AMWA–EMWA–ISMPP joint position statement on the role of professional medical writers

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Chris Winchester DPhil

Managing Director at Oxford PharmaGenesis

  - Winners of a Queen’s Award for Enterprise 2015
- 160 staff; 100 writers and consultants
  - > 90% with a PhD/MD
  - PRINCE2 qualified project managers
- Enduring partnerships with healthcare companies and professional and patient organizations

Honorary Associate of the School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health, Durham University
First AMWA–EMWA–ISMPP joint initiative

- The **first unified position statement** on the role of professional medical writers from 3 leading professional organizations:
  - American Medical Writers Association (AMWA)
  - European Medical Writers Association (EMWA)
  - International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP)

- **Joint Position Statement** describes, for the first time, a global standard for professional medical writers

- Replaces previous position statements and guidelines from these participating organizations
Representing 6,500 medical communicators around the world
Objectives and scope

- States both author and medical writer responsibilities
- Explains the value that professional medical writers bring to evidence-based medicine
- Brings the expertise of medical writers and the guidelines within which they work to clinicians, researchers, peer-reviewers, and journal editors
- Reflects updated guidelines and current evidence of the value of professional medical writing support
- Recommends appropriate acknowledgment of an accountable medical writer
AMWA–EMWA–ISMPP Joint Position Statement on the Role of Professional Medical Writers
Released January 2017

Introduction
This joint position statement of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA), and the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) describes the appropriate role of professional medical writers in the development of medical and scientific publications, including:

- articles and supplementary content (e.g., video abstracts) for publication in peer-reviewed journals
- abstracts, posters, and oral presentations for dissemination at scientific congresses.

This joint position statement is in line with up-to-date guidelines from several other international organizations.1–18

Types of publications covered
Reflects relevant guidances and statements
Responsibilities of professional medical writers

Professional medical writing support helps authors and sponsors to disclose their research in peer-reviewed journals and at scientific congresses in an ethical, accurate, and timely manner, with the ultimate aim of advancing patient care. Professional medical writers have extensive knowledge of ethical publication guidelines. When assisting authors with communication of the results of company-sponsored research, they must:

- follow Good Publication Practice (GPP3) guidelines and International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations
- consult appropriate reporting guidelines (e.g., CONSORT and others collated by the EQUATOR network)
- ensure that the authors and sponsors are aware of their obligations under these guidelines
- keep up to date with advances in medical communications ethics and best practices.

Follow relevant guidelines and best practices

Provide appropriate, accurate, and current information

Ethical
Accurate
Timely
Responsibilities of authors who collaborate with professional medical writers

Authors who choose to collaborate with a professional medical writer on manuscripts or congress presentations must:

- ensure that they, as authors, have access to all relevant information (e.g., protocols, statistical analysis plans, statistical analyses, and clinical study reports)
- provide intellectual input before writing commences and throughout content development
- ensure that the final text fully reflects the views of, and is approved by, all authors
- affirm the appropriateness of the final choice of journal or congress
- acknowledge the provision of medical writing support, including the nature of the support, and the name, highest relevant qualifications (e.g., degree or professional credential), and affiliation of the professional medical writer accountable for the support provided, and acknowledge the funding sources for the provision of medical writing support (see Box)
- recognize as a co-author all contributors (including a professional medical writer) who meet the ICMJE authorship criteria.¹

Reflects ICMJE authorship criteria

Emphasizes the need to acknowledge medical writing support
Example of template disclosure statement

Box. Example of template disclosure statement for professional medical writing support.
“The authors thank [name and qualifications] of [company, city, country] for providing medical writing support/editorial support [specify and/or expand as appropriate] which was funded by [sponsor, city, country] in accordance with Good Publication Practice (GPP3) guidelines (http://www.ismop.org/gpp3).”

WHAT:
Details of type of support provided

WHO:
Accountable medical writer, editor, other, as appropriate, and their qualifications

HOW:
Within specific guidelines

WHERE:
Location
Call to action

- Read the Joint Position Statement at
  - AMWA: http://www.amwa.org/position_statement
  - EMWA: http://www.emwa.org
  - ISMPP: http://www.ismpp.org/advocacy

- Attend a presentation at a forthcoming event

- Recommend endorsement from related organizations

- Update your own publication policies accordingly
Impact to date

Over 10,878 unique page views in the first month

New Medical Writer Joint Position Statement Released by AMWA, EMWA, and ISMPP

London, UK, 17 January 2017 - The American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) , European Medical Association (EMWA), and International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) to Joint Position Statement on the Role of Professional Medical Writers, which is the first unified position professional medical writers from three leading professional organizations.
A team effort

The Joint Position Statement was drafted and reviewed by representatives of AMWA, EMWA, and ISMPP located in Europe, North America, and Asia.

4 members of the Writing Committee
- Art Gertel, AMWA Past President
- Chris Winchester, EMWA member
- Karen Woolley, past ISMPP Asia-Pacific Trustee
- Yvonne Yarker, ISMPP Chair, Board of Trustees

Thanks to the organizational reviewers and all those involved in the original position statements of these 3 organizations.
Contact

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