The agency perspective

01 July 2014
Kate Ashworth – Client Services Director
Selina Muthada-Pottayya – Senior Account Executive
Agenda

• What is medical communications?
• Agency models
• What services does a med comms agency provide?
• Typical agency team and roles
• Why join?
What is Medical Communications?
Medical communication is providing consultancy services to the pharmaceutical industry to help raise awareness of medicines via education and promotion.

Medical communications

A medical communications agency educates and informs healthcare professionals about innovations and perspectives in healthcare.
What does a Med Comms agency actually do?

1. Provide **strategic counsel** to pharma companies on optimising and maximising the dissemination of data to all relevant target audiences.

2. Provide **scientific and commercial communications** to increase disease area awareness, anticipation around the therapy and differentiation from its competitors.

3. Help pharma companies to **educate and inform** its customers about the benefits and risks of therapies.

Supported by data
### Developing a drug

Developing a drug can take up to 15 years & can cost £billions!

- **HCPs need to be told about the medicine so they will prescribe it…**
- **This requires marketing & communications activities**
- **Pharma companies benefit from using agencies with specialist expertise**

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### Why do pharma companies need this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Synthesis, Biological testing &amp; pharmacological screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Phase II: 100–200 patients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Phase III: 1000 patients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase IV: Marketing review, Post-marketing level</td>
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- **10,000–30,000 substances**
- **1 new medicine**

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- **Year 0**: Final patent application
- **Year 3**: Investigational new drug application
- **Year 9**: Marketing application
- **Year 11**: Marketing approval, Product launch

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**Notes:**

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- HCPs need to be told about the medicine so they will prescribe it…
- This requires marketing & communications activities
- Pharma companies benefit from using agencies with specialist expertise
Agency models
Lots of terminology!

Regulatory affairs
Medical education
Market research
Branding
Market access
Digital specialists
Consultancy
Public relations
Promotion
Logistics & meetings management
Publications
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There are many agency models...

- **Integrated healthcare agencies, part of large corporate holding groups**
  - Market access
  - Medical education
  - PR
  - Advertising

- **Specialist in one or two content services**
- **Specialist in non-content services (logistics & meetings/skills training)**
- **Man in his shed**

‘Full service agency’
What services does a med comms agency provide?
Treatment of high-grade gliomas and adolescents

T. J. MacDonald, D. Aguilera, and C. M. Kram L
Aflac Cancer Center and Blood Disorders Service, Children's Hospital of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA, USA (T.J.M., D.A.); University Children's Hospital Wittenberg, Halle, Germany (C.M.K.)

Pediatric high-grade gliomas (HGG) are a diverse group of tumors that include diffuse intrinsic pontine gliomas and their variants and are associated with extremely poor outcomes. There is no effective chemotherapeutic treatment for these tumors, and options in adult patients are of limited benefit. There is growing evidence that the treatment of pediatric HGG, as well as many adult gliomas, is limited by DNA damage repair (DDR) mechanisms. However, there are no effective DDR-based targeted therapies in this setting. The current study aimed to determine whether the DDR status of pediatric HGG tumors is associated with their response to chemotherapy.

Randomized, phase III study comparing osmoprotective carboxymethylcellulose with sodium hyaluronate in dry eye disease

Christophe Baudouin*, Béatrice Cochenet*, Pierre-Jean Pisella*, Brigitte Girard*, Pascale Pouliphen*, Hazel Cooper*, Catherine Creuzot-Garcher

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Patients presenting late with HIV infection are at a higher risk of clinical events, are difficult to treat and have a higher mortality compared with those who present earlier. Indeed, being diagnosed too late for effective antiretroviral therapy results in low CD4+ T-cell counts. In addition to the detrimental effects on the health of the individual, late presentation also creates a significant societal burden because it is associated with increased risk of HIV transmission and health-related costs.
Congress activities and materials

Opinion leader programmes
PR
Sponsored symposia
Congress
TRAFFIC
Exhibition booth
Symposium highlights
video
Mode of action
video
Giveaways
Congress website
Distribute publications
Meet the experts
Symposium highlights
video
CD-ROM highlights
Webcast
Oral presentations
Abstracts
Posters
Symposium proceedings
Meetings

- Advisory board meetings
- Standalone meetings
- Launch events
- Train-the-trainer meetings
- Planning meetings

Prepare meeting minutes & executive summaries
Medical materials

• Brochures or leaflets for use by sales representatives
  – Leave pieces
  – Details aids
  – Product monographs
• Competitor intelligence
• Internal training decks
• Communication plans
Typical agency team and roles
The typical agency team

