CHAIRS' BRIEFING

Thank you so much for agreeing to chair a panel at *Medical Humanities: (In)Visibility, the NNMHR 2021 Congress* and for playing a key role in making this a dynamic and rewarding experience for all participants. We have deliberately invited chairs from different disciplinary backgrounds and career stages, so whether this is the first or fifty-first time you've chaired a conference panel, we hope that these notes help make the task easy and enjoyable for you and for the speakers on your panel.

Parallel sessions are structured around 2 or 3 papers in a 90-minute session. Each speaker has been asked to prepare a 20-minute presentation allowing at least 30 minutes for questions and discussion. Although you can agree with your presenters exactly how to structure the session, taking questions at the end of all papers can help to draw out the connections between them. **Keynote speakers** have been asked to prepare a 45-minute presentation allowing 45 minutes for discussion and questions.

Each session will also have a dedicated **producer** who will deal with all technical aspects of running the session, allowing you to focus on the presentations. We will put you in touch with your producer in due course, once the rota has been finalised.

To see the full programme and the abstracts for your session please go to https://nnmhr2021.org. You will need to **register to receive the password** to access the detailed programme. We will provide the Zoom link for your session at least 24h beforehand, but you can also access the call via the 'location' pin on the website listing.

Before the session

- Please reach out to the speakers. While full abstracts are included in the programme, we have not asked for biographies and you may also like to ask if there's anything in particular they would like you to highlight. Please also confirm speakers' preferences as regards social media – if for whatever reason people do not wish their talk to be tweeted or screenshots taken (for example, because they are presenting sensitive or unpublished data) it is important for you to announce this at the beginning of the session.
- Agree with the speakers and producer the order of the papers, how the session will be structured and check whether people will be presenting live or sharing a pre-recorded video.
- Agree with the speakers and producer a 'back channel' for communications, *e.g.* exchanging mobile numbers or setting up a WhatsApp or equivalent group, so that you can contact each other quicky if there are major technical difficulties.

On the day

- Please join the Zoom call at least 15 minutes before the session start time for a technical check.
- Welcome people to the panel and ensure a prompt beginning.
- Introduce each of the speakers – briefly, but ideally with something that goes beyond just the title of their talk and institutional affiliation.
- Politely, but firmly keep the speakers to time. You might agree a way to do this with the Producer.
- Facilitate questions and answers in a way that encourages wide participation in discussion. The Producer will help with monitoring the chat and the use of the 'raised hand' function.
- Conclude the panel in a timely fashion.

We further ask that you keep questions of equality, diversity and inclusion to the fore. This includes consideration of the fact that this is a highly interdisciplinary conference, so people may not be familiar with each other's fields let alone research findings, and that who gets invited to ask the first questions may not be just a matter of quick hands in the air.