

President's Message

Dear all,

Welcome to the first issue of *Medical Writing* for 2017. This issue is dedicated to "Writing Better", something we in the profession are constantly striving for and something which EMWA aims to help us achieve together. One way we achieve this is by sharing our experience and expertise via this journal. I never cease to be amazed by the breadth and quality of the articles included and would like to thank our editor, Phil Leventhal, his co-editors and all those of you who contribute to the journal for making this such an interesting and valuable resource.

Another of the organisation's aims is to raise the profile of our profession and act as the 'go-to' association for opinion, guidance, and best practice. During 2016, we worked with the American Medical Writers Association and the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals to update our position statement on the role of professional medical writers in the development of articles, abstracts, posters, and oral presentations in peer-reviewed journals or at scientific congresses. The joint document was published in January and describes the role and responsibilities of medical writers in the development of medical and scientific publications. It addresses the difficult and controversial issue of "authorship" of documents. A copy can be accessed via our website (<http://www.emwa.org>).

We have a number of exciting new IT initiatives taking place this year to move EMWA forward. Our website had become very slow so we have invested in a new website platform which will significantly improve response time. This has

involved a significant amount of work but will allow us to develop the website and provide additional services over the coming years, including an updated directory of freelance writers. 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. Eventually users will be able to personalise the information, both by selecting the information they want to see (e.g. advanced workshops only, or symposium information only) and by selecting their own personal programme of activities they have booked. This will be of great benefit to delegates and significantly less time consuming for those volunteers who prepare the conference documentation.

We hope you will all see these changes as a significant improvement in the services we provide to our members. The results of the survey we carried out last year suggested some areas that can be developed further, especially the webinars, member benefits, and freelance services. It also provided the Executive Committee with some ideas about how the Association itself and the services and benefits it provides to members can be developed. If you have specific ideas or suggestions or would like to help please do contact a member of the Executive Committee.

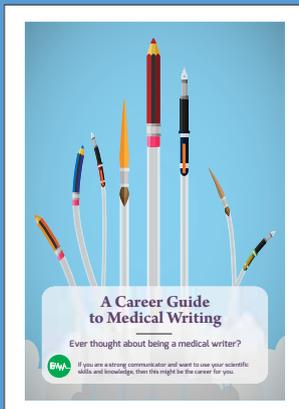
Our next conference takes place at the International Conference Centre in Birmingham,



UK from Tuesday, May 2 to Saturday, May 6. The EMWA Professional Development Committee has prepared a comprehensive education programme, with workshops covering a broad range of both familiar and new topics. Our Symposium will explore recent developments in the area of data transparency and disclosure and provide the opportunity to hear speakers from regulatory bodies and the pharmaceutical industry as well as writers themselves. For experienced members, we have a series of three Expert Seminars covering some of the latest developments in medical writing. The conference will also host an internship forum and introductory talk for potential new writers as well as the well established freelance business forum. We also have a session on mindfulness and a range of exciting social events. There really is something for everyone and I hope to see many of you there.

Best wishes
Alison

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EMWA's New Medical Writing Career Guide is now available!

Included in the guide:

- What is medical writing
- The different types of medical writing
- The skills and qualifications needed to be a medical writer
- Where medical writers work and what they do
- How to get started
- How much to expect to get paid
- Career prospects for medical writers