

President's Message

Also in this issue

Nico Pitrelli talks about the future of science journalism, and Editor-in-Chief **Phil Leventhal** discusses whether medical writers can submit articles to journals on behalf of corresponding authors.

This issue also includes two special sections. The first are the winning essays from the annual Geoff Hall Scholarship essay competition, which this year, was on 'Good Medical Writing Saves Lives'. This year's winners are **Sophia Whitman** and **Cirsten Verleger**. We wish them both luck in their new careers in medical writing.

The second special section includes abstracts from the second annual spring conference poster session. The poster session is an excellent way for EMWA members to see the latest thinking and research in a 'snapshot', and has been introduced as an annual addition to the educational offering from EMWA.

Although I have never worked in the pre-clinical world, I was intrigued by **Jayna Patel's** article, which examines the role of standardisation on animal testing of medical devices.

I was a little worried that this issue might be too heavy on EU law, so I was glad to welcome two lighter contributions. **Raquel Billiones** looks at the humorous side of medical device trade names. I also asked **Michael Todd** to pen something on his working life. His short piece reminds me of a medical writing version of Nicholson Baker's *The Mezzanine*. Now that is a sentence I never thought I would write!

If this issue has whetted your appetite, please don't miss the forthcoming webinars by two of the contributors to this issue – and comrades of mine on the EMWA Executive Committee! *Writing Clinical Study Reports for Medical Devices* by Beatrix Doerr is slated for July, while the *Introduction to Clinical Evaluation Reports for Medical Devices* by Raquel Billiones will be confirmed for later this year.

I hope that you enjoy this issue of *Medical Writing* as much as we have putting it together for you. My sincere thanks to all of the contributors, as well as to Phil and his editorial team for helping to make it happen.

References

- 1 European Commission. Medical Devices. 2017 [cited 2017 April 14]. Available from: <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/medical-devices/>.
- 2 European Commission. Commission welcomes new agreement for safer use of medical devices. 2016 [cited 2017 April 17]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8863&lang=en.
- 3 Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. Borderlines between medical devices and medicinal products. June 2013.



**From EMWA's
New President**

Dear EMWA Members,
What an exciting and proud moment this is for me to serve as President of an association that I have seen grow in professionalism over the years since first becoming an EMWA member in 1996! We have come a

long way since those days and I can appreciate this even more since joining the Executive Committee (EC).

I want to thank Alison and the EC for sharing their experience and ideas with me while serving as Vice President. It has been both an energising and enlightening experience.

The spring conference in Birmingham was a success, with 49 workshops, 3 half-day ESS sessions covering topics related to medical communications, pharmacovigilance, and regulatory topics combined with an excellent Symposium on "Transparency and Disclosure of Clinical Regulatory Documentation." We had a number of outstanding speakers and panelists including a representative from the European Medicines Agency. There was something for everyone and plenty of networking opportunities including the Freelance business Forum and the Internship Forum as well as a full social programme including the Spring Dinner and Dance. A great time was had by all.

As EMWA's President, I intend to both hold the course and build on our strengths as the foremost educational organisation in Europe for medical communicators.

I believe that EMWA has an important role in promoting public awareness about our profession. We will intensify our efforts to broaden contacts with universities and research institutions to get the word out to undergraduate and graduate students about our organisation and careers in medical writing.

In recent years, increasing numbers of people have been attending local informal meetings to listen and learn about medical communication and to network. EMWA members who attend such meetings can act as ambassadors to talk about the profession and the benefits of membership. I think EMWA should continue to support such groups by publicising their meetings via our social media networks and website as well as by reporting on these events in the MEWs.

We plan to further develop our contacts with other

professional organisations involved in different fields of scientific, regulatory, and medical communication. As an example, we collaborated with the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) to hold their editing certification exam on the afternoon before the annual meeting in Birmingham.

We will also systematically evaluate information from previous conferences in order to get an idea of what has been successful in the past and what we can do better in the future.

