

A Legacy of Leadership

AMWA's 67th Annual Conference
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OPEN SESSIONS OFFER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN ATLANTA

Coordinated by Cathy F. Clark, Sue Hudson, and Douglas Haneline, PhD

This year's conference includes a record-breaking 43 timely and informative open sessions—all of which are included in your registration fee.

An Introduction to Pharmaceutical Marketing Materials

This session presents a review of the different types of marketing and sales materials used by pharmaceutical companies and the role the materials play in helping companies to achieve their promotional goals. Attendees will gain an inside look into pharma marketing, the jargon used, and how to pitch more ideas to their clients.

Birth of a Notion: How patientINFORM Came to Be

In 2004, the American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and other voluntary health organizations (VHOs) came together with various medical society and commercial publishers to find a way to provide lay readers with free online access to published medical research, along with interpretative articles provided by the VHOs to put the findings in perspective. The presenters will discuss the innovative solution—patientINFORM; the down-and-dirty of how it works; how it can improve health literacy (not to mention the freelance market); and what the future holds in store.

Civil War Medicine

The American Civil War brought about changes in both military and civilian medicine. This session's presenters will outline the medical and surgical advances that took place during the conflict, reviewing the medical challenges facing the armies of both North and South. Topics covered will be the epidemiology of diseases facing the soldiers, the organization of medical care for soldiers in the field, medical evacuation, and the evolution of care for battle casualties.

Complexities of Conducting International Clinical Trials

Companies and regulatory agencies are increasingly asking for clinical studies to be conducted outside of North America, which introduces a whole new set of organizational and logistical (on-the-ground) challenges. Panelists will present the perspective of (1) a pharmaceutical company that designs and places international clinical studies, (2) a contract organization that conducts/monitors these studies, and (3) a medical writing group that writes the requisite protocols and reports.

Copyright Do's and Don'ts

In the Digital Age, new copyright issues and concerns affect all types of content creators, developers, and their editors. What do content professionals, especially those in medical communication, need to know to follow the law properly? With AMWA participants, we will engage in a lively discussion of where we stand in the world of copyright, what has already changed in recent years, and what changes may still lie ahead.

Developing an Educational Web Site

The presenter describes development of the multimedia cancer education Web site, CancerQuest (<http://cancerquest.emory.edu>). Topics to be covered include the creation of novel animations, Web interfaces, outreach based on the Web site, and the formation of international collaborations that have resulted in the translation of the material into 4 languages.

Emergency Health Care: An Emerging National Crisis

A 2006 report from the Institute of Medicine describes the enormous challenges faced by emergency health care in the United States: overcrowding, lack of on-call specialists, inadequate disaster preparedness, and poor funding. Join us as we explore the issues facing emergency departments in both urban and rural settings, discuss how medical centers and communities are coping with these problems, and offer strategies that can help improve the delivery of emergency health care.

Freedom Writers: Making the Most of the Freelance-Agency Relationship

Are you a freelance or contractor who yearns to know how to establish good (or better) relations with a communication agency or regulatory writing group? Are you an agency manager looking to foster strong relations with your freelance writers? We'll explore practical aspects of how to get the most out of these partnerships, from contracts, fees, and managerial issues, to understanding the demands and limitations placed on agencies by their clients. The session is for novices to seasoned professionals.

Health Care on the Margins: Reaching Out to the Disenfranchised

Health economics isn't an esoteric field but one with implications for delivering health care across society. What happens when groups fall outside the margins of health care? How can we reach out to those with mental illness? Children in disaster areas? Rural populations? Does our 2008 national election offer hope for reaching such groups? In this enlightening session, the panel will discuss these issues as well as the role of medical writers in reaching disenfranchised groups.

Health Marketing and Communication at CDC

A panel from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will explain CDC's health marketing model and describe how CDC incorporates health marketing in its public health campaigns. The panel will provide examples of health marketing in action and discuss the use of new media and its implications for campaigns. Attendees will also learn more about what CDC is doing in the field of health literacy.

Heart Disease in Women and AHA's Guidelines for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Women

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in women in the United States, but only about half of American women know this. In this open session, cardiologist and health educator Dr Nanette Wenger will provide valuable background information on the nature of heart disease in women, discuss her experiences in raising public awareness of this problem, and describe key aspects of the American Heart Association's new Evidence-Based Guidelines for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Women.

