Medical and Scientific Communications Network

27 October 2026

Caffeine, AI and the human skills behind medical writing

Welcome to this week's newsletter. We offer the chance to pause, take stock as we share a few things that caught our attention over the past few days-ideas, articles, and observations worth a moment of consideration before the next deadline calls. In a field rarely short of information our aim is to filter out the background noise and share topics that deserve a second look.

In the news

Why failure is a taboo topic in science: Failure is one of the best teachers we have. So why is nobody talking about it (more...)?

It's time to teach peer review as a core research skill: Preprint journal clubs offer a scalable way to make peer-review training a routine part of scientific education (more...).

Science journalists being impersonated: Fraudsters impersonated established science journalists, raising questions about identity checks and trust in reporting (more...).

Health misinformation at a UK wellness event: An investigation examines Barbara O'Neill's promotion of unproven remedies and rejection of conventional treatments at a Cheshire event. It offers a discussion point about persuasive personalities, public trust and communicating medical evidence (more...).

Framing science in the digital age: Science news plays a key role in connecting scientific research with the public, shaping perceptions, and enhancing scientific literacy. This study distinguishes three types of news values for science news on social media, including general, social media- specific, and research-specific news values (more...).

A Job Demands-Resources Perspective on Science Communication: Scientists are increasingly expected to engage public audiences, yet little is known about how this work shapes their well-being (more...).

Reporting completeness of clinical trials evaluating large language model interventions in medicine: systematic review: Clinical trials of LLM interventions show modest adherence to established reporting guidelines, with persistent underreporting of LLM specific methodological details, reproducibility artefacts (protocols, data, code), and harms reporting required to support reproducibility and confident appraisal of safety risks before their clinical translation (more...).

Recommendations for evaluating a single surrogate endpoint (REASSurE): consensus based, surrogate evaluation framework with explanation and elaboration: The use of a surrogate endpoint to replace a primary outcome relevant to patients in a clinical trial may allow faster approval of a novel treatment, but at the cost of increased uncertainty about treatment benefit. This risk may be amplified if the surrogate endpoint was inadequately or inappropriately evaluated against the patient relevant outcome (more...). https://www.bmj.com/content/394/bmj-2026-100618

Thousands of research studies violate journal policies on collaborations between editors and authors: A tool developed to mine metadata and find past collaborations between handling editors and authors has turned up thousands of cases that breach journal policies on such relationships (more…).

Health misinformation minefield: Countering online deluge by copying its style (more…).

Save the Date



Unlock the Art & Science of Medical Communications!Building on the incredible momentum, creative spark, and vibrant insights of our past MSCN gatherings, we are thrilled to host our **Pre-Christmas Meeting on 9th December 2026** at Vestry House, London!**Spaces are limited!** Medical communicators aren't just writers-we are storytellers, strategists, and vital leaders turning complex science into meaningful human connection. Join top minds across the industry for an inspiring afternoon exploring the perfect intersection of strategic narrative, visual design, and regulatory clarity. **Vestry House, London** (WC2H 8LG). **Afternoon Session**Find out more

Caffeine and the body



Coffee, tea or an energy drink? Caffeine is part of everyday life, but how much do we really understand about what it does to our bodies?

From sharpening alertness and potentially improving exercise performance to disrupting sleep and triggering anxiety, its effects are more complicated than simply feeling more awake. And what works for one person may not work for another.

This article explores the science behind caffeine, how it interacts with our brains and bodies, why individual responses differ, and what the evidence tells us about balancing its potential benefits against its unwanted effects: read on: https://stgilesmedical.medium.com/caffeine-and-the- body-3de553ce1329

How to AI-proof your medical writing career



Join me at the EMWA conference speaking on medical writing in the age of AI

The session will act as a guide to support medical writers with how to effectively integrate AI into their working practices at the same time as developing the human-specific writing skills needed to effectively operate in a changing environment.

Context: Medical writing is evolving with AI, which can automate routine tasks but struggles with complex scientific judgment and strategy. Medical writers should focus on roles that leverage human expertise and strategic skills to direct, validate, and contextualize AI-generated content.

AI automates routine tasks: AI can produce outlines and first drafts, summarize studies, edit grammar, extract information, and generate standard medical communications, potentially impacting writers focused on these tasks.

Human skills remain essential: AI struggles with scientific judgment, critical appraisal, regulatory nuances, adapting messaging, publication strategy, relationship building, and ensuring ethical integrity, where medical writers can differentiate themselves.

Future-proofing careers: Writers should become AI-enabled, deepen scientific expertise, engage in strategy, excel at expert review, and develop interpersonal and leadership skills to thrive in transformed medical writing roles.

Find out more.

