The life and times of GAPP
MedComms Networking brunch club
July 4, 2018

Jackie Marchington, PhD, CMPP
Director of Global Operations, Caudex – a McCann Health company
Former member of GAPP, 2014–2018
Disclosures

• GAPP
  • All emeritus and retired members provided their time freely
  • ISMPP supported the website from 2012–2017

• Jackie Marchington
  • Employee of Caudex, Oxford, a McCann Health company
  • Member of ISMPP
  • Co-chair, ISMPP Advocacy and Outreach Committee

• Original cartoons ©HamiltonHouse (Cindy Hamilton)
BG
(before GPP...)

A brief history lesson
Issues raised in the literature

**PAPER**

Impact of covert duplicate publication on meta-analysis: a case study

*BMC 1997; 315 doi: 10.1136/bmj.315.7109.635* (Published 13 September 1997)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 1997;315:635

**MARKETING**

Spin doctors soft pedal data on antihypertensives

*BMC 2003; 326 doi: 10.1136/bmj.326.7381.179* (Published 18 January 2003)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2003;326:170.1

**NEWS**

Journal “should have revealed scientist’s connection to company”

*BMC 2002; 324 doi: 10.1136/bmj.324.7329.70* (Published 12 January 2002)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2002;324:70.1

**NEWS**

Firm tried to block report on failure of AIDS vaccine

*BMC 2000; 321 doi: 10.1136/bmj.321.7270.1173* (Published 11 November 2000)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2000;321:1173.1

**PAPER**

Evidence b(i)ased medicine—selective reporting from studies sponsored by pharmaceutical industry: review of studies in new drug applications

*BMC 2003; 326 doi: 10.1136/bmj.326.7409.1171* (Published 29 May 2003)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2003;326:1171
And then the press...

Painkiller firm 'hid heart risk'
The Guardian, 2 Nov 2004
David Teather in New York

The reputation of the drug industry took another heavy blow yesterday with a report suggesting that Merck had fought for years to cover up evidence linking its painkiller Vioxx to heart attacks and strokes.

Drug giant 'ignored Vioxx heart risk'
The Guardian, 5 Nov 2004
Sarah Boseley Health editor

The multinational drug company Merck knew four years ago that its blockbuster painkiller Vioxx was causing thousands of heart attacks and deaths, but kept it on the market until five weeks ago, scientists said last night.

Glaxo faces drug fraud lawsuit
The Guardian, 3 Jun 2004
David Teather in New York and Sarah Boseley

Firm accused of keeping back negative trial results.

Spitzer Sues a Drug Maker, Saying It Hid Negative Data

At medical journals, paid writers play big role

By Anna Wilde Mathews, The Wall Street Journal
January 12, 2005

Lila E. Nachtigall, MD
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
New York University School of Medicine
251 E. 33rd St.
New York, NY 10016

Dear Dr. Nachtigall,

On behalf of Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, DesignWrite has been asked to assist you with the development of a manuscript concerning breast cancer and sex hormone-binding globulin. Jeff Solomon recently contacted you concerning this matter.

I have sent you a copy of the manuscript, which you should be receiving by FedEx in the next few days. I would very much like to discuss this project with you in greater detail, and will contact your secretary to confirm receipt of the manuscript and to set up a convenient time to speak. If you prefer, please feel free to contact me at 609-924-1116 or via email at dwrite1kmittle@attmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,
January 12, 2005

Lila E. Nachtigall, MD
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
New York University School of Medicine
251 E. 33rd St.
New York, NY 10016

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Sincerely,
And it never...
...ever...
...goes away...
Industry responses

From within
• Original GPP developed between 1998–2003
  • 1st revision (GPP2) 2009
  • 2nd revision (GPP3) 2013
• #GPP4 being thought about...
• Global Publication Survey
• MPIP

From without
• ICMJE
• Corporate Integrity Agreements
• Sunshine Act
The birth of GAPP
Why were we needed?

• Around 2010–2012, articles being published about industry sponsored research assumed ghostwriting was common, things were as they were 10 years previously
• Conflating ghostwriting with professional medical writing support
• Suggesting spin and selective reporting were the norm
Medline publications to end 2011
Responses were isolated and slow
How could we (collectively) do it better?

• GAPP was founded to:
  • provide a timely and credible response to influential stories about medical publication professionals
  • be a “go to” group for those needing timely input from international leaders of medical publication professionals
The team

- 5-people
- Respected members of, but not representing, professional organizations
- Passionate advocates
- 10 weeks leading, else review/approver role
- Find own appropriately qualified successor on exit
Alert process

• Referrals
  • contact@gappteam.org; website form
• Surveillance
• Fortune
• Anticipation
Characteristics of a trigger article

- On remit
  - Ghostwriting/publication professionals/industry practices
- Decent reach
  - Mainstream journal
  - High profile author(s)
- Opportunity to educate
  - Pubs professionals
  - Researchers/authors/students
Characteristics of a GAPP response

- Respectful
- Cite third party guidance (ICMJE, WAME, CSE)
- Cite sources correctly/correct misinterpretation
- Refute anecdote with evidence
  - GPS
  - Ghostwriting prevalence
  - CMPP
  - Current practice vs historical
- Highlight current guidance and current behaviour
GAPP in action
~50 responses

- Some ignored
- 1 attempt to get us banned from PLoS
- PubMed Commons – useful while it lasted
Proactive articles


Did it work?

Correlation does not equal causation, but GAPP started here

...just saying...
Time to go?
Responses: 2012–2018

- The volume of articles about industry sponsored medical publications has decreased
- Misinformed or poorly researched articles are still being published, but they have been focussing less and less on professional medical writing
- The conversation about industry funded research has been moving toward data disclosure and clinical trial transparency for some time
- We responded to only 4 articles in 2017
The Matheson Event

- In 2016, GAPP responded to a series of articles by Alastair Matheson about how industry manipulated ICMJE criteria for authorship
- The third one, in the BMJ, drew independent responses from GAPP and ISMPP, and, eventually, a joint final response from all organizations
- Organizations had evolved to be able to work together on a timely response
So long!

• As of 2 May, 2018, the Global Alliance of Publication Professionals stepped down

• After 6 years and ~50 responses, we felt that GAPP had served its purpose and the professional organizations have evolved to a point that we could hand back responsibility for rebuttals and responses to AMWA, EMWA and ISMPP
Don’t sit back –

- We will continue to maintain the website and the contact@gappteam.org inbox
- Thank you for your support and assistance over the years