How to Respond to Peer Reviews of Manuscripts and Grants

Peer review is a major barrier to publishing research results and/or receiving grant funding. To achieve improved results, writers and editors need a greater understanding of the peer review process. Areas to be discussed include an insider's insight into the review process, response structure and tone, and dealing with difficult reviews.

How to Use Humor in Health Writing: Tips From the Real Doc Hollywood

The speaker is the author of humorous novels (including *Doc Hollywood*), children's books (including *What's in a Doctor's Bag?*), and health books. He will discuss the innate sense of humor we all have and will demonstrate how to tap into that humor when writing. Even serious topics often deserve at least a few sentences or paragraphs of appropriate humor to give the reader a break. According to the speaker, life is just a dash and we all should be enjoying it.

How to Write an Informed Consent Document for a Clinical Trial

This session will focus on the elements of the informed consent (IC) document as outlined in 21CFR part 50. Participants will learn how to develop an IC that meets regulatory requirements, passes institutional review board scrutiny, and is readable. Participants will review 2 ICs: 1 meeting requirements and 1 with regulatory/ethical issues.

Integrated Approach to Medical Marketing

We will explore the evolving trend toward merging advertising, public/media relations, and internal, corporate, and marketing communications; the components of an integrated marketing communications (IMC) plan; and the

advantages of integrating communication, including increased efficiency, decreased costs, and cross-platform branding. The disadvantages of IMC, including the potential for conflicts of interest and the misuse of communication functions, and Internet drivers of IMC such as e-mail blasts, podcasting, Webinars, and teleseminars will also be addressed.

Interviewing for a Freelance Writing Job

The freelance job interview is your first opportunity to shine, but for many it is a source of angst. The session leader will analyze the anatomy of the freelance job interview and teach you how you can turn every interview into the first step in a long, beautiful, and profitable relationship.

Listserves and E-mail: Security and Sanity

This session's presenters will help unravel the mysteries of listserves and offer safety tips for using Internet lists and e-mail. Topics include purpose of listserves, subscribing/unsubscribing, reading options, and posting etiquette. Discussion will also focus on e-mail security, spyware, and protecting your computer and identity.

Medical Writing in Developing Countries: Challenges, Successes, and Initiatives

The medical communication world is increasingly becoming one. Yet countries differ in traditions, conditions, and institutions relating to medical writing. This session offers glimpses of Chinese authors' experience writing articles for English-language journals, of the communication of science and medicine in Colombia, and of a program to help researchers in developing countries publish their work. We invite you to come and listen and share experiences you may have with medical writing in developing countries.

Mind Your Freelance Business: The Year-end Review

You work hard as a freelance, but are you minding your business? Learn how to evaluate your client mix, profitability, work load, and marketing efforts at year-end. Use the information to maximize earnings, work more efficiently, choose hourly versus project rates, maintain intellectual interest, and verify that your business is growing over the years.

Navigating the Promotion Review Process

Committees that review and approve promotional materials for approved products are an integral part of any pharmaceutical company. We will discuss review committee dynamics and the impact of medical writers. Additional discussion topics will include tips on making efficacy and safety claims, and recent decisions regarding misleading advertising.

New AMWA Certificate Program: The Curriculum in Science Fundamentals

Are you a writer with a liberal arts degree and a thirst for scientific information? A seasoned writer with core and advanced certificates, looking for a new challenge? The first new AMWA certificate program in more than 20 years—the curriculum in science fundamentals—focuses on the needs of writers and editors, with workshops designed to orient participants to particular scientific areas and provide a foundation for further study. Join us in this open session to find out more about this exciting opportunity.

New Drug Development: From Bench to Breakthrough

Discovering and bringing a new drug to market typically costs a pharmaceutical company more than \$800 million and may take a decade or more to accomplish. How are new drugs discovered and developed? Why are universities key players in new drug development? What are the newest medicines to hit the market, and what's hot in the pipeline? In this session, we will follow the process from the molecule to marketing.

NIH Funding: What the Roadmap Means to Medical Writers

The plans of the NIH to target funding toward clinical and translational research likely mean an exponential growth in positions supporting these investigations. This session's presenter explains NIH funding shifts from General Clinical Research Centers (GCRCs) to Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSAs) and the types of medical writing that will be in demand.