Upcoming Events

29-30 October 2026 - BMJ Future Health Europe https://futurehealth.bmj.com/bmj-future-health-europe

AMWA 2026 Medical Writing & Communication Conference, November 4-7, 2026, Washington USA https://www.amwa.org/event/2026annualconf

Extracellular Vesicles: Engineering the Future of Precision Medicine Porto, Portugal, 13-14th Novemberhttps://targeting- exosomes.com/

Public Engagement in Practice 2026 5 November 2026 | Linacre College, University of Oxford, UK Applications close at 09:00 on 5 Nov 2026. https://www.royce.ac.uk/events/royce-training-public-engagement-in-practice-2026/

Falling Walls Science Summit 2026 6-9 November 2026 | Berlin, Germany, and online Scientific breakthroughs and engagement between science and society. https://falling-walls.com/science-summit

BIO Europe 2026 9-11 November 2026 | Koelnmesse, Cologne, Germany https://informaconnect.com/bioeurope/

Communicating science how do we talk about what we do and does it work 17 November 2026 | 12:00-13:00 UK time | Online https://www.foundation.org.uk/Events/2026/What-does-effective-engagement-between-science-%281%29

18 November 2026 - 7th Annual Pharma Communications Conference https://thepharmaconference.com/

9-21 November 2026 - EMWA 62nd Virtual Conference, Autumn 2026 https://emwa.org/conference

Medica 16-19 November 2026: Dusseldorf, Germany https://www.medica- tradefair.com/en/Visit

19 November 2026 - Making STEM Engagement Accessible https://www.big.uk.com/event-6759327

The King's Fund Annual conference 2026: good health for all**:** 17th November , London: https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/annual- conference

Conference : London Biotech 2026 Conference: 18-19th November Excel Register For The Leading Global Biotech Event | London Biotechnology Show

DIA-MHRA Global Summit November 16-17, 2026 | London, UK: Developed in collaboration with the MHRA, is designed to showcase how the UK ecosystem brings innovation to life across the full pathway._ https://shorturl.at/qQ9nU

International Celiac Disease Symposium: 17-20 November 2026, Melbourne, Australia ICDS2026 - International Celiac Disease Symposium

The MAD World Summit 2026, The UK's leading event dedicated to workplace culture, health and wellbeing. **Thursday 26th November 2026 | Convene, 155 Bishopsgate, London** https://madworldsummit.com/venue-2/

Shaping the future of Diabetes Prevention Sitges, Spain, 30th November -2nd December 2026 Home - The Lancet Summit: shaping the future of diabetes prevention

December 2026 and early 2027 GIANT Health 2026: 7-8 December 2026 | Business Design Centre, London, UK Healthcare innovation, NHS transformation, AI and digital health. https://www.giant.health/giant-2026

Genesis 2026 Maximising Returns from Life Science Innovation: 10 December 2026 | 1 Wimpole Street, London, UK Life sciences research, investment, collaboration and innovation. https://www.genesisconference.com/

Association for Science Education Annual Conference 2027 7-9 January 2027 | University of Northampton, UK Science education, engagement and professional development. https://www.ase.org.uk/events/2027-ase-annual-conference-shaping-future-of-science-education-together

2027 European Meeting of ISMPP: 25-27 January 2027 | Leonardo Royal Hotel Tower Bridge, London, UK Meeting for medical publication professionals. Link opens the organiser's specific event listing. https://connect.ismpp.org/events/event- description?CalendarEventKey=f25da30e-f338-4784-a8e4-01983d793e02&Home=%2Fevents%2Fcalendar

DIA Europe 2027: 16-18 March 2027 | Basel, Switzerland Drug development, clinical trials, regulation, pharmacovigilance and patient access. https://www.diaglobal.org/en/flagship/dia-europe-2027/about/conference

BioTrinity 2027: 13-14 April 2027 | London, UK Life sciences research, investment, pharmaceutical partnerships and networking. https://biouk.glueup.com/event/biotrinity-2027-184799/

23rd Annual Meeting of ISMPP: 3-5 May 2027 | Orlando, Florida, USA Meeting for medical publication professionals. Link opens the organiser's specific event listing. https://connect.ismpp.org/events/event-description?CalendarEventKey=39d02661-4703-47b1-ab5f-0194461b519f&Home=%2Fevents%2Fcalendar

BIO International Convention 2027: 7-10 June 2027 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA International biotechnology convention. The event website now displays the 2027 save-the-date; some supporting pages still contain 2026 material. https://convention.bio.org/

Titbits

How should I deal with a rude email from a colleague? : Receiving an unpleasant email can be unsettling, so give yourself time before responding (more...).

Nature's job-satisfaction survey highlights the changing geography of science: A higher proportion of scientists in China and India report feeling optimistic about the future than in the United States and several European countries (more...).

‘Fiercely stubborn’: the US scientists continuing their research amid funding cuts: Researchers working on climate change, diversity, transgender health and international aid have turned to lawsuits, private donors and alternative topics to keep their projects going (more…).

How a new wave of science philanthropists can have the greatest impact: Tech entrepreneurs are bringing an engineer’s eye to research funding. They must be open about their findings to reap maximum benefit (more…).

Daily briefing: How to rebuild science from ruin: Researchers in New Orleans share lessons from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Plus, budding cryptographers are using AI to crack historical codes and an enzyme that keeps cognition sharp with age (more…).



Steven and Tim

Two friends, each running a business on opposite sides of the pharmaceutical and medical communications industry, have joined forces to rescue and sustain the MedComms networking group. Our shared vision is not just to preserve the community but to create a lasting legacy that supports future generations of communicators. Read our privacy policy here.

PIA Commercial: specialist insurance for medical communications professionals

We’re pleased to welcome PIA Commercial as a sponsor of MedSciCommsNet. PIA Commercial arranges tailored insurance for individuals and businesses working in life sciences, biotechnology and healthcare, including medical writers and communications companies. Its services include professional indemnity insurance, alongside employers’ and public liability, business travel and office cover.

Whether you work independently or run a company, PIA’s team can help you explore cover suited to your activities. Free, no-obligation insurance advice is available, including to those who are not existing clients. To find out more, visit PIA Commercial or contact Mike Cherrington at mike.cherrington@piacommercial.com or on **0121 694 6897**.