



should be visually attractive and should stimulate conversation and help create new collaborations.

While medical communications clearly benefit from using visuals, regulatory writing might also benefit, particularly by incorporating graphics and infographics to help visualise complex data. **Leehee Navon-Perry, Jackie Raskind, and Sara Stein** provide a good example of how simple tools accessible to any medical writer can be used to create infographics to illustrate study schemas in regulatory documents. They show how this kind of image can be used as a universal tool to easily transmit the study design to all readers, regardless of their background. **Thomas Schindler, Katrin Summerer, Leonie Leithold, Kamila Sroka-Saidi, and Clive Brown** take this point further, explaining how graphical abstracts can be incorporated in lay summaries of clinical studies. They discuss how to design a graphical abstract and highlight ethical issues involved in selecting the content.

Alexandra Sanfins and Maria João Almeida take a different perspective, showing how visuals helped establish a professional network in Portugal. They also describe some tools that allowed them to easily create visually appealing documents without previous training in graphic design.

I hope this issue will help you understand the possibilities for producing visuals as part of your work. In many instances, you can generate an effective visual by following some simple rules and by using icons or stock images. An example is the cover image I created for this issue with the precious help of Ana Costa. For more detailed images, you may need the help of a professional illustrator or designer. In any case, your visuals should be as clear and carefully constructed as your texts.

Happy reading!

Ana Goios

About the Guest Editor

Ana Goios is a Portugal-based medical writer with a scientific background from years of research in population health and genetics. She has complemented her academic training with courses on scientific illustration, data analysis and biostatistics, and the EMWA Professional Development Programme.

COVID-19 forces cancellation of conference



The EMWA Executive Committee and Head Office closely monitored the rapidly evolving implications of the current COVID-19 situation and the recommendations from the World Health Organization as well as the advice from and restrictions implemented by national governments. As a result, EMWA chose the only option available and cancelled the upcoming Prague conference that had been scheduled for May 5–9, 2020.

This will be a major financial loss for EMWA, but the organisation has been careful in spending money during the past years and have a robust enough financial reserve to be able to manage its impact.

The organisation will investigate steps such as extending the length of the November 2020 conference. Stay tuned to EMWA Newsblasts for further information.

EMWA collaboration with the German Scholars Organisation

EMWA is continuing its collaboration with the German Scholars Organization (GSO), a non-profit organisation with over 5000 members dedicated to providing career advice and networking opportunities to scientists who want to pursue careers in Germany.

As part of this collaboration, Abe Shevack was interviewed in a webinar by

Dr Anne Schreiter, the Managing Director of the GSO. The interview focused on careers in medical writing, transitioning from academia, and the role of EMWA in supporting scientists interested in medical writing.

The webinar can be viewed on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_kSPCU0E3U&feature=youtu.be.

EMWA Ambassador's Programme spreads its wings

On November 20, Abe Shevack gave a talk on EMWA and careers in medical writing at the regular meeting of Berlin medical writers at the Grand Café on Oranienburger Str. Altogether, 15 people attended, including organiser and EMWA member Paul Wafula and former EMWA President

Tiziana von Bruchhausen. There were lively discussions on the importance of EMWA training and certificates, mentorship of newbies, getting started in regulatory writing, and setting realistic timelines with clients. All present seemed to have a good time.



AMWA-EMWA-ISMPP Joint Position Statement on Predatory Journals now available in Romanian

To raise awareness among non-English speakers about the responsibilities of medical writers and publication professionals concerning this significant issue, EMWA has initiated the translation of the joint position statement into European languages.

We are proud to announce the posting of the

Romanian translation of the joint position statement by EMWA members Georgiana Orbanu and Carmen Schmechel. The translation is available on the EMWA website: <https://www.emwa.org/about-us/position-statements/joint-position-statement-on-predatory-publishing/romanian/>.

We are currently looking for translators to translate the joint position statement into other European languages. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Abe Shevack (aspscientist@gmail.com) or EMWA Head Office (info@emwa.org).

