

Career Guide for **New Medical Writers**

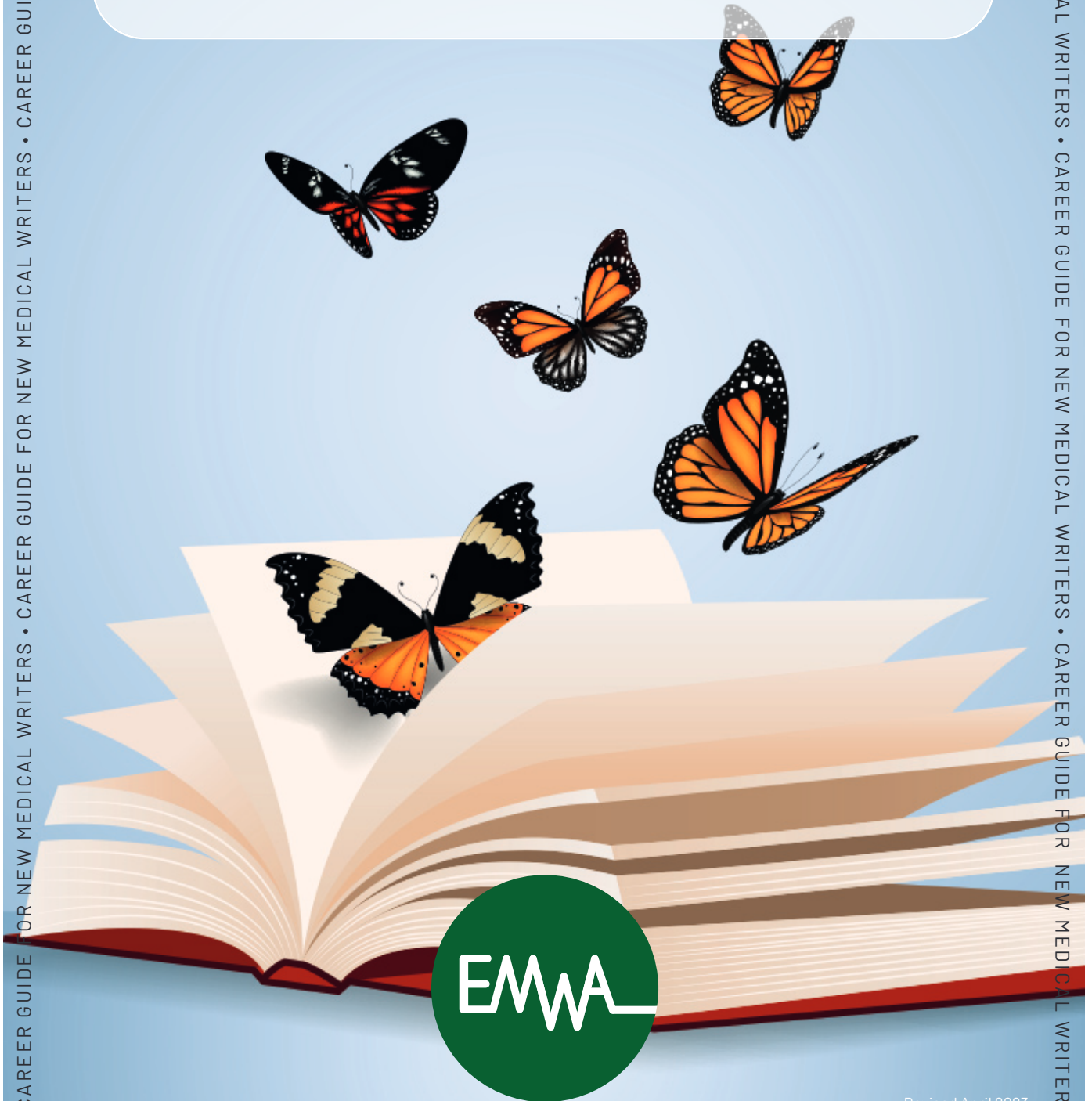




Table of contents

Purpose of this guide	4	Medical communications	14
What is medical writing?	4	• Journal articles and documents for medical and scientific publications and congresses.....	14
Career prospects in medical writing	5	• Medical education for healthcare professionals.....	15
• Pharmaceutical, medical devices, and biotech companies	5	• Advisory board meetings.....	15
• Contract research organisations (CROs).....	6	• Promotional medical content (print and digital).....	16
• Medical writing/communication agencies.....	6	• Medical journalism and press releases	16
• Regulatory bodies and governmental agencies.....	7	• Lay language summaries.....	16
• Medical education agencies.....	7	Fields related to medical writing	16
• Academic and research institutes.....	8	• Medical writing in your native language and medical translation	16
• Publishing houses and journals.....	8	• Medical or scientific editing.....	16
• Other.....	9	• Quality control specialist.....	17
Flexible working options	9	• Project management.....	17
Qualifications and skills of medical writers	10	• Publication planning.....	17
Preferred educational qualifications.....	10	• Content lab specialist.....	17
Skills.....	10	• Submission specialist.....	17
Types of medical writing	10	• Scientific/medical illustrator.....	17
Regulatory medical writing	11	General career progression of a medical writer	18
• Drug development.....	12	Salary and remuneration of a medical writer	18
• Health economics.....	13	What EMWA offers	19
• Transparency and disclosure.....	13	What is EMWA	19
• Medical devices and diagnostics.....	13	EMWA conferences	21
• Veterinary medical writing.....	14	Medical Writing journal (MEW)	21
		EMWA special interest groups (SIGs)	22

Created by EMWA's Getting into Medical Writing (GIMW) Group

Authored by EMWA members: Namrata Singh, Clare Chang, Virginia Chachati, Alexandra Sanfins, and Evguenia Alechine

Reviewed by EMWA Executive Committee: Satyen Shenoy, and Raquel Billiones



Purpose of this guide

With an increasing drive to ensure transparency along with the public's demand for access to clinical and scientific data, there is a greater need to communicate scientific and medical information in a professional way. This information needs to be effectively communicated to distinct audiences, such as healthcare professionals, drug regulators, and the general public. This is where medical writing and communications come into play.

