

MedThink SciCom—Publication Guidelines

Mission Statement

MedThink SciCom provides medical publication support to pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device clients using specific direction from authors and researchers who participated in the design of clinical studies and the collection and interpretation of data.

At MedThink SciCom, we are committed to the highest scientific and ethical standards for publications. To this end, we have created these guidelines to set common standards and help our staff members and clients interpret, apply, and adhere to good publication practice standards.

Our role is to assist and facilitate publication development with authors who provide oversight and direction, as well as to ensure that all industry-sponsored communications are developed in an ethical manner and are scientifically accurate, fair, and well-balanced. In addition, we ensure that all industry-sponsored communications are performed in compliance with existing publication guidelines and standards.¹⁻³

MedThink SciCom publication guidelines are not exhaustive but rather are designed to be applied in conjunction with the recommendations contained in our clients' standard operating procedures, in industry publication guidelines and standards,¹⁻³ and in guidelines from journals and conferences to which manuscripts and presentations will be submitted; thus, we encourage individuals to refer to these published guidelines.

As an active contributor and supporter of the medical publication profession, MedThink SciCom ensures that all teams that work on our publication accounts are staffed with an International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) Certified Medical Publication

Professional™ (ie, CMPP™—a credential that represents a high level of knowledge, integrity, and proficiency with best practices in medical publications).

Authorship and Process for Author Interactions

MedThink SciCom supports and adheres to the authorship criteria recommended by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).² Authors are considered to be individuals who provided substantive intellectual contribution to a published study; specifically, to qualify for authorship, an individual must have fulfilled the following 4 criteria: (1) made a significant contribution to study concept and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; (2) developed a draft or revised it critically for important intellectual content; (3) approved the final version to be published; and (4) agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work and ensured that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work would be appropriately investigated and resolved.

All persons who are designated as authors should qualify for authorship on the basis of these criteria, and all those who qualify should be listed as authors. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. Authors should have access to all final relevant study reports, tables, appendices, and study protocols and have a deep understanding of the study about which they are reporting. Each author should have confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the work of each coauthor. Authors should make decisions about and approve of the presence and order of individuals who are listed in the author byline before submission of the final draft for publication. One of the authors should be identified as the guarantor of the submitted draft and should be prepared to explain the presence and order of all authors. If an individual who has qualified to be listed as

an author no longer wishes to be included in a publication project in development, then written confirmation should be obtained from the individual to document that decision.

MedThink SciCom takes direction from authors at very early stages, before outline development. We strongly encourage that authors who request publication support (1) provide specific input on and critically review the outline and all subsequent drafts; (2) approve changes made during the peer-review process; (3) retain control of the content decisions and scientific integrity of the content; and (4) approve the final version before submission for publication.

MedThink SciCom documents all authors' reviews and approvals through one of several means such as Datavision, PubSTRAT, PubsHub, or detailed spreadsheets. In addition to electronic archiving of communications, some clients may also require tracking of communications through specific publication management software.

Contributorship

As per ICMJE guidelines, MedThink SciCom recognizes as contributors those individuals who do not meet the criteria for authorship but whose contributions to the study or draft development merit recognition, such as participation as a clinical investigator; data collector; or provider of writing, editing, or technical assistance. Consistent with the positions stated by industry publication guidelines and standards,¹⁻³ we ensure that all contributors are recognized in the Acknowledgments section of the manuscript. This recognition generally indicates whether the support consisted of writing, editing, statistical analysis, and/or graphic support. If an individual who has qualified to be listed as an acknowledged contributor no longer wishes to be included in a publication project in development, then written confirmation should be obtained from the individual to document that decision.

Disclosures

MedThink SciCom ensures the transparent disclosure of conflict-of-interest information, as recommended in industry publication guidelines and standards¹⁻³ and as required by most journals and congresses. We ensure that authors disclose all relevant nongovernment sources of funding and all financial and other relationships they may have with the manufacturer or financial stakeholder of any product mentioned in the draft, such as consultancies, honoraria, stock ownership, patents, royalties, paid expert testimony, and employment.

MedThink SciCom provides conflict-of-interest forms and any other requests for conflict-of-interest information to authors. Although we will assist authors in complying with disclosures, it is the responsibility of the authors to provide this information accurately and completely.

The MedThink SciCom Publication Process

A well-managed publication process is essential to the integrity of the work; the typical manuscript development workflow at MedThink SciCom is shown in the Figure.

Note that corresponding authors often prefer MedThink SciCom to submit manuscripts on their behalf. When requested to do so, we obtain documented permission to submit manuscripts on behalf of an author, as well as documented verification that all authors have reviewed and approved the final version. MedThink SciCom follows industry guideline recommendations¹ for the submission process.

References

1. Graf C, Battisti WP, Bridges D, et al, for the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals. Good publication practice for communicating company sponsored medical research: the GPP2 guidelines. *BMJ*. 2009;339:b4330.
2. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals. <http://www.ICMJE.org>. Accessed October 23, 2013.
3. International Society for Medical Publication Professionals. International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) Code of Ethics. <http://www.ismpp.org/ethics>. Accessed October 23, 2013.

Figure. Manuscript development workflow.