Regulatory Public Disclosure SIG update

The EMWA Regulatory Public Disclosure Special Interest Group (RPD SIG) page on the EMWA website has been updated. Please take a few minutes to read through what the RPD SIG has to offer: <https://www.emwa.org/sigs/regulatory-public-disclosure-sig/>.

On the RPD SIG webpage, you will find some great resources to help you navigate the world of regulatory public disclosure (RPD). Similar to other EMWA SIGs (<https://www.emwa.org/sigs/>), the RPD SIG provides regular updates to members at conferences. For those not able to attend the EMWA conference in Vienna, the RPD SIG presentation has been uploaded to the EMWA website: <https://www.emwa.org/media/3011/vienna-rpd-sig-slide-deck-10may19.pdf>. This presentation provides further details of the extensive RPD resources that are available to EMWA members as well as outlining the ways in which members can become involved in supporting the RPD SIG.



Scam e-mail alert

We have been made aware of a scam email requesting payment for unpaid membership. More than one version of this email has been received by EMWA members.

Please do not respond with any sensitive personal information, such as banking details, as the email is not from EMWA.

If you have any related questions, please contact EMWA's Head Office at info@emwa.org.

From: EUROPEAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION <info2@staycentered.org>
Sent: 06 January 2020 13:28
Subject: PAYMENT REMINDER

Dear Member,
This is to notify you to make payment as soon as possible for unpaid dues to the new association account which will be provided on request. Do reply back and notify us of which payment method best suits you.
Payments can be made via the following:
* Online Bank Transfer
* Online Credit Card Payment (E-Invoice)

If payments are not made on time, your membership will be temporarily suspended.
If payment have already been made, do send payment confirmation for your account status to be updated.

Thanks,
SYVIENGCHANH CALVIN GUY
European Medical Writers Association
EMWA Head Office
Registered Office:
Chester House, 68 Chestergate,
Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6DY

New version of Good Publication Practice (GPP) on the way

Good Publication Practice (GPP) is an industry-leading document to guide the ethical development of medical publications. Development of a new version, **GPP4**, is now underway. A steering committee has been established and is working on revisions to the guidance. More information is available from ISMPP: <https://ismppnewsletter.com/2019/12/03/gpp4-development-is-underway/>.

Predatory journal news

A recent comment article in *Nature*, headed up by lead authors Agnes Grudniewicz, David Moher, and Kelly D. Cobey, unveils a new consensus definition of predatory publishing and provides some suggestions of steps to take in the future to tackle the problems it causes. The 43 participants, consisting of members of industry organisations, society and commercial publishers, research institutes, libraries, policymakers, and other key academic roles, provided answers to 28 questions and engaged in 12 hours of discussion, followed by two further rounds of feedback and revision, to develop the definition. The definition put forward by the group is as

follows: "Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritise self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterised by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices." Read the article to learn more: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03759-y>.



How to select the right journal

In a recent addition to their video series, Medical Publishing Insights and Practices (MPIP) provide helpful tips on "how to select the right journal". Choosing a journal can be a daunting task. The MPIP video shares useful tips and resources for journal selection, ensuring timely dissemination to the right audience. The video can be viewed on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmHWE4Zo5tY&feature=emb_title.

ICMJE Recommendations: 2019 update

The ICMJE Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals received a modest annual update in December 2019.¹ The most significant changes are:

- The importance of disclosing financial and non-financial relationships and activities is underscored. The ICMJE has largely removed references to conflicts of interest, reasoning that is ultimately up to readers to decide whether a relationship or activity constitutes a conflict. It is recommended that authors do not cite work published in predatory journals.
- The existing recommendation that editors "engage a broad and diverse array of authors, reviewers, editorial staff, editorial board members, and readers" is given greater prominence.

Reference

1. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Up-Dated ICMJE Recommendations (December 2019). 2019 [cited 2020 Jan 22]. Available from: http://www.icmje.org/news-and-editorials/icmje-recommendations_annotated_dec19.pdf.