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**TOP TIPS for running an online course**

1. Be familiar with your technology. All speakers need to be familiar with online platform (Zoom, MS Teams, other) you are using. Get them to practice during the days before your ‘course’ if they aren’t already skilled and slick! If using Teams, ensure that all external facilitators have Teams set up beforehand and check they can join. A ‘trial run’ either the day before or an hour or so before starting is a good idea.
2. Facilitators in particular need to endeavour to find the best Internet connection possible – ideally this will be a cabled connection; Wi-fi connections are less reliable and data (phone) connections are unsuitable.
3. Enlist a moderator or co-facilitator to support you in each session to manage ‘chat’ and IT issues. This is definitely the best option but sometimes (especially with smaller group teaching), this may not be possible. It may be worth noting that if there is no other alternative and you have no co-facilitator, having another device open (but muted) on the chat box can also work. It just means you can keep an eye on the questions as they come up - if in presentation mode, you cannot see the chat function.
4. IT support. If you can get any external IT support, then do so!
5. A good quality microphone is very important for the facilitator(s); nothing worse than sounding like you are calling from the moon on a mobile phone! They aren’t expensive (£50 or less)
6. Remember to look at the video camera which may not be in the same place as your screen
7. Slideshows on Teams can either be run from presentations hosted within Teams or from your own desktop. Preferences vary. If you are sharing your screen make sure you have ticked ‘include computer sound’ if you plan to show a video and have a backup of the video ready as well in case the embedded file fails. Open all files you may need before you start the ‘Teams’ meeting. Also remember to **close** other programmes such as Outlook so that emails don’t appear during your presentation.
8. All presenters/facilitators should ensure that their final slide set is sent to the organiser(s) in case of any IT problems. A backup plan should be in place for a ‘central’ team to step in and takeover if the need arises.
9. Having two screens when facilitating can be very helpful so you can see what your learners can see on one screen (often when screen sharing and/or presenting PPT slides the presenter can no longer see the learners)
10. Form a WhatsApp group for the facilitators and course organisers so you can rapidly communicate between yourselves
11. Make sure delegates know what to do to contribute to the meeting. You may want to add time into the timetable at the start of the course to make sure the delegates know how to ask a question and to practice ‘hands up’, ‘chat’ ‘mute’ and unmute’. Ask delegates to mute their microphones unless speaking or there can be feedback.
12. Make sure you have enough breaks. Even a half-day is a lot online; we advise short gaps/breaks every hour. Think about the best time of day and day of week for your own profile of learners; times suiting primary care are likely to be different for example
13. You can be more flexible with the duration of sessions
14. Set ground rules. Always set the ground rules at the start of the session. Chat function more useful if limited AV functionality (e.g. not enough have mics)
15. It is highly desirable that delegates have their cameras on during the session. If learners have cameras on, you know they are there and paying attention! You may need to remind them. If that is not possible throughout the session, ask them to at least have the camera on at the beginning and at the end of the session, if possible. Whilst having the video on is preferable, this sometimes doesn't work very well with a very large group. To improve connectivity, you may need to get everyone to turn cameras off for the presentation part or unless speaking.
16. Headsets are useful. Recommend headsets to learners.
17. Interactive quizzes really help. Interactive polling (within Teams/Zoom) and external quizzes (e.g. Kahoot (<https://kahoot.com/schools-u/> ), Slido ([https://www.sli.do](https://www.sli.do/)) , Mentimeter (<https://www.mentimeter.com> ) can make it more stimulating and we strongly recommend this.
18. Maximise the use of other multimedia (videos etc.) and animations (Doodly, Moovly, PowToon, Animaker … )
19. Minimise interruptions (Amazon deliveries, doorbells, dogs barking, children entering the room (etc.)
20. Recording the session is helpful. We suggest that you record the session so delegates can watch again later (or if some are unable to ‘attend’ every session) but you MUST tell everyone in advance so if they are unhappy with being in the recording then they have to switch off their video camera and not speak.
21. The recording can be uploaded in MS Teams. Alternatively, BASHH have a (password-protected) Vimeo facility. You may consider a time limit (4-6 weeks?) after which the recording is deleted.
22. Videos to help: these videos from ASME are well worth watching:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvuM6pFC7Qs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxvJgbvNGio>

1. **Expect** the technology to fail - have a backup plan!
2. Consider the costs involved with running a virtual educational event. Although you are not spending on venue and catering, there may be increased costs related to IT support, facilitators time, number of people involved on running a session, etc. Look carefully at your budget and consider how it would have changed.
3. It may be easier to get speakers to do pre-recorded sessions as this format facilitates participation by its flexibility, on the other hand it obviously does not allow for participant interaction. A mixture of pre-recorded delivery followed by a live Q&A seems to work very well.
4. Feedback. Include specific feedback questions for both facilitators and delegates about the online experience so we can learn what works and what doesn’t.
5. NHS learning hub has these two modules on using MS Teams for teaching:

<https://learninghub.nhs.uk/Resource/951/Item>

<https://learninghub.nhs.uk/Resource/952/Item>

*You will need an electronic learning for healthcare (eLFH) login to access (like you do for eHIV-STI) but it is easy to self- register if you do not have one, you just need an NHS email address or an open Athens account.*

**\*\* REMEMBER \*\* The BASHH Virtual Education Steering Group are always here to provide support and guidance**

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How Will It All Work?

