Starting your career in MedComms

Hannah Wills
What is MedComms?

MedComms agencies work with pharmaceutical clients to raise awareness of diseases and treatments, educating and informing healthcare professionals about the benefits and risks of new therapies, supported by clinical and economic data.
Why is MedComms so important?

Pharmaceutical company

Healthcare professionals

MedComms: bridging the knowledge gap
Bridging the knowledge gap

**Strategic**
- Brand planning
- Market and competitor analyses
- Communications strategy development

**Tactical**
- **Meetings**
  - Satellite symposia
  - Standalone meetings
  - Advisory boards
  - Booth content
  - Virtual events
  - Expert engagement

- **Scientific content**
  - Slide sets
  - Publications
  - Literature reviews
  - HEOR and market access materials
  - Patient communications

- **Training materials**
  - Promotional materials
  - Objection handlers
  - Speaker training
  - Visual aids and detail aids
  - e-Learning

- **Digital**
  - Websites/apps
  - Videos and animations
  - Infographics
  - Social media
  - VR and AR
What does MedComms mean to me?

MedComms agencies work with pharmaceutical clients to raise awareness of diseases and treatments, educating and informing healthcare professionals about the benefits and risks of new therapies, supported by clinical and economic data.

Intellectually stimulating and rewarding
Chance to expand scientific understanding
Opportunity for development and growth
Teamwork and collaboration
May involve travel to meet clients/KOLs
MedComms entry-level opportunities

- Editing
- Medical writing
- Account or project management
Key attributes for any role

- Communication skills
- Scientific knowledge
- Organizational skills
- Eye for detail
- Teamwork
- Adaptability
- Eagerness to learn
Working as part of a team

Meeting

- Objectives and briefing calls
  - Agenda
  - Venue logistics
- Attendee travel plans
- Slide presentations
- Pre-reading materials
- Signage and materials
- Slide rehearsals/tech checks
- Onsite attendance
- Post-meeting report
- Evaluation forms
Choosing an agency – key criteria

**Size and structure**
Small, nimble, independent business or large network organization?

**Reputation**
Strong heritage? High-quality deliverables? Positive team morale? High team retention rate?

**Market focus**
Supports Global HQ clients or an individual market/region?

**Culture**
Supportive? Friendly? Collaborative?

**Types of work**
Full service (e.g., publications, digital, training, meetings) or specialist?

**Career progression**
Formal training or tailored support?

No two agencies are the same – you need to find the best fit for you
Sources of information

Websites, networking events, internships/work experience are all invaluable sources of information to ensure that you are prepared for the interview and for your first day on the job.
My journey into MedComms

Anna Bakewell
My journey into MedComms

Medical Writer, 7.4 Limited

Second interview

7.4 Open Day, January 2017

Building experience

MedComms Careers Session, January 2016

PhD Molecular Neuroscience Cardiff University

BSc Zoology Cardiff University
Building experience

**Scientific research**
- Alzheimer’s disease research project
- Literature review
- Conference poster presentation

**Teamwork**
- Korfball
- Working within a large team
- Postgraduate Day committee

**Communication skills**
- Published article for The Conversation
- Communicating Your Science Workshop
- Volunteering with children with learning disabilities

**Organization and responsibility**
- Self-directed research project
- Korfball club secretary
- Postgraduate Day committee co-chair
- Undergraduate research project supervisor
What does a medical writer do?

We have a new drug to launch!

How will doctors use this drug? What further information do they need?

Let’s ask the experts!

Here are my slides—all done!
Treatment course

- Started treatment March 2017
- 160mg/d
- After 4 weeks, fatigue, HFSR, nausea
- Albumin 22mg/dL, Bilirubin 0.8mg/dL
- INR 1, HbA1c 6.1%, CRP 4.5 mg/dL
- Dose modification 160mg>120mg

Case study

AEs reported after 4 weeks of treatment:
- Fatigue
- HFSR
- Nausea

March April May June July August
160mg/d
120mg/d

Dr H personal communication

"Here are my slides— all done!"
Why do I like my job?

- Learning
- Creativity
- People
- Variety
Some cool PowerPoint tricks

Effective learning

Industry knowledge

Teamwork

Communication

Organization and prioritization

Time management

What skills have I developed?
Thank you

Come and meet us at the AMICULUM booth
Questions?