Predictive Health—A Novel Paradigm for Disease Prevention

Advances in technology over the last decade have allowed a shift towards a new paradigm in medicine called *predictive health*. This exciting new field draws upon many disciplines, including genetics, proteomics, epigenetics, bioinformatics, and computational biology. One application, for example, is to create disease-preventing pharmaceuticals tailored to individual patients' genetic profiles. The Predictive Health Initiative is underway at Emory University and the Georgia Institute of Technology, as are other efforts around the nation. Grab your notebooks; in this session you will hear the latest from 3 of the leading pioneers of this effort.

Public Health Challenges in an Era of Global Connectivity and Communication Revolution

Globalization affects health both directly (eg, increased global travel resulting in rapid spread of emerging infectious diseases) and indirectly (eg, urbanization and climate change). At the same time, advances in communication and technology have created unprecedented empowerment and opportunity for users of health information. This presentation will explore influence of these challenges on public health as it addresses both urgent threats (eg, outbreaks, natural and man-made disasters) and urgent realities (eg, cardiovascular disease, obesity) at the global level.

Results of the 2007 AMWA Salary Survey

How does your compensation compare with that of others doing similar work? What relevant data can you present to negotiate an increased salary or freelance fee? Does obtaining an AMWA certificate matter? To help you answer these and other questions, AMWA conducted an official salary survey of its members related to their income in 2006. This new version of the survey has been expanded to include more categories and questions, especially related to freelance work. The results will be presented at this session. For those who cannot attend the session, the PowerPoint presentation will be posted on AMWA's Web site shortly after the conference. A detailed article will also be included in an upcoming issue of *AMWA Journal*.

Scope of Medical Communications

For those new to the field and for those wanting to transfer to a new area of the profession, this panel presentation will provide an overview of medical communication from the perspectives of writers and editors working in different specialties and environments. Presenters will discuss opportunities and projects in their specific fields, the necessary background and education, salary ranges, how to break in, and how to get ahead.

Stem Cells: At the Intersection of Science, Politics, and Religion

Human pluripotent stem cells, prized for their astonishing ability to self-renew and to transform into any kind of cell in the body, are altering our understanding of basic biology. Yet for all their promise, stem cells are no strangers to controversy. Our panel will discuss how ethical, political, and religious factors are converging to influence the field. Will stem cells help correct failing hearts, fix paralyzing spinal cord injuries, generate new organs, or cure debilitating diseases like parkinsonism or Alzheimer disease? Will they hold the key to better understanding of cancer? What about the study of adult versus embryonic stem cells? How are federal restrictions on stem cell research affecting scientists' ability to propel science forward? Last but not least, what role can and should the medical communicator play in conveying these issues to the public?

Technologies for Medical Communicators

Marshall McLuhan, mass communications guru, contended that the medium is the message. In the field of medical communications this concept can be annoying, perplexing, and potentially dangerous! If you sometimes feel like the use of "IT takes a village" (IT = Information Technology!) then this session will provide some clarity. Panelists, who have technology experience in the public health and medical sectors, will attempt to dissect and examine the tools and technologies that can help us deliver our regulatory, informational, and informational medical communication in a manner that results in an informed—not distracted—consumer. The session will include a discussion of e-mail digests, listserves, Web sites, online publications, and multimedia such as video and audio presentations.

The Accuracy of Disease Statistics

Medical journal articles are packaged data, and they are only as good as the data. The presenter will describe which disease and therapy data we can believe and when the best data available are only an approximation.

The Care and Feeding of Editors: How to Manage an Editorial Department

“The buck stops here” is the hallmark of an editorial department. Find out how one managing editor motivates editors to perfection. Discussion topics will include establishing and maintaining high editorial standards, training for consistency, communicating with key partners, and optimizing the services of freelance editors.

The Journal Selection Process: Getting Beyond the Impact Factor

Although we are often drawn to the simplicity and prestige of the journal impact factor, determining the right journal for manuscript submission involves a more comprehensive decision than a single numeric score can provide. This session will cover a multitude of considerations that should inform any decision on where to submit your work.

The Role of Medical Writers in Promoting Ethical Publication Practices

Three medical writers will discuss guidelines for promoting transparency with regard to publication authorship, acknowledgments, potential conflicts of interest, and related concerns. The session will focus on (1) getting involved in the ongoing debate; (2) educating thought leaders, employers, and the public on the legitimate role of medical writers; (3) promoting the effective use of ethical guidelines in publication projects; and (4) supporting research on both ethical and technical medical writing issues.

