



American Medical Writers Mid-Atlantic Chapter Conference

March 9, 2018



4-H Conference Center

7100 Connecticut Ave.

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

The National 4-H Conference Center is a nonprofit hotel and conference center initially designed as a center for youth development. The facility is situated on 12 beautiful acres in Chevy Chase, Maryland, located just off the Beltway (I-495 exit 33 for MD-185/Connecticut Ave toward Kensington/Chevy Chase).

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Time	Event
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration, Breakfast/Networking
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Welcome and Announcements
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	Keynote Speaker – Art Gertel
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Break/Networking
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Back to Basics Roundtable Sessions
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	NETWORKING LUNCH
1:30 PM	Closing

Registration Fees and Policies

The registration fee is \$100 for all participants. It includes breakfast, keynote speaker, roundtables, buffet lunch, and snacks.

Registration is open and available now by visiting the AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter webpage: <http://amwa-midatlantic.org/>. Follow the links for the 2018 regional conference.

REGISTER at: <http://amwa-midatlantic.org/>

Important Dates

Online Registration opens	February 2, 2018
Deadline for conference cancellation with partial refund	March 3, 2018
Last day to register on-line before on-site registration	March 5, 2018
On-site registration rate applies	March 6, 2018

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Conference cancellation requests must be received in writing at least 1 week before the scheduled event. Requests can be sent via email to Vita Washington at vita.washington@gmail.com. Refunds, minus a non-transferrable \$25 registration cancellation fee, will be distributed only to individuals who cancel in writing at least 1 week before the scheduled event. No refunds or credits will be given for failure to attend, late arrival, unattended events, or early departure.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Forms of payment that are accepted include Visa, Master Card, American Express, and debit cards.

Registration for Events

For events that require reservations (i.e., roundtables), you must reserve your space during the registration process. Reservations will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Registration Questions

If you have questions regarding your registration or other program-related AMWA-MAC questions, please email Vita Washington (vita.washington@gmail.com).

Confirmation and Receipt

An automatic email will be sent to confirm registration and provide a receipt.

Accommodations

4-H Conference Center
7000 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
(301) 961-2687

Sleeping room reservations can be made by calling the 4-H Conference Center Front Desk at 301-961-2801 and referencing the American Medical Writers Mid-Atlantic Chapter Conference. The rate is \$149.00 per night, plus 6% MD tax. There is limited availability.

Location

The 4H Conference Center is located on 12 acres in upscale Chevy Chase, MD. Directions can be obtained at: <http://4hcenter.org/events/transportation-directions/#!maps-directions>.

The Conference Center has complimentary on-site parking.

The closest Metro station is Friendship Heights (toward Shady Grove if arriving from the city center) on the Red Line.

A map of the Metro system is available at the following website: http://4hcenter.4-h.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/05/MetroMap.pdf?_ga=1.244545605.1353559567.1475514546 .

From the Friendship Heights Metro Station, take Metrobus L*, Ride-on #1, or #11 to the National 4-H Conference Center. Metro bus maps are available at the following website: http://4hcenter.4-h.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/05/Metrobus-Map.pdf?_ga=1.214047063.1353559567.1475514546.

Public transportation to the 4-H Conference Center involves taking both the Metro and the Metrobus.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Art Gertel, Principal, MedSciCom, LLC: Volunteerism – A symbiosis for success

“Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”

John F. Kennedy, Inaugural speech – 20 January, 1961.

These familiar words echo the concept of the benefits of volunteerism. We, who are members of professional organizations, like AMWA, must consider not just how much we can gain from that membership as recipients, but also how we can improve the offerings of that organization for ourselves and our fellow professionals.

To put this into a physiological context, as contributors to the organism of which we are “organelles,” we benefit through our contributions to that organism. In this presentation, I will draw on personal experience to suggest ways in which we can contribute to, and benefit from, volunteering our time, thoughts, and skills. This investment is likely to result in the betterment of the organization and, by extension, to the further development of our own career-building skills and experiences.

ROUNDTABLES

ROUNDTABLE: Alternative markets for freelance science and medical writers

Skill Level: Basic to Intermediate

Discussion Leader: Thomas A. Burns, Jr., MS, North Carolina State University, Tekrighter, LLC

Participants in this roundtable will learn of various alternative markets for freelance science and medical writers, which they may not have previously considered. The roundtable will be interactive—I expect to use the experience of the participants as well as materials that I will present. We will discuss how these markets can be used to build a portfolio of writing samples and how to approach editors and other prospective employers with a well-crafted query to secure an assignment. We will also discuss how the research for one assignment can be repurposed to secure others for different clients.

