the vendor room with so many tables that they feel cramped or overlooked.

Tips:

- Cap the number of vendors at 18 or 20 at the absolute most. This will comfortably fill the vendor room for most locations, and incentivize vendors to register early rather than waiting to the last minute.
- Create a "Vendor Passport" to encourage meeting attendees to visit each vendor table. Provide each vendor representative with a stamp of his or her company logo and tell them to stamp the card as attendees visit them. Attendees with more than 12 stamps on their card can turn the card in for a drawing to win a prize at the end of the meeting. Past prizes have included an Amazon Tap and an Echo.
- Create a "Vendor Registration" link on the chapter website as soon as the meeting date is determined. You need to contact vendors early as they schedule their meeting attendance for the year.

Past vendors have included:

Gold Level:

Varian Medical Systems

Elekta

Silver Level:

Sun Nuclear Corp

BrainLab

Bronze Level:

Modus Medical Devices

PTW New York

Accuray

CIVCO Medical

LAP Laser

IBA Dosimetry

ScandiDose

Theragenics Corporation

Phylips healthcare

RaySearch Americas

IsoAid

Landauer

Mobius Medical Systems

ViewRay

Life-Line/RadCalc

Oncology Data Systems (MU CHECK)

Unfors RaySafe

Isoray Medical

Qfix

Standard Imaging

Vision RT

RIT

C-RAD

MimVista

MD Anderson Dosimetry Laboratory

ZapIT! Medical

Orfit

NELCO

Conclusion

The process may seem daunting, but you can do it!

The most important thing you can do as a meeting organizer is to start early and give yourself and your team enough time to accomplish each task on the meeting planning checklist.

The second most important thing you need to do is to recruit volunteers to help you, to ask for help when you need it (BEFORE you feel overwhelmed), and to communicate often with your team. In the early planning stages a group conference call once every three weeks or so might be sufficient. By the last week prior to the meeting, you'll be exchanging multiple daily phone calls and e-mails with your team members. By the day after the meeting, you might be so sick of talking to each other you need a break for a few weeks.

Send your team members a thank you letter for their hard work, make sure the CAMPEP and MDCB evaluation forms are submitted, and take some time to celebrate your accomplishment.

You rock!

Appendix A
Sample Meeting Agenda

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 7:00 | Vendor setup |
| 7:15 -- 8:00 | Registration. Coffee, fruit, danishes served. |
| 8:00 -- 8:10 | Welcome |
| 8:10 -- 9:00 | Speaker 1 |
| 9:00 -- 9:50 | Speaker 2 |
| 9:50 -- 10:00 | Gold Sponsor Presentation |
| 10:00 -- 10:25 | Coffee Break with Vendors |
| 10:25 -- 11:30 | Keynote Speaker |
| 11:30 -- 1:00 | Lunch / EXCOM meeting |
| 1:00 -- 1:30 | Point/Counterpoint debate or YI Symposium |
| 1:30 -- 1:55 | Speaker 4 |
| 1:55 -- 2:15 | Speaker 5 |
| 2:15 -- 2:25 | Gold Sponsor Presentation |
| 2:25 -- 2:50 | Coffee Break with Vendors |
| 2:50 -- 3:30 | Speaker 6 |
| 3:30 -- 4:00 | Speaker 7 |
| 4:00 -- 4:30 | Speaker 8 |
| 4:30 -- 5:00 | Speaker 9 |
| 5:00 | Night Out |

Appendix B
Sample Meeting Announcements

Initial e-mail blast

Subject: SAVE THE DATE! (Spring/Fall) NW AAPM Chapter Meeting (date)

The NW Chapter of the AAPM is delighted to announce that our (Spring/Fall) chapter meeting will be held on (date) in (city, state). Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. A registration link will be sent out soon.

Abstracts are now being accepted for presentations from 25 minutes to an hour in length. To submit an abstract, please contact (contact name) at (e-mail address). Submissions must include an abstract, current CV, and four learning objectives. Preference will be given to presentations which are of immediate interest to therapy and imaging physicists working in the clinic. The submission deadline is (six weeks prior to meeting date).

[If hosting a YI Symposium: Graduate students and residents are also encouraged to submit abstracts for the Young Investigators Symposium. Each entrant will give a 10-minute presentation on his or her research in Medical Physics. Presentations will be judged on content, clarity, novelty, and relevance to the field. Prizes will be awarded.]

Follow-up e-mail blast

Subject: Registration now open for the NW AAPM (Spring/Fall) Chapter Meeting

Registration is now open for the (Spring/Fall) meeting of the NW Chapter of the AAPM on (date) at (location) in (city, state). Don't miss this opportunity to meet other physicists in the NW and to learn of new advances in the field. CAMPEP and MDCB credits are in process.