We thought it would be a good idea to give you a few quick tips on how to be a great STIF/BASHH virtual audience member and to help you to participate fully in the programme.  
  
**To attend the meeting,** you will need access to the Zoom/Teams\* application. Check you have this in advance of the day! If using Zoom, check that you have downloaded the latest version at <https://zoom.us>

Make sure you enter the meeting with your name and organisation, so that your in-meeting badge identifies you.

**Have a good internet connection**: If possible, use a cable connection and don’t rely on Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi can cause issues or interruptions. You can test the speed of your connection here: <https://www.speedtest.net/>

Test your video and sound before the meeting. We suggest you spend about 5 minutes on this before you join the event

**Try to ensure that other applications on your computer or laptop are closed. Use your Task manager to shut down other applications using bandwidth.**

**Make sure your camera works** and your light conditions are reasonable (e.g. don’t have a window behind you) You won’t need your camera on during the entire event but it would be great to see your face so we can network!

**Sound:** a good headset with a microphone is usually the best but if you have good experience with your built-in laptop microphone and loudspeaker you can use those if you are in a silent environment.

 If you are wearing a headset with a microphone attached please keep the microphone away from your mouth otherwise all we hear is your breathing.  
  
Please try to watch somewhere quiet - not next to your washing machine… and if the dog starts barking or you need to speak to someone please make sure you mute your microphone if not already.   
  
So your mobile doesn’t ring during the workshops/lectures please turn it off or onto silent.  
  
Please don’t type on the keyboard during the workshops/lectures. Close your e-mail to avoid notifications each time anyone receives and e-mail.

**On the day of the event**, please access the meeting, via the link in your email, a few minutes before we are scheduled to begin, from xx:xx. We will start promptly at xx:xx. If you have any problems with connecting before the meeting, please contact xxxxx

Have your drinks, notebooks and pens at the ready, ready to learn, connect and collaborate.

What can I expect? How is this different to our Face to Face meeting?

Other than the fact you will be joining us online, the format will not change much, and we will endeavour to provide you with some great sessions of learning, inspiration, networking, and a chance to get your questions answered.

You will be invited to engage throughout each session and our moderator will explain the “rules” of the day when you join us. We're all facing highly unusual times and we're all experiencing a wide variety of challenges. Let's help one another by asking questions, sharing knowledge via the chat and feeding back after each session!

We are looking forward to seeing you all.

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One of the reasons people are finding meeting online is so tiring is because we are, in effect, operating in two different environments, our physical surrounding and the environment within the online session. To minimise this effect, ***to the extent that your personal circumstances allow***, please observe the etiquette below.

**NAME:** have your name appearing with your video icon. If you're using a different person's device or just listing your email, please change it to ***your name*** for the duration of the session and please add your surname. You can change it back afterwards to the name of owner of the device, if not your own. If you try to join as someone else, you may not be admitted!

**PUNCTUALITY:** please arrive to the session at least 5 – 10 min before start so that if you encounter technical difficulties, you can resolve them and still be on time. This avoids distraction and interruptions for the whole group.

**VIDEO ON:** Please keep your video ON for the duration of the session --- with video off people can be wondering what you're doing, or even, whether you're present at all. Also, for confidentiality reasons during the session, we need to have video on.

**MUTE PLEASE!** Please mute your microphone when not speaking to minimise feedback loops

**HEADPHONES:** If possible, please use headphones as this further reduces the risk of feedback loops.

**GALLERY VIEW/SPEAKER VIEW:** During the general discussions, Gallery view is recommended. For the demonstration section, speaker view is recommended. If you have not used these views yet (typically at one of the corners but this varies from device to device) there's an icon that toggles between gallery view and speaker view. Use this to adapt for the best view for general discussions and demonstrations.

**ATTENTION:** Give your full attention to the group as you would in a normal face to face meeting. Please switch all other devices for the duration of the session so that you can keep your attention on the session --- research on performance tells us that "off" is much better than just silenced. Close your e-mail on the computer so you don’t have messages coming in. Aim to take away as many distractions from your physical environment as possible

**INTERRUPTIONS:** Aim to be in an environment where you will not be interrupted but, if you are, keep the video on but mute yourself (if the group is not already muted as a whole) and deal with the interruption as appropriate. That way we can always see when you're available or not. And, yes, children and partners often appear on screens these days and that is ok.

**GROUND RULES**

Please MUTE your microphones

Please have your VIDEO ON

Please use chat for QUESTIONS but not to ‘CHAT’!

Close all windows (especially E-MAIL, WHAT’S APP ….) which might ‘ping’ notifications