

AMWA Collaborates With EMWA and ISMPP on Joint Position Statement

In a continuing effort to ensure high-quality standards for medical communicators, AMWA has worked with the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA) and the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) to develop a joint position statement on the role of professional medical writers. The statement, released on January 17, 2017, is the first unified position on the role of professional medical writers from these 3 leading professional organizations.

The Joint Position Statement explains the value of professional medical writing to evidence-based medicine by summarizing current evidence on the professional medical writer's role in the ethical, accurate, and timely disclosure of research results in medical and scientific publications, including abstracts, posters, and oral presentations.

"This Joint Position Statement describes, for the first time, a global standard for professional medical writers. This will serve as a valuable reference for ethical publication practices worldwide," says Art Gertel, AMWA Past President.

Building on Good Publication Practice (GPP3) guidelines and International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations, the Joint Position Statement describes best practices for professional medical writers and provides a template for appropriately disclosing medical writing support.

The Joint Position Statement supplements AMWA's own statements on ethical publication practices, including the Code of Ethics and the Position Statement on the Contributions of Medical Writers to Scientific Publications. All of these publications are available on the AMWA website at http://www.amwa.org/position_statement.



EUROPEAN
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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 (eg, 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.¹⁻¹³

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,¹⁴ accurate,^{15,16} and timely¹⁷ manner, with the ultimate aim of advancing patient care. Professional medical writers have extensive knowledge of ethical publication guidelines.^{18,19}

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^{1,2}
- consult appropriate reporting guidelines (eg, CONSORT²⁰ and others collated by the EQUATOR network²¹)
- ensure that the authors and sponsors are aware of their obligations under these guidelines^{1,2,20,21}
- keep up to date with advances in medical communications ethics and best practices.

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 (eg, 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 (eg, 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

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.ismpp.org/gpp3>).”

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