

President's Message

Dear EMWA Members,

Exciting news from our conference in Warsaw! Besides the excellent conference programme, there were a few updates and initiatives going on “behind the curtains”. First of all, I would like to thank our workshop leaders, members of the EMWA Professional Development Committee (EPDC), the Executive Committee, and all volunteers for their great support in planning, organising, and running the conference. We had 95 members attending for the first time (many green lanyards!), more than 40% of the overall number of registrants. We were delighted to welcome these new attendees and hope they enjoyed the conference. Among the 31 workshops run in Warsaw, we had six new ones, and five further workshops are currently under development and will be available soon. There is much work ongoing to broaden the offer of topics for our members. A few writing areas of growing interest have been specifically addressed such as pharmacovigilance, public disclosure, and medical devices. A recent webinar provided insights into veterinary medical writing. Although “vet writers” still represent a minority at EMWA, we are interested in hearing their voice: What are the skills and topics you would like to be trained on? If you are already experienced, would you be interested in volunteering to strengthen this area at EMWA? The EPDC volunteers are always grateful for new ideas and suggestions, as this helps to shape EMWA to the needs of the members.

Besides the educational programme, there are other ways for EMWA to train and update their members, such as expert seminar series and symposia, conference sessions, topic-related discussions and reviews, and collaborations with other professional associations. Based on a suggestion made by one of our experienced members, we are currently establishing a working group of experts on the topic of predatory publishing/journals. This issue needs to be communicated to medical writers and communicators. Training initiatives within EMWA, as well as close collaboration with other professional associations, are needed to raise awareness on this subject. To identify further relevant issues, we have asked our Nick Thompson fellows to explore topics and investigate the potential for training, events, or collaborations, based on their expertise and their perspective as experienced members.

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At the opening session of the conference in Warsaw, Sam Hamilton and Art Gertel shared an important update:

CORE Reference, downloaded 14,500+ times, continues to gain traction globally. Public declarations of support from pharmaceutical companies and CROs [clinical research organisations] are a testament to the perceived value of CORE Reference in reporting modern design interventional clinical trials. TransCelerate Biopharma, an alliance of selected prominent pharmaceutical companies, plans to release a CSR [clinical study report] template in Q4 2018. At the November 2018 AMWA Conference in Washington DC, representatives of the TransCelerate CSR template development team advised Art Gertel, strategist for the CORE Reference project, that CORE Reference and ICH E3 were considered pivotal in developing the CSR template.

EMWA is very proud of being part of this exciting project!

Collaborations like the CORE Reference and the Joint Position Statement are a valuable way

to strengthen EMWA as a reference organisation for professional medical writers and its role in public discussions. Our association was recently invited to contribute to the development of a new outcome reporting standard for clinical trial protocols and reports of completed trials, called the Instrument for reporting Planned Endpoints in Clinical Trials (InsPECT). We have already shared this invitation with our members through the website and social media. Furthermore, EMWA, the American Medical Writers Association, and the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals have recently been contacted by the EQUATOR Network to perform a joint review of the CONSORT guidelines and to spread the word about the EQUATOR Good Reporting tool. There are various other initiatives ongoing “behind the curtains”, and I look forward to reporting on their progress soon.

After these very positive updates, I would like to thank all EMWA's volunteers and to express to our members my best wishes for happy holidays and a good start in the New Year!

Tiziana von Bruchhausen