

# President's Message

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## Dear medical writers



Welcome to the first issue of medical writing in 2015 on plain language, which means that this message had better be simple and easy to read. I am a huge advocate of plain writing and, as a Publication Manager, spend much of my time

working with writers and authors to help achieve greater simplification and improved readability. Indeed, it is always welcome to receive a journal response stating that the manuscript is 'well-written'. However, writing simply is not as easy as it sounds, and I know that many writers struggle with this concept at the beginning of their careers. What to include and discount is always a dilemma but must reflect the interests and needs of the target audience. In this respect, writing simply should be practiced in whichever type of communication we are developing, from detailed reports to simple e-mails; we are all busy and no-one wants to wade through lines of superfluous text.

Another important role for a Publication Manager is keeping up-to-date with new guidelines, which impact upon the delivery of scientific publications. Recently, I had the honour to discuss the 'Five-step Authorship Framework to Improve Transparency in Disclosing Contributors to Industry-sponsored Clinical Trial' (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/12/197>) with Professor Ana Marušić, lead author of the research. A summary of my discussions are available on our website, but in essence, the researchers believe that current authorship guidelines are often too rigid for complex multi-centre, multi-disciplinary trials. They recommend that the difficult issue of authorship is openly discussed before publication writing begins. However, author contributions are monitored throughout the publication development to make sure that individuals who merit authorship are recognised.

I am also looking forward to working with the Good Publication Practice 3 recommendations. Although it can be difficult to keep abreast of all

the new guidelines and recommendations, they are prepared to help us all deliver high-quality publications to the highest possible standards from a transparency perspective. Don't forget to visit <http://www.equator-network.org/> for all the latest news and guidelines in a single place.

The EMWA Executive Committee has been working hard to forge new collaborations with aligned organisations. You may have seen the online link to GAPP (The Global Alliance of Publication Professionals), which has requested our help in finding articles about publication ethics or unethical practices. Our presence has also been requested at the Second International Congress on Medical Writing in Ajman, UAE and, of course, the Budapest Working Group is an expert collaboration. Such alignments give us the opportunity to broadcast EMWA to wider audiences as well as participate in new initiatives that will affect our future work. We strive to find new member benefits, which taken with our journal, conferences, growing Webinar programme and e-learning opportunities, provide exceptional value for money, within a professional network.

Our conferences in 2015 will take place in Dublin in May and the Hague in November. In the Spring conference, in addition to our full educational programme, we will host our third symposium day with the theme of 'Risk Management and Risk-benefit Evaluation – a 360° Perspective'. Our new EMWA Expert sessions will also be launched. Sitting either side of the symposium day, these have been introduced to give senior delegates an opportunity to learn about new areas and applications, as well as sharing their valuable experiences. I hope that Dublin sees record-breaking attendance and shall look forward to seeing many of you there.

In the meantime, if anyone has any suggestions for new educational or webinar topics or would like to volunteer as a workshop leader, webinar leader, or for any administrative role, please do not hesitate to contact Head Office or a member of the Executive Committee.

Julia Donnelly