

President's Message

What a busy time! The EMWA Professional Development Committee, the Conference Team, and the Executive Committee are working very hard on organising the virtual conference in November, which we hope will be a unique experience for you. The conference will start with an opening ceremony on Wednesday, November 4. On Thursday, November 5, we will have a variety of activities, including talks on predatory publishing, English sessions, how to work efficiently on your business, an exciting sponsored seminar, the freelance business forum, and the option to attend a mindfulness seminar. The symposium day on Friday, November 5, is about Research Integrity & The Medical Communicator: What We Do When No One Is Watching. The following 2 weeks will be packed with workshops. A big thanks to the workshop leaders who all made extra efforts to adapt their workshops for the virtual world!

There was a myriad of decisions to make and so much work behind the scenes. We would not have made it without the help of our EMWA volunteers, who showed their utmost dedication to the cause. Let me take the opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to everybody involved in making the November conference happen, including the Head Office. Remember, all volunteers work without payment and by doing so make it possible to offer trainings and membership at a reasonable price.

We aim to officially honour our volunteers through our social media initiative #EMWATogetherApart, which is supported by our Vice President Carola Krause. We have had around 1000 views per post – please continue to like and share to get our volunteers the visibility they deserve!

Aside of our activities for the November conference, we have successfully launched our virtual Expert Seminar Series (ESS) programme and have planned two more virtual ESS this year, one on Safety/Vigilance reporting for Medical Devices on October 7, and one on Medical Communications later this year. We have also had pilots of virtual round table discussions. Based on the experience gained, we will frame this new format and make it available to all EMWA members.

On another note, I believe that as an organisation of medical communicators, we also have a responsibility in society that goes beyond training. For me, the growing number of

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conspiracists and increasing brutality and racism are worrying. We are proud of the diversity, inclusivity, kindness, and helpfulness of our organisation. And by meeting peers from all over the world, of different races, ages, gender, nationalities, religions, cultures, by default, we can overcome prejudices. To clearly state to the outside community that EMWA is a diverse, respectful, and welcoming organisation, we are in the process of developing a code of conduct and rules for etiquette.

In general, acting against misinformation and conspiracies is difficult, and the COVID-19 articles recently retracted from major journals certainly do not help to increase trust in science.

As a reaction, the Medical Communications Special Interest Group has started to work on a position/action statement on scientific peer review that will be developed in partnership with the International Society of Medical Publication Professionals and the American Medical Writers Association. We also aim to strengthen the role of medical writers and communicators with this statement.

Thanks to all of you who are making EMWA an interesting, diverse, and welcoming organisation. I look forward to meeting you virtually in November!

Beatrix Doerr