So, what is medical writing and what does it look like as a prospective career? As a medical writer, you'll learn how to look at raw data, distil messages, interpret the data within a team, and craft these messages to communicate these data in different formats and to diverse audiences. Any new or aspiring medical writer should think about this career as a new research opportunity, where the research outcome is effective communication.

In this context, this guide has been developed by EMWA's Getting into Medical Writing (GIMW) group and it explains medical writing as a career path and how EMWA can support medical writers throughout. It addresses several queries related to medical writing and gives you an idea of what it takes to become a successful medical writer.

What is medical writing?

Medical writing is the art of communicating complex scientific information in simplified, clear, and concise words while remaining scientifically accurate and, usually, based on regulatory, ethical and technical guidelines. It can involve creating text for a wide variety of uses, such as clinical research documents, educational and promotional materials, healthcare websites, news articles, and scholarly manuscripts for journal submissions.

A medical writer aims to communicate research findings that are relevant to society in effective ways based on the target audience, the goal of the communication, the communication channel, the timeline, and the topic. These audiences may include physicians, patients, pharmaceutical/biotech/medical device companies, regulatory authorities, governmental agencies, ethics committees, and the general public. Medical writers undertake some part of the responsibility of bringing accurate medical and scientific information closer to society. This is particularly relevant in a time when misinformation is widely spread, especially on the internet.

Medical writing involves clear and accurate communication of clinical and scientific data and information that deals specifically with medicine or healthcare. Medical writers can work for a variety of companies and organisations or be self-employed as freelancers, each requiring specific qualifications and a diverse skill set.





Career prospects in medical writing

A medical writer gets to work closely with scientists, doctors, statisticians, graphic designers, IT specialists, and other experienced professionals. Medical writing has carved its alcove in every domain of the healthcare industry. Below are some of the industries and types of companies that hire or outsource to medical writers.

- **Pharmaceutical, medical devices, and biotech companies**

Within the industry, medical writing tasks are either managed in-house or outsourced to medical writing agencies, medical communication agencies, and/or contract research organisations (CROs, further described below). As an in-house medical writer, you might develop documents for regulatory submissions, create clinical research documents for the clinical operations team, develop medical communication deliverables for the medical affairs and marketing team, or work on value dossiers or briefs for market access and health economics and outcome research (HEOR) teams.

- **Contract research organisations (CROs)**

CROs are traditionally responsible for completing clinical research projects. Working at a CRO will likely include communicating with international client organisations, managing multiple projects, and learning about various therapeutic areas. CROs provide services to pharmaceutical companies, such as pre-trial regulatory consulting, conduct clinical trials, and get products registered with regulatory authorities.

CROs may also be involved in writing patient education materials, developing scientific content for journals and symposiums, and real-world evidence reporting.

CROs typically have several functions/departments with capabilities to assist their clients on various aspects of a trial. Some examples include regulatory affairs, clinical operations, biometrics (e.g. statistics, programming, data management) as well as medical writing. Clients may outsource multiple aspects of a project to a CRO or just a single capability (functional service provider). What this means for medical writers working at CROs is that depending on what is outsourced, they may have to work with both the internal and client teams or just the client's team.

- **Medical writing/communication agencies**

Medical writing agencies often take on both regulatory writing and medical communications (aka “medcomms”) work, while medical communication agencies mostly work within medical communications. However, the type of work the two agencies take on may not be as clearly defined; project scopes and deliverables might overlap. It is best to research the company of interest to see what type of work they are involved in.

Agencies may provide documentation support to biopharma, medical devices, cosmetics, and veterinary product companies, among others. They support biopharma to produce all the documentation required throughout the product life cycle, from product development and launch through to post-marketing and life cycle management.

Depending on the agency, some of the medical writing roles might include clinical research writer, regulatory writer, scientific writer, publication writer, submission specialist, reviewer, editor, or quality control (QC) specialist. Project management is a key skill in medical writing. Those who thrive in the project management arena can take on roles such as project and account manager to work with clients to understand their medical writing needs and then work with in-house or freelance medical writers to get the job done on time and within budget.





- **Regulatory bodies and governmental agencies**

Medical writers also work for regulatory bodies and governmental agencies such as the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA), among others. Each country has its regulatory bodies and requirements in terms of documentation, language, etc., and medical writers can be involved in either creating these documents or translating them into the local language.

- **Medical education agencies**

Medical education companies require medical writers for the promotion and continuation of medical education. These writers may also work on the digitalisation of existing content or updating previous content to keep training current and enhance accessibility for a larger audience. These writers may have an opportunity to exercise their creative side by working as (or with) instructional designers and using storyboards to design messages or e-learning modules.




- Academic and research institutes

Institutes hire medical writers to support researchers in writing grant proposals, publishing their research in journals, and presenting their results at conferences. Science professional associations, companies, medical schools, universities, and charities sometimes employ science writers to write for their newsletters, journals, magazines, and websites.

- Publishing houses and journals

Medical writers support publishing authors to write their research clearly and according to journal guidelines and may help with journal submissions. Medical book publishers hire medical writers, editors, and translators who will help in the development of textbooks for schools, universities, and healthcare professionals.

A medical or science editor may choose to work for publishers of peer-reviewed journals. They work closely with both authors and reviewers and manage the whole process, from submission to publication.

 *It is worth mentioning that under no circumstances medical writing is considered ghostwriting. EMWA and the entire medical writing community support ethical writing and publication standards. You can find EMWA's position statement in the **About Us** section of the website.*

- **Other organisations that hire medical writers**

Increasingly, non-profit health organisations, medical societies and associations, medical and veterinary companies, research institutes, HEOR agencies and governmental agencies such as the EMA and FDA also employ medical writers and translators in their communications departments. A perfect example is the World Health Organization, which is constantly communicating health matters to the public.

