

# President's Message

## A look forward – and back! – at AI in *Medical Writing*



**Maria Kołtowska-Hägström**  
EMWA President 2023-24  
president@emwa.org

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Hello Everyone,

This issue of *Medical Writing* is devoted to automation and artificial intelligence (AI), the hot topic that interests all of us and that is likely to change our lives dramatically, at least our professional lives.

While thinking what to write in my message, I've asked myself;

"When did EMWA for the first time present anything about automation?" Guess what I found!

In 1993, in the Newsletter from the European Medical Writers Association, a report from the Management Forum Seminar on computer-assisted marketing applications for new drugs 1992 was published. By the way, in 1993 EMWA was a chapter of AMWA, that's why the newsletter was published as "American Medical Writers Association Journal Europe" (See it here at: <https://journal.emwa.org/documents/journal/TWS/The%20Write%20Stuff%201993%20Vol%2001%20issue%201.pdf>)

In the seminar, representatives from governments and industry from Europe and USA discussed developments of CANDA (computer-assisted marketing applications for

new drugs). Several advantages of this new application method were mentioned, such as an improvement of in-house documentation systems, an enhancement of communication between companies and authorities, and reduction of paper burden. These advantages are still valid.

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Then, in 2014 a *Medical Writing* issue, Software for Medical Writers (<https://journal.emwa.org/software-for-medical-writers>) was published. Secrets of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, different templates, Datavision, and a few others were revealed. My favorite articles were: a critical review of translation tools written by Laura C. Collada Ali and Laurence Auffret, and tips on medical writers's must-have software provided by Shirin Ghodke.

EMWA and *Medical Writing* keep a close eye on the progress in the IT world so in 2019 an

issue on AI and digital health was published (<https://journal.emwa.org/artificial-intelligence-and-digital-health/>). Evguenia Alechine, a guest editor of that issue, wrote in her editorial:

*"Artificial intelligence (AI) and digital health are changing the way we live and work. They are already and increasingly present in medicine and are slowly permeating the medical writing industry. For many medical writers, this raises the question whether these new technologies will be friends or foes, whether they will make our work easier, or whether 'we will be replaced by robots'".*



Time flies! It's now more than 30 years after EMWA's first mention of "computer assistance" in medical writing and the question from Evguenia's editorial is more valid than ever.

Leaving *Medical Writing* a bit aside, I am very pleased to inform you that EMWA has initiated a group (the AI Working Group) looking into AI and how it will impact medical writers (that is us, EMWA members). This group, chaired by Sarah Tilly, our President-Elect, is distinct from the Special Interest Groups, yet closely cooperates with all of them to enable EMWA to remain current, have a voice in these activities, and to be able to educate our members. For more details on how the AI Working Group operates and how you can engage, read the Q&A article published in this issue on p. 70.

Now, just to conclude – we are looking very much forward to the news on the revolutionary AI development presented in this issue of *Medical Writing*.

Happy reading.  
Maria