

# Medical Writing

## Writing better

Philip Leventhal, Editor-in-Chief



As medical writers, we fall within the field of professional writing. Writing well should be essential for us. Unfortunately, training on how to write well specific to our field is hard to come by. Most books focus on preparing scientific articles and not on the mechanics of writing or are not adapted to our needs. My own experience tells me that medical writers could greatly benefit from practical information on how to write better.

To help, this issue of *Medical Writing* includes what I like to call the “writing better workbook”. Each chapter of the workbook includes explanations, examples, and, most importantly, exercises and an answer key. The first chapter, by **Michelle Arduengo**, is on nominalisation (verbs turned into nouns), which is one of the most common and pernicious problems for medical writers. Three following chapters, by **Christine Møller**, **Barb Every**, and **Tom Lang**, tackle wordiness, another common enemy of good medical writing. From there, **Claire Gudex and Jude Pedersen** take on sentences, **Neville Goodman** advises on eliminating troublesome words, and **Amy Whereat** and I cover how to organise good paragraphs. **Michelle Guillemard** adds strategies to improve writing for lay audiences. Finally, I have provided a practical checklist that you can use to help put all of these aspects of writing better into practice.

In addition to the writing workbook, in this issue, we present the results of the **2016 EMWA member survey**, which was conducted to help guide EMWA’s on-going projects and future plans.

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- **Scopus**<sup>®</sup>, an index managed by Elsevier, is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature.
- **EBSCO** is a bibliographic service for academic, medical, school, public library, law, corporate, and government fields.
- **ResearchGate** is a social networking site for scientists and researchers and includes *Medical Writing* in its list of publications. This should help people find our journal.
- **U.S. National Library of Medicine** now includes *Medical Writing* in its list of publications, although, unfortunately, we are not indexed on PubMed. Like ResearchGate, this should help people find our journal.



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