National or local newspapers, magazines, journals, websites, and social media may work with science writers or journalists when releasing health/medical news.

Last but not least, medical and scientific translators, editors, and proofreaders also fall under the medical writing umbrella.

Flexible working options

One of the major advantages of this career option is the freedom to work either as a freelancer or as an employee, either onsite or remotely. In recent years, a person's location has become secondary while applying for a medical writer's role; you can work remotely for a global company without the need to relocate.



The *Medical Writing* journal has a full issue on [Virtual Workforce](#), published in September 2022. Check it out!

Whatever option you choose depends upon your situation or preference, and limitations or strengths. A medical writer working as a freelancer might earn more than a full-time employee. However, as an employee, you benefit from in-house training and

professional development along with the security of having health insurance, retirement savings, an annual bonus, and paid leave as part of your contract. While as a freelancer, you may not have to face office politics, restructuring and other organisational changes, you have to be flexible to manage different personality types within your client companies. Someone working as a freelancer is also responsible for finding their work and adapting to changes in the market. Freelancing can be lonely at times, but it is possible to create supportive networks and relationships. Nowadays, companies and organisations hire both types of employees, and it's in your hands to pick between a scheduled day at a dedicated company or fitting your work around your lifestyle and juggling different clients.

In these articles, you can read some testimonies from experienced medical writers:

- [“Career shift: from employment to freelancing”](#) by Hye-Ryon Kim (March 2019)
- [“Never say never: returning to full-time employment after freelancing”](#) by Alison McIntosh (March 2016)



Qualifications and skills of medical writers

Preferred educational qualifications

Ideally, a medical writer will have a university degree in a field related to science, medicine, veterinary, or sometimes even language. For example, a BSc (Bachelor of Science), MSc (Master of Science), MD, PharmD, or PhD. It's common (but not mandatory) for medical writers to be healthcare professionals or have a medical or life sciences degree. You can find a list of the skills that medical writers use, which are often required or preferred by employers and clients, in the box below.

Types of medical writing

The different types of medical writing can be roughly classified into regulatory writing and medical communications, although the delineations are not always clearly defined. This diversity results in a wide range of documents that medical writers produce. Some examples are mentioned in Figure 1.

Skills

Transferable skills

- Medical or scientific knowledge
- Strong research skills
- Critical thinking
- Analytical skills, including basics of biostatistics
- Data interpretation and presentation
- Knowledge and application of technical, ethical, and regulatory guidelines, e.g., ICH, EQUATOR, ICMJE, etc
- Writing skills
- Project planning and management
- Written, verbal, and visual communication skills (including both active listening and presentation skills)
- Sustainability and awareness of diversity, equality, and inclusion

Tools and technologies

- Microsoft Office applications, such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Literature search platforms for example PubMed, Scopus, Ovid, Embase, Cochrane, etc.
- Referencing tools like Endnote, Mendeley
- Plagiarism software such as iThenticate
- Proofreading and editing software like Grammarly
- Content management tools like Veeva Vault
- Publication management tools like Datavision and PubStrat
- Illustration tools for example Illustrator, Canva, Biorender
- Online collaboration tools like Google Docs, SharePoint, Dropbox, MS Teams, Acrobat
- Online communication tools such as Zoom, Teams, etc.

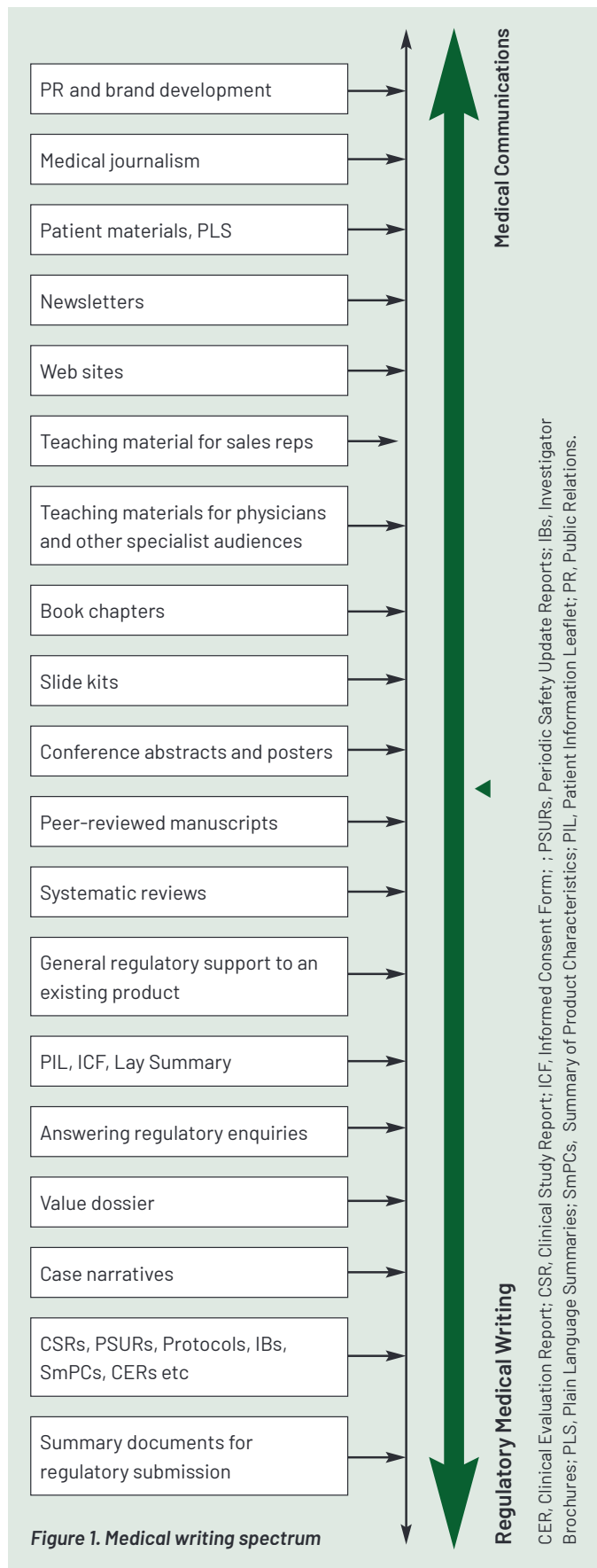
Regulatory medical writing

Regulatory medical writing is the development of regulatory documents, which are submitted to health authorities. The main target audiences are regulators, investigators, and ethics committees.

