

Presidents' Messages

From EMWA President 2020–2021

When I had some spare time in January, I worked on this message as I expected April to be quite packed. Being written before the COVID-19 crisis, the message was positive in every aspect – it was about the progress of EMWA within the past year and what exciting times and new projects are to come. Well, this was in vain, as the circumstances have changed dramatically and nobody knows what is going to happen. Hopefully, things will have improved by the time this issue is published in June.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to cancel our Spring Conference. Meanwhile, we also cancelled the face-to-face Autumn conference. This was a decision the Executive Committee did not take lightly and was made because our members' health and safety are the top priority. By making the decision early, we will be able to focus time and resources on planning for an exciting virtual conference in November.

Needless to say, the cancellation of the conferences is a major financial loss for EMWA. Luckily, we have been cautious in spending money during the past years and now have a robust financial reserve to be able to withstand it.

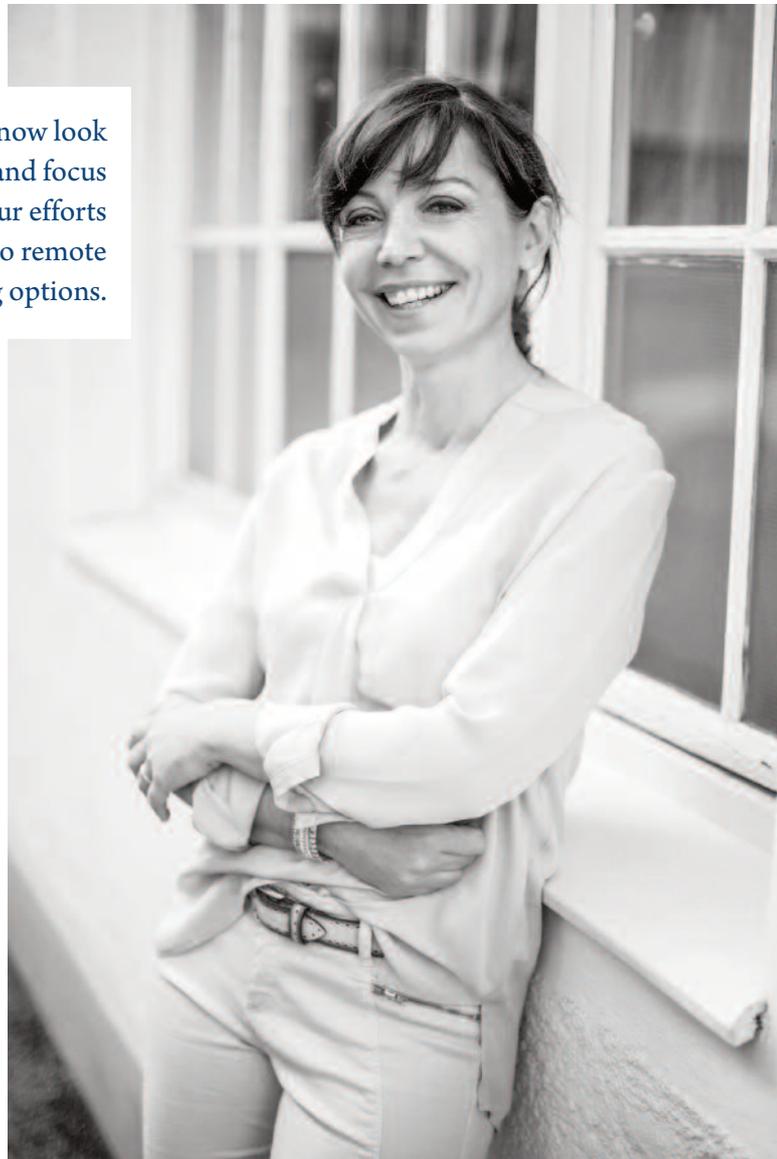
Being occupied most of the past weeks with disaster recovery and planning, we now look ahead and focus our efforts related to remote learning options:

- The first virtual Expert Seminar Series (June)
- Virtual round table discussions (starting by September)
- Virtual fall conference (November)

Let me take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the webinar team, led by EMWA Professional Development Committee members Laura Collada Ali and Carolina Rojido, for all they have done during the past weeks. They navigated us through different platforms and formats, helped us prepare for the first virtual annual meeting and the first virtual Expert Seminar Series, and organised additional webinars. They took on these giant tasks despite the challenges of their daily lives and jobs.

