

VTI Level III: Annual Conference module

Introduction

Communications & Volunteer Development is a newly formed department with expanding responsibilities, which include the Annual Conference. With these changes the department is looking at making the process of planning an Annual Conference a more effective process for all future host Chapters. We want to try and make the Conference an easy event to plan on both sides – for the host chapter and HSC staff. From host Chapters, to HSC staff, to Chapters and Area Reps all over Canada, the Annual Conference is a wonderful time to experience. It is something that we all look forward to. We want to build on that excitement and fun and make the Annual Conference an easy event to plan and execute for all future Conferences. We would like to build on your experiences, the positive and negative ones, and help other potential host Chapters by providing them with a manual on *How to Host an Annual Conference*.

In the past, we have had enthusiastic Chapters host a Conference but the responsibilities weren't always clear. At times throughout planning the Conference some Chapters have felt overwhelmed, while other Chapters have enjoyed every minute. The Conference has always been a positive experience for all planning Chapters, what we want is to build on your experiences and help other Chapters prepare for their responsibilities.

What We Want

The following headings are what we will be focusing on in Winnipeg. We have posed some questions for you to think about. For the participants that have already experienced the Conference, think back to your meetings, duties, and timelines. Did they work for you? Would you change anything now you have had some time away from it? Would you do anything differently, or keep the same, now that you know how a Conference functions? And, what information would have helped you while planning for the Conference? For the participants that haven't yet experienced planning a Conference, think about specific information that you believe you need in order to be an effective planner. What specific pieces of information do you want to know? What have you encountered already that has helped you to focus on the task? And, what would you like to know from past Host Chapters that could help out a future snag or two?

Putting Together a Bid

- What do you think is the current process of selecting a potential host Chapter? Is there a better way? What would you like to see changed?
- What pieces of information do you think is important to know in order to select the proper hotel?
- What stipulations should we have in our bid in order to avoid potential pitfalls?

Host Chapter Responsibilities

- For past Conference participants: What did you think were the Host Chapter's responsibilities? Once you found out what your *real* responsibilities were – was the list different from what you thought it would be?
- For future Conference participants: What do you think your responsibilities are as the Host Chapter?
- What structure did you use/will you use to organize the tasks?
- Do you think a critical path will/would help? If so, how?
- What was the hardest task to execute? How could it be made easier?
- What was the easiest task to execute?
- What did you most enjoy about the past Conferences?

National Office Responsibilities

- What are the roles of the HSC staff (that you believe now or then)?
- What is the best way to communicate Conference details from National office to the Host Chapter?
- What information from National office would have helped you earlier on?
- What areas, that National currently is responsible for, would you like to add input?

What's next?

We have already started to adjust some of the planning process of the Annual Conference. Attached to this package is the revised Host Chapter application. This application has been changed in order to pinpoint areas that are important to our delegates – we need to ensure that our facilities will provide what we need! Take a look at this revised application and come with thoughts on what you like, don't like, what is missing, and what should be added.

Huntington Society of Canada

Annual General Meeting and Conference

Application for Host City

1. General Information:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Chapter/Area</i> | |
| Contact Person | |
| Address | |
| Phone | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

2. Hotel Information:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------|--|
| Hotel | |
| Location (ie: downtown, outskirts) | |
| Contact Name (position) | |
| Address | |
| Phone | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

3. Hotel Requirements

| | Guidelines | yes/no | Comments |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Plenary/meeting room (main banquet room) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 300 All 3 days | | |
| Break out rooms (not including plenary) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 10 For 2 days Capacity for 40 theatre style | | |
| Minimum # of bedrooms available to HSC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90-110 | | |
| Cost for rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$100-\$130/night double occupancy | | |
| Non-Smoking Rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of | | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| | rooms reserved | | |
| Catering Costs (most recent menu attached) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breakfast (avg. \$6-\$10) • hot/cold lunch (avg. \$10-\$20) • dinner banquet (avg. \$20-\$30) | | |
| Wheelchair Accessible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whole hotel • suites/rooms | | |
| Cancellation Rate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terms & conditions • non-refundable deposit | | |
| Checklist for suites/rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hairdryers • iron & ironing boards • coffee maker | | |
| Workout Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is one available? • hours of operation | | |
| Parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ample space • cost | | |
| Floor Plan (floor plan attached) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is one available? | | |

4. Ground Transportation

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Distance from airport</i> | |
| Availability of shuttle service to and from airport | |
| Airport transportation coordinated by local volunteers | |

5. Social Activities

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|--|
| Number of volunteers willing to help | |
|---------------------------------------------|--|

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Friday Night Dinner Event (HSC will pay \$30/person) (hosted by local chapter & to have local flavour) | |
| Ideas for give-aways (coordinated by local volunteers) | |
| Proximity of local bars and social outings outside of hotel | |
| Ideas for post-Conference excursion for interested delegates | |

6. Dignitaries

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Ideas for dignitaries to invite | |
| Subjects/themes of particular interest to local HD or volunteer community | |

7. General Comments

How would hosting the Annual Conference help develop your chapter/area?

How would hosting the Annual Conference benefit area HD families and health professionals in the region?