Learning Objectives:

- Know specific alternative markets that a freelance science or medical writer can exploit
- How to use alternative markets to build a writer's portfolio
- How to query editors and other prospective employers to secure an assignment
- How to repurpose research done for one assignment to secure other assignments

ROUNDTABLE: Health care blogosphere: Resources, tips, and sources for creating blog content for freelance writer marketing and health care industry clients

Skill Level: Basic

Discussion Leader: Melissa Crawford, MSN, RN, CNL, Context Health Communication

At this roundtable, we will discuss the web applications available to create and integrate a simple blog, developing an architecture and style of blog content, finding your personal niche, using blogs as marketing tools, and identifying potential clients in need of blog content.

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding of what qualifies as “blog content,” as defined by place of publication and style

- Gaining knowledge of web publications and sources for up-to-date, scientifically sound health care topics ripe for creating blog content
- Understanding how to set up and use a professional blog to market your freelance business
- Identification of potential sources of work: clients in the health care industry that use blog content

ROUNDTABLE: Bias-free, respectful, and patient-centered language

Discussion Leader: Heather P. Friedman, MPH, Friedman Medical Communications, LLC

Skill Level: All

Health care professionals have a long-established habit of using “medical shorthand” when discussing cases with one another, and sometimes even when speaking to patients directly. This includes language that falls under the label of jargon, but it also includes ordinary words such as *complains*, *denies*, and *fails* that have taken on a unique usage and meaning in medical contexts. Today, some of this traditional language is perceived as patronizing, dehumanizing, and culturally or emotionally insensitive to patients. As medical communicators, we have a responsibility to replace potentially offensive terms with language that eliminates bias, reduces negative connotations, and establishes respect for patients as individuals. This obligation applies not only to patient education materials targeted to laypersons, but also to publications written for clinician audiences. In this roundtable, we will review the most commonly encountered insensitive medical terms and usage, and we will explore respectful and bias-free alternative language choices.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize common medical language and word usage that can be perceived as insensitive, condescending, or otherwise disrespectful to patients
- Identify alternative language choices that can and should be used in every type of medical communication material
- Explore language that is both sensitive and medically accurate when discussing sex/gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, age, disabilities, and mental illness
- Learn about resources and guidelines to help medical communicators choose language that is preferred by the particular groups and populations being discussed

ROUNDTABLE: The art of writing an effective response letter to a journal editor and reviewers

Discussion Leader: Katherine Molnar-Kimber, PhD, KMK Consulting Services of Kimnar Group LLC

Skill Level: All Levels

Writing an effective response letter to the journal editor and reviewers can move your client’s submitted revised manuscript to the acceptance folder. While many comments are relatively easy to address, others are not. Some reviewer comments may require additional experimentation or analyses; and others may indicate a lack of understanding or disagreement on analysis with the authors. In addition to a template, we’ll discuss when and how to disagree with the reviewers and still get published in the journal. This presentation will provide examples of reviewers’ issues and successful ways to address them. Participants are encouraged to bring (non-confidential) examples of challenging reviewers’ issues for group discussion. Five issues, such as journal prestige, document type, and response letter, can impact the flexibility of the reviewers and editor. Every participant of the round table will receive a handout.

Learning Objectives:

- Categorize requests as major or minor revisions

- Recognize probable excessive delay or negative review due to competition, and deal with it
- Provide guidance for issues requiring clarification in manuscript
- Compile an effective response letter and compose the revisions in the manuscript based on authors' input

ROUNDTABLE: Useful strategies for improving your productivity

Discussion Leader: Kristin A. Roynesdal, MS, KLARITAS Media

Skill Level: Basic

Whether you are running a freelance business or working in-house, time-management skills are essential for medical communications professionals. Because a project must meet a certain scope within a given deadline, working more efficiently can help you get the most out of each hour of your workday. This roundtable is for medical writers and editors who wish to learn specific strategies for improving productivity and working more efficiently. The discussion will include practical advice from AMWA members and a worksheet for participants so they can apply these strategies in their daily work.