Aside of these activities, we have released our EMWA member logo, which you can now download from the members-only area of the

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EMWA website (<https://tinyurl.com/ydfowwtf>). You can use it on your website and in your email signature, which can increase your market value by showing your membership in a professional organisation.

Let me end in thanking our former president Barbara Grossman, for all her help and work during the past years and for leading the Executive Committee and EMWA through the challenges of the early months of this year. Looking into the future, I am happy that Carola Krause will be supporting us as Vice President. Her technical knowledge and expertise as a

digital native is particularly relevant in these turbulent times.

I deeply miss seeing you all in person. As someone who works from home, the conferences have always been a highlight of the year. I will truly miss meeting colleagues, friends, and new people from all over the world and visiting interesting locations. But let's stay "together apart" and make the best out of the situation.

My thoughts are with you and your families to stay safe and healthy during these challenging times.

Beatrix Doerr

From EMWA President 2019–2020

Beatrix Doerr, our new EMWA President, has neatly summarised the impact on “normal EMWA life” of the COVID-19 pandemic and the steps that the Executive Committee (EC) and the Education Committee are taking to bring EMWA to YOU – through different remote learning options. For example, as I write this, the first virtual Expert Seminar Series has just been announced.

What a contrast to 2019 with the highs of two well-attended EMWA conferences in Vienna and Malmö and the many EMWA achievements between times. In this message, I'd like to take the opportunity to thank a few people, for example: the wonderfully supportive EC, the Head Office team (led by Lynne Fletcher, Claire Whittingham and Lisa Wilson), and YOU – EMWA's many volunteers. Thank you. I thoroughly enjoyed working with all of you, especially as you made even the most challenging tasks doable.

In particular, I'd like to thank:

- Carolina Rojido and Laura Collada Ali with their Webinar Team, who organise a great variety of presentations – with thanks also to some excellent presenters! If you didn't manage to catch past webinars on the day, you can view them through the website: go to <https://www.emwa.org/training/emwa-webinars-programme-2020/>
- The Education Committee led by Marian Hodges, who worked with EMWA Head Office to plan and implement a diverse offering of workshops at both the May and November 2019 conferences – a mammoth logistical challenge.
- Those talented EMWA members who are also linguists; because of their efforts, EMWA has provided translations of the following Joint Position Statements:
 - The Role of Professional Medical Writers
 - Predatory PublishingThe translations help to spread awareness of the responsibilities of medical communicators among non-English speakers.
- Our team of Ambassadors, led by Abe Shevack, who represent EMWA at a variety of

events and last year participated in a video for medics considering a move to medical writing; see <https://www.emwa.org/about-us/ambassadors-programme/>

- The Social Media team led by Maria João Almeida, who effectively communicate to the “world outside EMWA” as well as to EMWA members.
- Phil Leventhal (Editor-in-Chief), his Editorial Team, and Vicki White (Managing Editor), who together with several outstanding guest editors and contributors, ensure that the EMWA journal, *Medical Writing*, is a “good read”.

- Diarmuid De Faoite and the Website Team, who together with IT support at Head Office ensure that the EMWA website is up-to-date and readily searchable.

Although we won't meet this year, I hope to see many of you at future conferences. In the meantime, STAY HEALTHY, and I wish all of you well – you, your families, and your friends. Please join me in wishing Beatrix and the new EC every success.

Barbara Grossman

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