The agency perspective

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Anna Palmer
Scientific Services Manager
Contents

• What is medical communications?
• How did I get here?
• Medical communications vs other agencies
• What do we actually do?
• Role of a medical writer
• Role of an account manager
• Other roles within medical communications
Communication of medical/scientific information to healthcare professionals, most often around a particular disease or a specific drug, and generally on behalf of a pharmaceutical company.
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Pharmaceutical company anxious to speak to GPs about their new migraine treatment

How?
Pharmaceutical company anxious to speak to GPs about their migraine treatment

Hire a Medical Communications agency!
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How did I become a medical writer?

- Biochemistry BSc
- PhD in physiology
- Two post docs (5 years total)
- Spotted job for ‘medical writer’
- First medical writing job!
How did I get here?

First medical writing job - 3 years at a publishing company

Moved to my first med comms agency as Medical Writer

Promoted to Senior Medical Writer

Moved to another med comms agency, as Senior Medical Writer

Became Scientific Team Leader, then Scientific Services Manager

2004 – 6

2006 – 8

2008

2009 – 12

2012

2013
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Med Comms is one of many specialties allied to pharma companies

- Digital specialists
- Consulting-centred interactive agency
- Medical Communications
- Medical affairs
- Market Access
- Public Relations
- Clinical research organisations
- Advertising
- Branding
- Marketing
### Average R&D cost of a new medicine up to launch: $1 billion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Research Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Discovery research</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Synthesis, Biological testing &amp; pharmacological screening</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Development research</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase I: 30 volunteers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Regulatory review</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Post-mktng level</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Product launch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 new medicine</td>
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</table>

- **Final patent application**
- **Investigational new drug application**
- **Marketing application**
- **Marketing approval**
- **Product launch**

- **10,000–30,000 substances**
- **1 new medicine**
Example scenario

- Drug A “Headilin” has completed phase III trials and the results are excellent.
- The Pharmaceutical Company “PharmaCo” have applied to the European Medicines Agency to get Headilin approved for use in migraine.
Example scenario

Public Relations
- Tell the press

Digital
- Set up Headilin.com

Advertising
- Promotion e.g. journal ads

Market Research
- Interview docs

Market Access
- Get Headilin in pharmacies

Regulatory
- Prepare study data for submission

Brand Agency
- Brand Headilin

Med Comms
- Educate prescribers and key supporting medical staff
You’ll hear the term ‘full service agency’ a lot!

• What does it mean?
  – It means they can do ‘everything’...

• Full service agencies may:
  • Have specialist divisions that deliver many or all of these services, or
  • Align themselves with complementary agencies
For example...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical communications</th>
<th>Pan-EU CME</th>
<th>Interactive and digital services</th>
<th>Market access</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Strategic communication planning</td>
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<td>- Publication planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Medical writing support</td>
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<td>- Stakeholder engagement programmes</td>
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<td>- Meeting &amp; congress support</td>
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<td>- Print production &amp; creative services</td>
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<td>- Logistical support</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Full service educational programmes for grant funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Bespoke accredited live educational events</td>
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<td>- International &amp; national accreditation</td>
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<td>- Distance learning programmes</td>
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<td>- Independent medical educational systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Web &amp; online services</td>
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<td>- Interactive learning tools</td>
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<td>- Video</td>
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<td>- MOA animation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strategic consultancy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Bespoke market access programmes</td>
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</table>
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Acknowledgments

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Congress materials

Original data
• Abstracts (for submission to conferences)
• Posters / slides for oral presentations

Promotional
• Material for booths in exhibition hall
• Sponsored symposium
  • Slides
  • Programme and abstract book
  • Invitation
  • Audio-visual
  • Stage sets
Meetings

- Standalone educational meetings
- Strategic advisory board meetings
- Launch events
- Train the trainer meetings
- Planning meetings

Prepare meeting minutes and executive summaries
Commercially focused materials

- Brochures or leaflets for use by sales representatives
  - Leave pieces
  - Detail aids
  - Product monographs
- Competitor intelligence
  - What is the competition doing at X conference?
- Internal training decks
- Communication plans
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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
- Suggest new ideas (e.g. publication opportunities)
- Contribute to new business pitches
A typical day for a medical writer

There isn’t one!

- Travel to an advisory board - take minutes, draft meeting report
- Review another writer’s work and provide feedback
- Attend strategic planning meeting at client’s offices to discuss next projects
- Teleconference with client and authors to discuss feedback on a manuscript
- Work to tight deadlines as well as ad hoc requests!
- Draft a primary paper or review article
- Devise content and functionality for a new educational website
- Finalise core slide deck
- Guide our clients

Research new disease area and prepare slides for an upcoming pitch
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
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Terminology

Client Services / Account Management

Account Executive

Account Director

Account Manager

Senior Account Executive
What is client services?

Top quality medical or scientific copy writing

Create and manage timelines in order to meet deadlines

Construct budgets and manage project finances

Manage account – key client contact, main writer contact

Understand offer strategic advice
The typical agency team

- **Client Services Director**
  Leads team responsible for coordination of delivery timelines and financial management

- **Scientific Services Director**
  Leads medical writing team and responsible for scientific consistency and accuracy

- **Strategic Counsel**
  Senior management ensuring programme achieves strategic aims

- **Account Manager**
  Responsible for managing budgets and timely delivery; coordinating all agency activity

- **Medical Writer**
  Responsible for developing scientific content and liaising with external experts

- **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
What do we look for in a new account manager?

- **MEDICAL**: Interest in science
- **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
Why join a Med Comms agency?
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
  – Event management
  – Interactive/digital specialism

• Opportunity to work with global experts in their field

• Opportunity to work in a range of therapy areas
...And it isn’t all work, work, work either