Sectors that employ regulatory medical writers include the pharmaceutical/biotech industries, medical devices/diagnostic industries, and veterinary medicines.

Soft skills for medical writers

- Attention to detail
- Troubleshooting and problem-solving
- Agility
- Ability to meet tight deadlines
- Ability to work on different projects at the same time
- Fast learner and ability to grasp difficult concepts quickly
- Team player and ability to build rapport
- Open to criticism and continuous learning
- Time management and prioritisation
- Ability to identify what's missing, ask questions, and suggest improvements
- Being responsive and easy to work with
- Patience, but also being on top of things when necessary
- Proactive mindset



An overview of sectors and the common documents medical writers will encounter when working in each sector are presented below. For additional insights into regulatory medical writing, we recommend the following article from both the [regulator's](#) and [writer's perspective](#) (both published in the June 2022 issue of the journal).

See the following links for further details:

- [A writer's role in drug development](#)
- [Regulatory Writing Basics](#) (published June 2014 in *Medical Writing*)
- [Post-Approval Regulatory Writing](#) (published December 2014 in *Medical Writing*)

- **Drug development**

Regulatory writing in pharmaceutical or biotech companies involves the development of documents that are submitted to health authorities during the development of a drug. Documents span a range of areas from pharmaceutical quality (chemistry, manufacturing, and controls [CMC]) to non-clinical and clinical development.

Non-clinical development

When a novel drug is identified, it goes through non-clinical research involving *in vitro* and *in vivo* testing. *In vivo* testing should generate data on the efficacy and safety of the drug at tentative dosage windows, which can be used to extrapolate and calculate safe first-in-human doses.

Clinical development

Once the drug reaches clinical development, it will go through a series of clinical trials (Phase I to IV) to determine the safety and efficacy of the drug in humans. Trials are designed with an indication in mind to target a specific disease for when the drug eventually reaches the market. Medical writers are heavily involved in the documentation of clinical trials from A to Z and even beyond.

More information in the [Clinical Trials](#) issue of *Medical Writing* (March 2023)



- Health economics

Once a drug is approved, another aspect to consider is how to bring the drug (or technology) to the market. HEOR is an area of research involving humanistic, economical, and clinical outcomes to evaluate the real-world effectiveness of the drug. The results from HEOR support market access. Market access is highly dependent on payers in a local market (e.g. public health insurance, private

health insurance, self-pay), the local healthcare system, and the country's culture. Market access will include the development of documents supporting reimbursement submissions.

See the following articles for more details:

- [Health Economics and Market Access](#) (published September 2013)
- [Medical decision making and health technology assessment](#) (published September 2021)

- Transparency and disclosure

Transparency and disclosure specialists also fall within the medical writing-related field. Clinical studies must be registered before the start and their results published after completion. Furthermore, many regulatory documents have to be publicly disclosed (as required in the EU and Canada). Also, the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\)](#) and [Good Publication Practice \(GPP\)](#) guidelines request that the same documents, in addition to the patient data, have to be submitted to journals following these guidelines, together with the materials that will start the peer review process. Transparency professionals and medical writers ensure the protection of patient

privacy and companies' proprietary information while complying with public disclosure requirements.



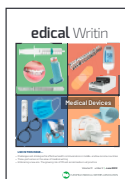
More information in the [Public Disclosure](#) issue of *Medical Writing* (June 2018)

- Medical devices and diagnostics

Medical devices and in vitro diagnostic devices are also supported by medical writers. Devices are quite diverse in terms of types, uses, risk profiles, and corresponding approval pathways.

During the development of medical devices, many documents are also written and these are similar to the ones described in Figure 1. A useful resource to get an idea of the documents required

by medical device regulation can be found in the article entitled "[New documents required by the medical device regulation](#)" published September 2020.



More details about medical devices in the [Medical devices](#) issue (published June 2022), as well as on the web page of [EMWA's MD SIG](#)

- **Veterinary medical writing**

Veterinary medical writing, like its larger human equivalent, covers a range of fields from regulatory writing for the veterinary pharmaceutical industry, to manuscripts for publication and communication with stakeholders. The majority of medical writers working in these areas are qualified veterinarians, but there are openings for non-veterinarians too. Indeed, the career paths in veterinary medicine taken by EMWA members are highly diverse. Anyone coming into veterinary medical writing these days must grasp the concept of *One Health*, a collaborative approach to the health of people, animals, and the environment. Under this approach, veterinary medical writing does not represent an isolated sub-specialization, but rather a key component of health-related communication for our planet. The EMWA veterinary medical special interest group (vetSIG) is open to all those with an interest in the field. Please check their web page for details on the vetSIG's quarterly meetings and other events.

Medical communications

Medical communications is an area of medical writing that encompasses a range of subject areas that involve the generation of a variety of materials related specifically to medicine or healthcare.

If you're interested in medcomms, [FirstMedCommsJob.com](https://www.firstmedcomms.com) has various resources that will guide you in your career search. The [EMWA Medical Communications Special Interest Group \(MedCommSIG\)](#) looks forward to including all those with an interest in the field. Please check the web page for details on MedCommSIG's monthly meetings and other events. Among many valuable issues of the *Medical Writing* journal, [Medical journalism](#) (Dec 2021) and [Writing for patients](#) (Dec 2022) can provide additional insights into this area.