It goes without saying that we will continue to offer high quality foundation and advanced level workshops and at the same time look at the structure of our training program and consider new alternatives.

For our experienced members, we will carry on with the Expert Seminar Series and Symposia to stimulate discussion and debate on exciting and timely topics as we learn and adapt to new regulatory requirements and the needs of our clients in a rapidly changing industry.

Planning for our future conferences in Cascais in the Autumn and Barcelona next Spring has already started. Both of these are beautiful places where we can combine our usual stimulating learning and networking environment with interesting sight-seeing. In Barcelona we are planning a thought-provoking symposium on Medical Devices. We look forward to seeing you all at these conferences.

Finally, I want to welcome our new EC members to the team, Tiziana von Bruchhausen (Vice President) and Mario João Almeida (Publics Relations Officer). I look forward to working with them and all of the EC this year on the exciting road ahead.

Abe Shevack
asp scientist@googlemail.com

From EMWA's Outgoing President

Dear EMWA Members,

This will be my last "Presidents Message" as I stepped down as President at the Birmingham Conference last month and handed over to Abe Shevack, our new President. It has been a very busy and interesting 2 years on the Executive Committee – sometimes difficult but also sometimes fun. I have had the opportunity to work with some very dedicated and friendly people and to support and develop the services we provide to all medical communication professionals.

During my period of office we have invested in a number of new systems which will ensure the initiatives developed over the last few years such as Annual Symposium and Expert Seminar Series, the Special Interest Groups and the Internship Forum run smoothly and continue to flourish. We now routinely use a web based document repository for all EC documents and have implemented a new e-mail system for EMWA using Office 365. We have replaced the conference brochure, previously provided in PDF format, with a new dedicated conference "mini-site" which brings all of the conference information together in one place and provides the relevant information in a more easily accessible format and we have invested in a new website platform which will significantly improve website response time and will allow us to develop the website further and to provide additional services including an updated directory of freelance writers and a searchable archive of EMWA webinars.

We have maintained our profile as an important organisation within the industry and worked with both The American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) and The International Society for Medical Publication Professionals to prepare a position statement on the



role of professional medical writers which was published at the beginning of this year. CORE reference, the user manual to help create clinical study report content developed jointly by EMWA and AMWA volunteers, continues to be widely used within the industry having received over 5,000 downloads since its launch in 2016.

Our social media team have been busy increasing awareness of EMWA via Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and we also developed and maintained reciprocal agreements with a number of organisations including ISMPP, DIA, eRegulatory Summit, and the Mediterranean Editors & Translators Meeting.

One of the mainstays of our organisation is the provision of quality training and this continues with the growth of our workshop and webinar programme. There were 49 workshops available at the Spring Conference in Birmingham covering a wide variety of topics and for those unable to join the conferences we have our training via webinars. This has now been taken over by the EPDC and will be developed further in the next year.

Overall we continue to remain a growing and vibrant organisation. This is, in no small part, due to the commitment and enthusiasm of all our volunteers and the dedicated head office staff – THANK YOU EVERYONE and a special thank you to all my colleagues on the Executive Committee for the time and energy they have given over the last year. My best wishes go to the new Executive Committee and our new President who I am confident will do a fantastic job in running our organisation. I hope to see many of you at future conferences for a number of years to come.

Alison Rapley
alison.rapley@gmail.com



Welcome to our new managing editor

Medical Writing is pleased to welcome Victoria White and her team at Review Without Peer, who will be providing managing editor services for EMWA's quarterly journal.

Vicki is particularly well-suited for this role, having served for 4 years as Editor-in-Chief of the *American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) Journal*. A former newspaper reporter, Vicki has worked in medical communications for the past 2 decades, first at the University of Florida,

then at Emory University, before establishing her Florida-based company whose mission is to provide editorial office services for journals as well as writing and editing services for other clients.

For *Medical Writing*, the Review Without Peer team will handle many of the day-to-day administrative tasks and quality control functions of the publication, enabling the journal's Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board to focus on long-range planning and attracting and polishing high-quality submissions.