**Core team**

- **Client Services Director**
- **Scientific Services Director**
- **(Senior) Account Director**
- **Senior Account Manager**
- **Senior Medical Writer**
- **Principle Writer**
- **Account Manager**
- **Medical Writer**
- **(Senior) Account Executive**
- **Associate Medical Writer**
- **Editorial Services**
  - Review all content to ensure quality control
  - Liaise with studio on layout
- **Creative Services**
  - Manage all creative elements including design, print, digital
- **Meetings Support**
  - Provide logistical support to core team as appropriate
The typical agency team

Core team

- Client Services Director
- Scientific Services Director
- (Senior) Account Director
- Senior Account Manager
- Scientific Services Director
- Senior Medical Writer
- (Senior) Account Director
- Account Manager
- Principle Writer
- (Senior) Account Executive
- Medical Writer
- Senior Medical Writer
- Associate Medical Writer
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How did I become a Client Services Director?

- Human Biology BSc
- Travelled around the world for 18 months
- Spotted that Medical Communications actually existed!
- Job as a Project Assistant in 2001
- 13 years later, CSD!!
Client Services/Account Management... lots of terminology

Account Manager

Project management

Account Director

Client services

Account management

Project Manager

Project Assistant

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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The typical agency team

- **Client Services Director**
- **Scientific Services Director**
- **(Senior) Account Director**
- **Senior Account Manager**
- **Senior Medical Writer**
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**Editorial Services**
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**Creative Services**
- Manage all creative elements including design, print, digital

**Meetings Support**
- Provide logistical support to core team as appropriate
Role of the Account Manager

- Manage account(s)
  - Key client contact

- Liaise with all relevant departments ensuring optimal team communication

- Develop budgets & manage project finances

- Build relationships with clients, doctors etc

- Ensure projects are delivered to the highest quality and to agreed timelines

- Assist with pitches & proposals for additional business opportunities
A day in the life of an Account Manager

- Status update call with the client
- Attend a brainstorm for a pitch
- Teleconference with medical
- Create a project timelines
- Create a budget
- Work with studio on meeting materials
- Review another's work
- Attend a standalone meeting
- Develop project timelines

There isn’t a typical day!
What do we look for in a new Account Manager?

• MEDICAL
  – Interest in science/scientific background

• ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT
  – Enjoy working at the front line!
  – Good communication skills
  – Good organisational skills
  – Team player
  – Be comfortable with numbers (budgeting, reconciliations)
  – Be comfortable presenting (new business, client meetings, internal meetings)
  – Understand product strategy and offer ideas

Deliver what the client wants, on time, on budget

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Scientific Services/Medical Writing...lots of terminology

Medical Writer

Scientific Services Services Director

Scientific Services Services Manager

Associate Medical Writer

Principle Writer

MEDICAL EDITOR

Scientific Advisor

Editorial Team Leader

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The typical agency team

Core team

Client Services Director

(Senior) Account Director

Senior Account Manager

Scientific Services Director

Senior Medical Writer

Principle Writer

Account Manager

Medical Writer

(Senior) Account Executive

Associate Medical Writer

Editorial Services

Review all content to ensure quality control

Liaise with studio on layout

Creative Services

Manage all creative elements including design, print, digital

Meetings Support

Provide logistical support to core team as appropriate
Role of the Medical Writer

- Research and write scientifically accurate copy
  Primarily in Word and PowerPoint

- Build relationships with clients, doctors etc

- Review and sign off

- Develop expert knowledge of your account

- Contribute to new business pitches

- Suggest new ideas (e.g. publication opportunities)
A day in the life of a Medical Writer

Research new disease area and prepare slides for an upcoming pitch

Attend strategic planning meeting at client offices

Draft a primary paper or review article

Review another’s work and provide feedback

Draft a primary paper or review article

Teleconference with client and authors to discuss feedback on a manuscript

Travel to an advisory board – take minutes, draft meeting report

There isn’t a typical day!
Attributes of a good Medical Writer

• **MEDICAL**
  – Science background / PhD advantageous
• **WRITER:** Enjoy writing and have a talent for it
  – Attention to detail
  – Think on your feet / problem solver
  – Excellent ‘desktop’ research skills
  – Able to absorb new concepts rapidly
  – Presentation skills
  – People skills – ‘bonding’ with colleagues and clients
  – Willingness to travel
  – Take feedback well!

Deliver what the client wants, on time, on budget
Why join?
Why join a Med Comms agency?

- Broad experience to be gained
- Fast paced and deadline driven
- Career progression: scope to progress rapidly
- Opportunities for change in direction within agency
  - Editorial & creative
  - Client services
  - Business development
- Opportunity to work with global experts in their field
- Opportunity to work in a range of therapy areas
And finally, it's not all work!

Ice skating in Oxford

Xmas party

PLOD 2013
Thank you