- **Journal articles and documents for medical and scientific publications and congresses**

Manuscripts and documents for scientific congresses writing involves collaborative work where the medical writer liaises with the authors in a scientifically correct manner, and within the proposed budget to finalise the documents on time. Medical writers can provide important intellectual contributions to articles and materials that will be presented in scientific/medical congresses, including analysis and interpretation of data, or identification of which author can be responsible for each component (for more information see EMWA *Medical Writing Education | Manuscript Writing* published March 2013).

Medical writers can be involved in the writing of primary or secondary scientific articles, namely original research, narrative reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analysis, guidelines and consensus documents, abstracts, posters, medical booth content, material for oral presentations such as symposia slides, and pre- and post-congress slide decks, among others. Besides interacting with the



authors, the medical writer is responsible for drafting the document, editing it, and improving its readability according to the intended audience; medical writers working on scientific publications follow specific guidelines like those published by [ICMJE](#).

The role of medical writers involved in manuscript and scientific document writing should be transparent and EMWA has proposed guidelines on the role of medical writers in developing peer-reviewed publications. According to these guidelines, the medical writers should be mentioned in the Acknowledgment section of the document and the medical writer must ensure that the document is scientifically valid and in line with the generally accepted ethical standards (see [EMWA guidelines on the role of medical writers in developing peer-reviewed publications](#), as well as [GPP 2022](#) and [ISMPP](#)). More information can be found in the EMWA [Medical Communications SIG](#) web page.

- **Medical education for healthcare professionals**

Medical writers may prepare continuing education materials for healthcare professionals. Continuing medical education materials can be independent or sponsored by the industry. These materials aim to deliver scientifically accurate and engaging content to help health professionals keep up to date with the latest best practices, products, and devices. These materials may be delivered via digital learning initiatives or traditional materials such as scientific materials, slide kits, and learning resources such as videos, and internet tutorials, among others.

- **Advisory board meetings**

Depending on the nature and objectives of the advisory board meetings, medical writers can be responsible for the preparation/conception of the meetings, through to the execution and elaboration of a meeting report.

Although capturing the meeting minutes is one of the most important duties of a medical writer attending an advisory board, there are several tasks in which the medical writer can be involved. Usually, advisory board meetings involve engaging with key opinion leaders (KOLs), preparing questionnaires, conducting online surveys to understand unmet needs, preparing a pre-meeting report to be shared with KOLs, preparing an executive summary, preparing presentations, hosting the meeting itself, capturing the minutes of the meeting, preparing the meeting report and, if applicable, elaborate a robust scientific report that can be shared with the scientific community.

These roles and responsibilities vary depending on the organisational body of each advisory

board meeting. Each advisory board meeting is unique and it is important that the medical writer understands the needs and expectations assigned to each meeting.



You can find further information in the [Medical Education issue of Medical Writing](#) (published Dec 2016)

- **Promotional medical content**

Developing promotional medical content involves a creative medical copywriting process to advertise a product or service. This field of medical writing is highly specialised, and there are rules that dictate how you can promote medical content that may differ between the various countries. You can create promotional medical content digitally, for websites and social media, or in print, such as brochures, visuals, posters, and banners. There is often a call to action at the end of a piece of promotional medical content.

- **Medical journalism and press releases**

Medical journalism and press releases involve world news around medical and scientific updates.

- **Lay language summaries**

There are two types of lay language summaries that medical writers usually work on:

- **Lay summaries for clinical trials** represent the clinical study results and are intended for study participants and the general public. The main objective of these lay summaries is to improve and enhance the general understanding of medical information which can help the patients or caregivers make informed decisions about participation in clinical trials. Their lay summaries

also form an integral part of the mandatory regulatory guidelines to abide by transparency in clinical research.

- **Plain language summaries for publications (PLSPs)** are another type of lay summary, which provides a summary of published research to be understood by non-specialist audiences including patients and other specialised professionals.

Fields related to medical writing

- **Medical writing in your native language and medical translation**

A translator is important to engage the patients of a diverse population. Medical writers and translators will convert your data into concise and imaginable forms. The native language will attract more people to read and disseminate the information.

- **Medical or scientific editing**

A medical or scientific editor checks the work that has been written by someone else. They will normally check that it is written in the correct style for the intended audience and the content is medically accurate. This is on top of checking for spelling mistakes or grammatical errors, verifying the reference list, and giving feedback to the writers. Editors can also be involved in a lot of rewriting and working with the author, and collaborative authoring is becoming more common. There is a lot of overlap between medical writing and medical editing.

- **Quality control specialist**

A quality control specialist (QC) ensures that every item on a checklist is met. A QC specialist verifies data including graphs, tables, content style, claims, etc. By checking that content is clear, labelling is accurate, and figures are aligned at the proper position, a QC specialist makes sure that nothing is out of place in a document. Before a document reaches the reviewer, a QC specialist ensures that the writing is solid!

- **Project management**

Project management involves looking after more than one client or cascade of work at the same time. Project managers often work within agencies, and liaise with clients directly, while giving briefs to the in-house team of writers and designers (or freelancers) to fulfil the needs of the projects.

- **Publication planning**

Publication planning is a concept unknown to most people coming from academia. In academic research, authors generally try to publish results as soon as data are available and analysed, but industry doesn't work like that. The publication of the results of a clinical trial requires strategy and planning that considers not only peer-review publications but also presentations at conferences, press releases and marketing materials, among others. A medical writer can specialise in publication planning. You can find EMWA's previous webinars on publication planning to understand more about this role.

- **Content lab specialist**

Content lab specialists are responsible for creating reference binders for medical writing documents, annotating and linking references to the text in the document. They also can get an opportunity to work various cloud based solutions like Veeva systems. These platforms enable team members to collaborate on a single document real time and get the documents approved faster.