Register at <http://www.nwaapm.org>

A few presentation slots are still available. To submit an abstract, please contact (contact name) at (e-mail address). Submissions must include an abstract, current CV, and four learning objectives. Preference will be given to presentations which are of immediate interest to therapy and imaging physicists working in the clinic. The submission deadline is (six weeks prior to meeting date).

Final e-mail blast

Subject: Reminder: (Spring/Fall) NW AAPM Chapter Meeting (date)

If you haven't done so yet, be sure to register for the (Spring/Fall) meeting of the NW Chapter of the AAPM on (date) at (location) in (city, state). Don't miss this opportunity to meet other physicists in the NW and to learn of new advances in the field. CAMPEP and MDCB credits are in process.

Register at <http://www.nwaapm.org>

Appendix C
Sample Keynote Speaker Recruitment Letter

Subject: Invitation to speak at the NW AAPM Chapter Meeting (date)

Dear (name),

I am writing to invite you to serve as a keynote speaker at our regional chapter meeting (date) in (city, state). Our members are always interested in seeing new applications in clinically relevant settings, and your work in (their research field) would be a great fit. As an invited guest, your travel and lodging expenses would be reimbursed by the chapter. (Add details about meeting location and other presentations which might be enticing).

I hope you are available to join us for what should be a great meeting.

Best wishes,

(Your name)

(Your title)

Appendix D
Sample Vendor Recruitment Letter

Subject: VENDORS, PLEASE SAVE THE DATE, (date) NW AAPM (Spring/Fall) Meeting at (location) in (city, state)

Greetings,

This is (your name, title) of the NW Chapter of the AAPM. I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your continued support of our chapter meetings. Without your support, it would be far more difficult if not impossible to hold substantive meetings.

The (year) NWAAPM (Spring/Fall) Meeting will be on (date) in (city, state), at (location). Hotel accommodations will be coming soon.

Vendor sponsorship levels remain unchanged. There are (number) spots available which will be filled by first commitment. We are adding two 10-minute time slots for vendor scientific presentations during our session for the first two vendors to commit to a Gold sponsorship. This is not intended to be a sales pitch, but is an opportunity to highlight new scientific technologies. Slides must be submitted 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

Bronze Sponsorship \$700, which includes a 6' table and meeting registration for one representative.

Silver Sponsorship \$1,500, table, registration for two vendor representatives and vendor sponsorship for a coffee break. Only two silver sponsorships are available.

Gold Sponsorship \$2,500, table, registration for four representatives and vendor sponsorship for the lunch or the evening social (first commitment gets to choose which one). The gold level also includes a 10-minute speaker talk about current research on one of your products. Only two gold sponsorships are available.

Please confirm with me via this e-mail address your commitment and at what level you wish to sponsor the meeting. With your sponsorship commitment e-mail, please include your electronic logo for our website and printed materials.

Online registration for vendors is now open for those who wish to pay by credit card at the NW AAPM website: <http://www.nwaapm.org>.

Payments by check can be made payable to NW Chapter AAPM and mailed to:

NWAAPM Treasurer

c/o (name)

(Treasurer's mailing address)

If your company is unable to attend our meeting, please consider a sponsorship contribution to our chapter of any amount. Your logo will be included in our online and printed materials.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Thank you in advance for your support.

(Your name and title)

Appendix E
Sample Speakers' Dinner Invitation Letter

Subject: NW AAPM Vendor & Speaker Dinner, Thursday night, (date) at (time)

The NW AAPM Chapter is delighted to invite you to dinner Thursday evening (date), the night before our (Spring/Fall) chapter meeting. Dinner will take place at (time) at (Location). The address is (address, city, state).

This will be a great opportunity to relax and meet other highly qualified physicists in an informal setting, as well as some representatives from the vendors who have made this meeting possible. Please RSVP to (contact name, title, e-mail address).

Thank you,

(your name and title)

Appendix F
YI Symposium Scoring Sheet

**(Date) NW AAPM (Spring/Fall) Meeting – Young Investigator
Session
Evaluation Form**

Name of
Evaluator _____

(Date)
(Location)
(Address)

| Name of Presenter | Quality of Scientific Content (0-10 marks) | Quality and Organization of Slides/Video (0-5 marks) | Verbal Clarity of Speaker and Timing (0-5 marks) | Novelty, Innovation and Relevance (0-10) | Total Score out of a maximum of 30 marks |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Comments: _____

(Name1): _____

(Name2): _____

Appendix G
YI Symposium Award Certificate

Appendix H
Sample Vendor Stamp Sheet Template

| | | | | | |
|----------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | | | | |
| Elekta | MD Anderson | Phillips | Sun Nuclear | | |
| C-Rad | LAP Lasers | NELCO | Standard Imaging | | |
| BrainLab | Isoray Medical | MU Check | RaySearch Laboratories | | |
| Bionix | IsoAid | Modus QA | Qfix | Vison RT | |
| Accuray | IBA Dosimetry | Mobius Medical | PTW New York | Varian Medical Systems | |