Learning Objectives:

- Set goals that follow the SMART principle
- Manage a schedule and prioritize responsibilities
- Track your results to discover strengths and weaknesses
- Readjust your goals to develop skills or delegate tasks

ROUNDTABLE: Policy changes, industry trends, and emerging opportunities for freelance medical writers

Discussion Leader: Yanni Wang, PhD, International Biomedical Communications, LLC

Skill Level: All Levels

Regulatory agencies across the world are taking steps to enhance clinical trial transparency and to improve the quality of patient care. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical companies of various sizes apply different business models to cost-effectively conduct their medical writing and communication business. The efforts pose challenges, but also provide opportunities for freelance medical writers who must be able to identify new prospects to sustain and grow their business. This session reviews recent changes in US drug approval and healthcare policies, discusses current business models that pharmaceutical companies use for medical writing, and provides tips and resources to help freelance medical writers navigate this evolving landscape and identify new opportunities.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn recent changes in US drug approval and healthcare policies
- Understand current trends in pharmaceutical medical writing
- Identify emerging opportunities for freelance medical writers

PRESENTERS' BIOGRAPHIES

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Art Gertel, Principal, MedSciCom, LLC

After 35 years serving in the pharmaceutical and related industries, Art established an independent consultancy in 2012: MedSciCom, LLC. He provides independent and collaborative strategic regulatory consulting by applying drug/device development, medical writing, bioethics, and The Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) expertise. He has been active in the establishment of standards of authorship for AMWA, the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA), and The International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP), as well as of Clinical Data Interchange Standards Consortium (CDISC) data-transformation standards for protocols, registries, and health records. Art is a founding member of GAPP (Global Alliance of Publication Professionals)—a rapid-response task force with a remit to address misconceptions about authorship. As a Registered Agent with the FDA, Art represents ex-US biopharmaceutical companies in their interactions with the FDA. Art is past president of the AMWA and a Fellow of both AMWA and EMWA, continuing to serve on committees and lead workshops and plenary sessions. He received AMWA's Swanberg and Eric Martin Awards.

ROUNDTABLES LEADER

Thomas A. Burns, Jr., MS, is a freelance science and medical writer in the Research Triangle Park area of North Carolina and the Managing Member of Tekrighter Scientific and Medical Writing Services, LLC. Mr. Burns received a M.S. degree from North Carolina State University and has worked as a science and technical writer in academia, industry, and government more than 25 years. He is a member of AMWA, the Society for Technical Communication, and the Society of Toxicology.

Melissa Crawford, MSN, RN, CNL, is an experienced clinician specializing in critical care. Born and raised in Washington, DC, she is a hopeless policy wonk who loves to talk nerdy about public health. As a cancer survivor with a background in patient advocacy, her ultimate mission is to promote the work of clients that simplify health care delivery; grow a reliable, sustainable industry; and make care better for patients, clinicians, and payers. She blogs about her adventures as a nurse, writer, and patient advocate at www.funwithhealthcare.com.

Heather P. Friedman, MPH, has worked as an editor/writer in the field of health care for 20 years. Her graduate work in public health first taught her to think critically about how to phrase health-related messages to the public without condescension or criticism. She has spent many years editing documents and written examinations for medical residents at the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, where bias-free and respectful language is an issue of particular emphasis. Her work has given her the chance to educate physicians about the importance of setting a good example for their trainees by neutralizing and humanizing the language used to discuss patients. As a freelancer, Heather has applied these principles, as well as others learned and developed over time, to work that includes editing manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals and writing/editing patient education materials.

Katherine Molnar-Kimber, PhD, is a full-time independent medical writer for scientific and clinical audiences. Documents include scientific manuscripts, reviews, CME, slide sets, monographs, guidelines, posters, and web pages. For clients, she has written, substantively edited, or edited more than 120 published manuscripts. As a scientist, she has written or co-authored 54 articles in scientific journals (corresponding author on 20 articles). She has been an ad hoc reviewer for at least 15 journals, including

The Lancet, Cancer Research, and Journal of the National Cancer Institute. She can be reached at www.KMK-How-to-Write.com.

Kristin A. Roynesdal, MS, is a professional editor who specializes in helping biomedical authors communicate their science clearly from proposal to publication. Her editorial services aid authors in polishing a variety of documents, including journal manuscripts, grant proposals, protocols, posters, slide decks, and theses/dissertations. She received her B.S. in Biology from Davidson College and her M.S. in Human Nutrition from Tufts University. She is an active member of AMWA and the American Copy Editors Society.

Yanni Wang, PhD, is the principal medical writer and owner of International Biomedical Communications, a company dedicated to translating research data into clear messages. Yanni has a Ph.D. in chemistry and more than 10 years of scientific and medical writing experience in multiple therapeutic areas.