- **Submission specialist**

A submission specialist is responsible for the timely submission and processing of a document to a journal, congress, or regulatory authority. Submission specialists work closely with the authors to collect all the submission documents required by the journal, get the forms signed for authorship, conflict of interest, etc., submit the manuscript on behalf of the author, and coordinate with the journal any post-submission requirements including the response to the reviewers.

- **Scientific/medical illustrator**

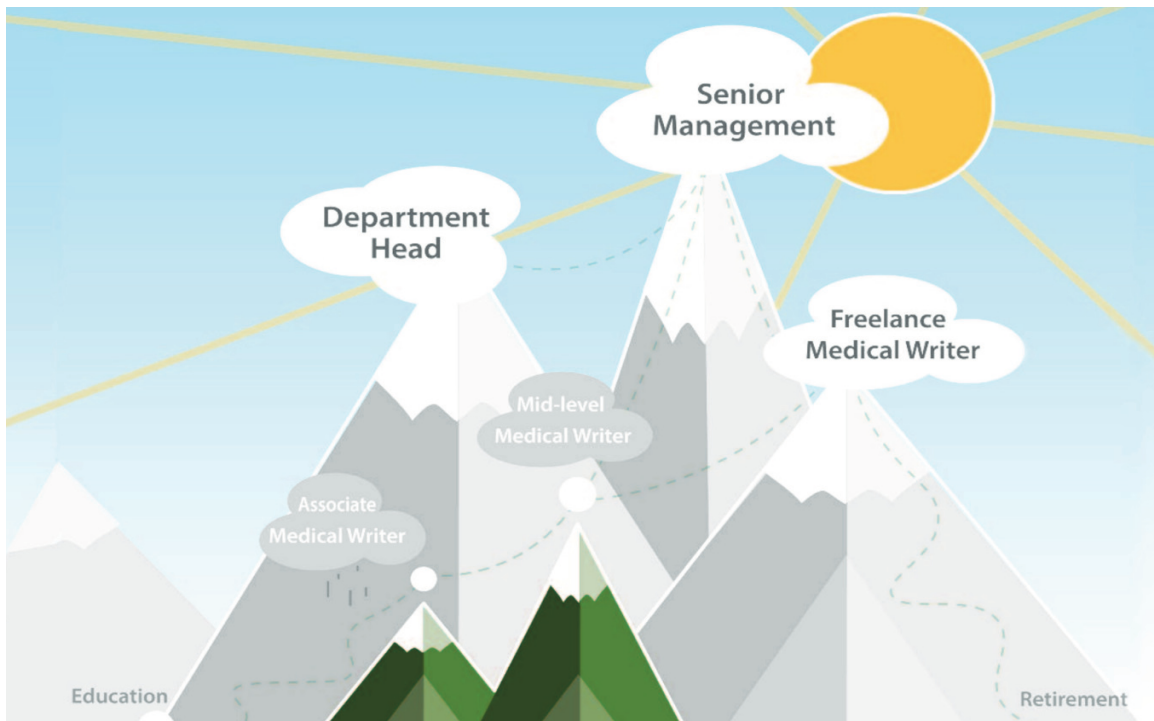
This is quite a new field in the medical writing industry that has drawn increased interest in recent years. Some professionals with either innate talents or training in illustration can specialise in scientific or medical illustration, as well as in graphic design applied to our field. The issue of *Medical Writing* on [Visual communications](#) (published March 2020) might open your eyes to new career opportunities. Worth mentioning here is the continuous effort of [EMWA's creative team](#), a group of EMWA volunteers who are also scientific designers and illustrators creating graphics for the organisation.



General career progression of a medical writer

Your first 6 to 12 months as a medical writer will be a great opportunity to learn more about the industry, use your transferable skills, and acquire new skills. A medical writer can expect to progress to a more senior role 1 to 3 years after starting. You can also switch from being a medical writer to editing, training new writers moving into a managerial role, or developing your own business. There are many directions you can go in as a medical writer, and you can switch between the different types of medical writing with the right experience and training.

You can find more information about career progression in the [Mentorship issue](#) (published June 2021).



Salary and remuneration of a medical writer

The remuneration you start on as a medical writer will depend on the type of medical writing you are doing, and the place you choose to work. Medical writers are in high demand and you can expect a competitive salary or service fees. At the end of the day, how much you can earn as a medical writer is up to you, so keep searching for the right fit for you – whether that is finding private clients, or working at a well-known pharmaceutical company.

The results of the most recent salary and compensation survey are published in the [Medical Writing journal Dec 2022 issue](#).



What the European Medical Writers Association offers

What is EMWA?

EMWA is a professional organisation that aims at networking and professional development of medical writing professionals through various programmes. It is a not-for-profit organisation that is run for and by its members. And [you can](#) join too!

Along with other worldwide medical writing associations such as [AMWA](#) and [AustralasianMWA](#), EMWA is one of the main professional organisations for medical writers. EMWA currently has over 1,000 members from 39 different countries (including 12 countries outside Europe).

The various working groups (Special Interest Groups or SIGs) collaborate with each other, welcome new members, and produce helpful resources for medical writers. Each year, EMWA holds two regular conferences, publishes four editions of the *Medical Writing* journal (MEW), runs regular [webinars](#) and meet & share events by the SIGs, and keeps its members up-to-date within the ever-changing landscape of medical writing through the monthly [newsblast](#), social media channels ([Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#)), and [news section](#) on the website.

EMWA is run by volunteers who are involved in many tasks from the [Executive Committee](#) (EC) to social media, webinars, conferences, etc. One of the many tasks undertaken by EMWA volunteers is the creation of [Joint Position Statements](#) (JPS) in collaboration with other associations such as AMWA, ISMPP, etc., which are relevant to all members of our community. Every EMWA member can become involved in these various working groups, or find other volunteer opportunities.