The Role of Medical Writing Assistance

Everybody agrees that good medical writing is important. The issues are who does it, who pays for it, and who gets credit for it. We will hear a well-published medical researcher–journal editor discuss the role of medical writers in developing journal articles. An accomplished freelance writer-editor with more than 20 years of medical writing experience will share her opinions about pressures to inject drug promotion into journal articles. A pharma executive with medical affairs and regulatory management expertise will explain why medical writers are so often hired to help prepare articles and scientific posters. Then we’ll ask our audience to share their opinions on this controversial topic.

The Twin Epidemics: Obesity and Diabetes

Obesity and diabetes, 2 inextricably linked conditions, are at the forefront of medical concerns in the United States today, and both disorders are on the rise. Between 1995 and 2005, the prevalence of diagnosed diabetes in the US rose from 8.2 million people to 14.6 million. In 1995, every state had an obesity prevalence of less than 20%; by 2005, only 4 did. In this session, Dr Venkat Narayan, renowned expert on obesity and diabetes, will review the trends in obesity and diabetes, the causes of their rise worldwide, and advances and promises for reducing the burden related to them.

Top 10 Techniques for Producing Great Slides

Slide Wars: Medical writer and client in the endless battle! The session leaders will cover some common differences in approach between the writer (or editor) and the client—for example, what are the best words we can use to get a concept across versus how many words can we manage to fit onto a slide and still be able to read the text? The session will also include a discussion of key concepts of audio/visual presentation and provide guidelines for creating slides that work.

Trading the Tricks of the Trade: The Ins and Outs of CME Materials

Preparing materials for the highly regulated, highly competitive continuing medical education (CME) arena requires excellent writing skills. This interactive session, led by employees of a successful medical education company and a Medscape clinical editor, will discuss the necessary writing skills and the challenges inherent in hiring in-house writers and freelance writers. Attendees will be encouraged to share their experiences in writing for CME and their suggestions for positive collaborations with medical or scientific writers.

Training in Scientific Communication in the Absence of Technology

Many of us have been trained as teachers in an environment of highly sophisticated technology where PowerPoint is a must. Demonstrative videos are used in many learning sessions. An attractive classroom with excellent lighting and comfortable seating is expected. What happens when the lights go off? When the floor of the classroom is dirt? When the teacher finds a slug crawling across today’s notes? In much of the world, this is the best-option scenario for the education setting. The students may or may not have pens, pencils, and paper. They are unlikely to have textbooks. There may be gunfire in the background rather than piped-in music. You are the teacher. What do you do now?

University Programs for Educating Medical Writers

Ten years ago, AMWA convened an Educators' Roundtable to discuss the state of teaching and training in medical writing from an academic perspective—that is, teaching beyond the borders of AMWA and outside the for-profit programs offered as seminars by other organizations. A lot has changed in the intervening time! Medical writers are more visible, the educational options are more established, and the roles that medical writers/editors play have become more complicated. Join us for a lively conversation about what we have learned, how different programs have evolved, and our hopes for the future.

Update on the *AMA Manual of Style*

Most medical writers and editors consider the American Medical Association's *AMA Manual of Style* to be an essential component among the tools of their profession. AMA's Stacy Christiansen will discuss the recently released 10th edition. What is the manual's stand on authorship? How should electronic citations be handled? Does the new edition recommend any major changes to style or data presentation? Ms Christiansen will answer these questions and many more.

Vaccine Safety: Dealing With Uncertainty

The timing and widespread use of childhood vaccines make them perfect scapegoats for diseases and conditions of unknown causes. Vaccines have been blamed for causing asthma, diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome, cancer, multiple sclerosis, and, more recently, autism. When these concerns were first expressed, little or no scientific information was available to confirm or reject them. Panelists will describe how public health decisions are made in the absence of scientific information. Using the examples of the vaccine safety concerns surrounding the first rotavirus vaccine, Rotashield, and the preservative thimerosal, panelists will explore the difficulty of communicating uncertainty, the need for making public health policy, and the potential benefits and risks of health policy decisions.

Writing About Medical Devices: FDA and Industry Perspectives

Writing for implantable medical devices has its own distinctive publication processes for clinical, regulatory, and promotional documents. Discover how both the requirements of the FDA and the forces of emerging global harmonization affect the industry documents involved in bringing complex devices safely to market.

Writing Science When English Is Your Second Language

We will discuss 3 aspects of research writing for non-native speakers and those who work with them: (1) common problems for non-native writers, (2) current research about cultural differences in thinking and organizing, and how these differences affect writing, and (3) practical exercises for the quick improvement of writing.