So, what is med comms?

Work with the pharmaceutical industry 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.
Types of projects

Meetings
- Satellite symposia
- Standalone meetings
- Advisory boards
- Speaker training
- Virtual meetings

Medical affairs
- Slide kits
- Publications
- Literature reviews
- HEOR/market access
- Expert engagement

Commercial
- Promotional materials
- Objection handlers
- Strategy development
- Market and competitor analyses

Digital
- Websites
- Apps
- E-learning
- Videos and animations
What does med comms mean to me?

Work with the pharmaceutical industry 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
- May involve travel to meet clients/KOLs
- Teamwork and collaboration
What are the entry opportunities?

Key attributes for any role: Scientific knowledge, teamwork, eye for detail, organizational skills, good communication, eagerness to learn

- Editorial
- Medical writing
- Account or project management
Choosing an agency – key criteria

Network
Larger organizations, often spanning med comms, advertising and PR

Independent
Tend to be smaller; may offer opportunity for greater responsibility early in career

Global
Support HQ clients pre- and post-launch

Full service
Span a range of services – eg publications, digital, training, meetings, consultancy

Local
Focus on an individual market or region

Specialist
Focus on one sector – eg training or market access
Not all agencies are the same…

You need to consider:

- Reputation
- Culture
- Team turnover
- Training opportunities
Sources of information

Company websites provide insights into agency life and culture. Check out Firstmedcommsjob.com for more specific information about landing your first job.
Internships, work experience and networking events are all invaluable sources of information to ensure that you are prepared for the interview and for your first day on the job.
Agency life

Faith Norster
My path to medical writing

Experience/skills

Scientific background
PhD student
Passion for scientific engagement

Med comms networking
My path to medical writing

Experience/skills

Medical writer
- Writing
- Poster and slide deck development
- Meetings/symposia
- Science engagement

Account handler
- Managing students
- Project tracking
- Organizing events

Medical communications
- Networking events
- Pharma visits

Faith Norster

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Teamwork
2016–2017  Barts Cancer Institute (BCI) PhD Forum Secretary

Research Engagement and Communication
2017  Poster presentation – American Society of Hematology (ASH) 59th Annual Meeting
- Oral presentation – BCI Postgraduate Day
- CRUK “Meet the Scientist” presentations – CRUK Science Immersion Day, CRUK London Research Showcase

2016  Poster presentation – BCI Postgraduate Day
- CRUK Research Engagement Activities – A-level school children, Compass Group fundraisers

2015  Oral presentation – ASH 57th Annual Meeting

Project Leading and Mentoring
2016  MSc Project Supervision – 10-week research project
2015–2017  Teaching and laboratory demonstrating – BSc and MSc Biology / Biomedical science course modules

Industry Experience
2017  Intensive MedComms careers workshop
- PhD Forum visit to Gilead and Janssen UK medical affairs teams
- MedComms networking careers event

EDUCATION
Oct 2014– Oct 2017
- PhD – Barts Cancer Institute, Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry
  The role of HMGB1 and its receptors in chronic lymphocytic leukaemia
Choosing the right agency for me

- Career progression path?
- Type of training?
- Size of company?
- Office location?
- Number of trainee medical writers in account?
- Therapy area?
- Type of medical writing?
What to expect as a medical writer

Project manager  Scientific lead

Medical writer  Medical writer  Other specialist

Designer  Editor

Medical writing  Scientific background  Medical editing  Design  Project management
### Safety profile

**Adverse reactions occurring within 7 days of any dose**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>Local reactions</th>
<th>Systemic reactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-administration 11–12 months</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reaction</th>
<th>Sweden and Finland</th>
<th>19–20 (%)</th>
<th>CI (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erythema</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swelling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrexia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crying</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somnolence</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anorexia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritability</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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CI: confidence interval

Smith et al., 2017
Support as a trainee

- Mentor (senior medical writer)
- Formal training (AMICULUM Curriculum)
- Weekly account meetings
- Client calls and meetings
- ABPI/compliance training
- Inductions
- Company meetings
- Networkpharma.tv
- Pharmatimes.com

Client work
- Therapy area
- Client processes
- Client calls/meetings

Writer

Industry
A typical project

Project briefing

Client review

Review and approval

Project completion

First draft

Second draft
A typical project

1. Project briefing
2. Internal discussion
3. Outline development
4. Client outline review
5. Design input
6. Internal review
7. First-draft development
8. Internal review
9. Edit
10. First draft
A typical project
Why I enjoy med comms

Innovative

Scientific engagement

Collaborative

Creative

Variety

Impact on healthcare

Flexibility
Come and speak to the team at the AMICULUM booth