EMWA offers a variety of training opportunities including:

- [EMWA Professional Development Programme \(EPDP\) workshops](#) during conferences (face-to-face or virtual). These workshops are for credit towards earning a professional development certificate.
- An annual one-day symposium (find [10th symposium](#) contents at [berlin.emwa.org](#)) at the spring conference themed on current hot topics both in regulatory and medcomms.
- Expert Seminar Series (ESS) (see [2022 ESS](#) and [2020 virtual ESS](#) programmes) provide further career development for experienced MWs.
- Regular [webinars](#) on different topics of interest, which can be joined live and rewatched by all members.
- Meet & share events organised by the [SIGs](#).

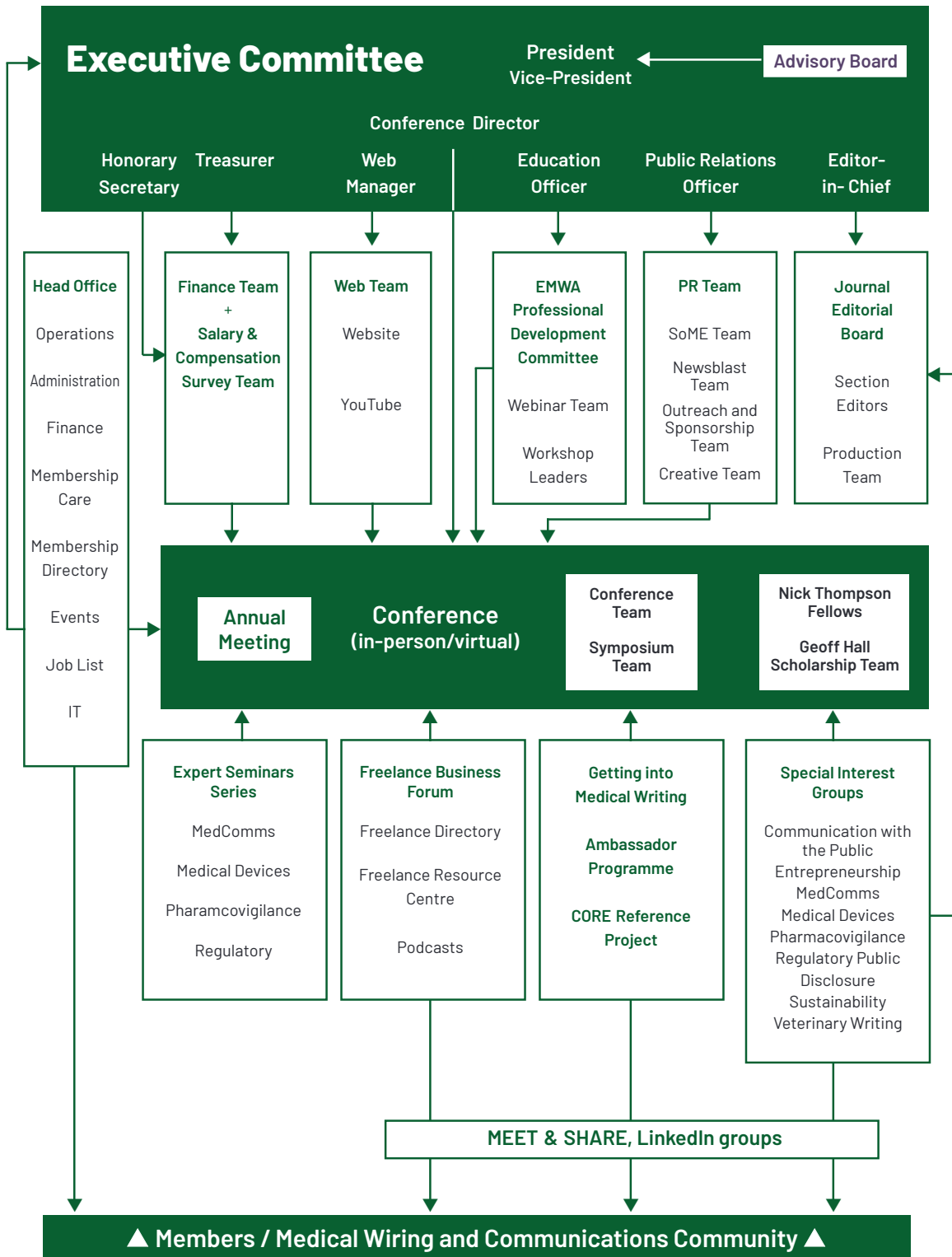
Within EMWA, the [Ambassador's Programme](#) task is to reach out to universities and research institutions and introduce medical writing as a prospective career for MDs, PhDs, postdocs, etc.

There is also a dedicated space for freelancers in the organisation: the [Freelance Business Group](#) that any member can join.

EMWA is always growing and improving, reaching out to raise awareness about medical writing and the benefits of joining our organisation.



Here you can find an overview of how EMWA is organised:



EMWA conferences

EMWA runs 2 conferences per year, one in spring and one in autumn. Conferences are a great way to attend workshops, network, and engage with the medical writing community. The spring EMWA conference is typically in May and runs for 5 days and is planned as a face-to-face/hybrid event. The autumn EMWA conference is usually in November and runs for 3 days and is virtual. During these conferences, you can network with colleagues, attend [professional development \(EPDP\) workshops](#) as well as a full-day symposium, and different seminars/sessions, and learn about the newest updates in our industry. You can find out about [future](#) and [past conferences](#) in the the Conferences section of the website.

Medical Writing journal (MEW)

EMWA offers its members a quarterly publication *Medical Writing*, an open-access journal which adds great value by raising awareness about relevant topics of interest to the medical writing community.

Regular sections

- News from the EMA
- Medical Devices
- Gained in Translation
- Digital Communication
- Regulatory Matters
- Medical Writing Humour
- Veterinary Medical Writing
- Medical Communications and Writing for Patients
- Gained in Translation
- Pharmacovigilance
- Good Writing Practice
- The Crofter: Sustainable Communications
- News and Notes from the World of Medical Writing
- My First Medical Writing
- Getting Your Foot in the Door
- Out on Our Own (freelancing)

If you're interested in contributing an article to any of these sections, please [contact the section editor/s](#). Check out the *Getting Your Foot in the Door* section of the journal for early career stories. If you're an aspiring medical writer and you want a chance to get feedback on your writing and showcase your writing skills with the community, contact the section editor and publish your first article in the *My First Medical Writing* section.

Feature articles

To submit feature articles on the specific topic of each issue, contact the guest editor/s of each issue. You can find a list of the coming year's planned issues on the [Medical Writing journal website](#).



Relevant MEW issues for new medical writers

Click the links below to learn more about writing better, editing, and careers in medical writing.

These are must-reads.

- [Careers in medical writing](#) (published March 2019)
- [Writing better](#) (published March 2017)
- [Editing](#) (published September 2018)

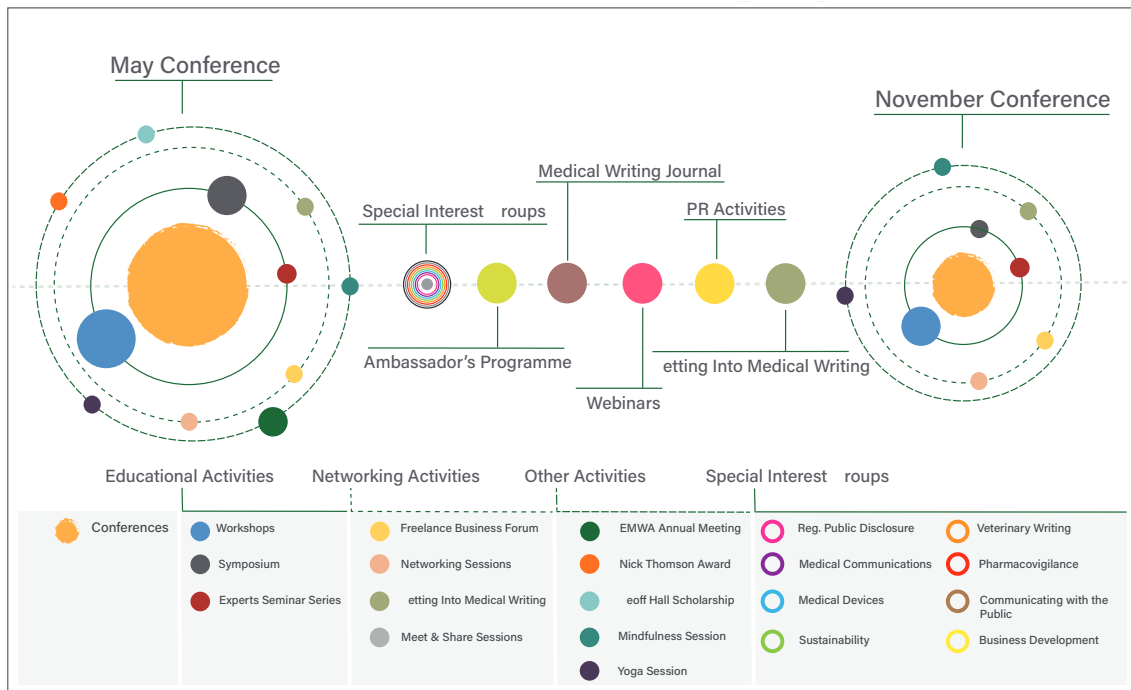
EMWA special interest groups (SIGs)

EMWA has created [special interest groups \(SIGs\)](#), which are working groups specialised in different types of medical writing. The SIGs run online sessions throughout the year, free for any EMWA member to join. Click on the links below to find out more about each SIG.

- [Pharmacovigilance \(PV SIG\)](#) involves the safety and regulation of medicines and the associated activities around their development.
- [Regulatory Public Disclosure \(RPD SIG\)](#) looks at the types of regulatory documents and how they are produced, as well as ideas for improving the process of their creation.
- [Medical Devices \(MD SIG\)](#) provides a forum for EMWA members to discuss and share information in the area of medical devices and in-vitro devices.
- [Veterinary Medical Writing \(Vet SIG\)](#) provides a forum for EMWA members to discuss and share information in the area of veterinary medical writing.
- [Medical Communications \(MedComm SIG\)](#) intends to support medical communication activities including scientific disclosure and publications, translation, real-world evidence, medical journalism etc. and acts as a source of affordable and updated information.
- [Sustainability \(SUS SIG\)](#) helps introduce and maintain sustainability across the medical industry.
- [Communicating with the Public \(CwP SIG\)](#) is becoming more important globally and is a burgeoning area for medical writers, so this SIG is dedicated to raising awareness of this area and helping medical writers to gain the skills needed.
- [Entrepreneurship \(EP SIG\)](#) is for EMWA members who want to transition from an individual role to starting their own business and provides a platform for conversations around setting up your business to run it successfully.

Last but not least, for new and aspiring medical writers, EMWA offers the opportunity to apply for the Geoff Hall Scholarship. Find more information in the [About Us > EMWA Awards section](#) of the website.

This is what the EMWA universe looks like



We hope you found this guide useful as a starting point in your career in medical writing. Our aim, as the [Getting into Medical Writing \(GIMW\) group](#), is to provide a service to all new and aspiring medical writers, so please give us feedback about this guide or any activities run by the group. You can email us at gettingintomw@emwa.org. We will be happy to hear from you!



This guide has been created and published by
The European Medical Writers Association

Registered Office: St James' House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield S1 2EX

TeL: +44 (0) 1625 664534 | info@emwa.org | www.emwa.org



Design: Chris Monk, www.Yellowduck.net