



Medical and Scientific Communications Network

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

The First Career Conversation Every PhD Student Deserves: Universities must teach new graduate students the “hidden curriculum” of how academic careers actually work—from funding to networking—starting on day one ([more...](#)).

A photographic memory is wishful thinking: In fiction, perfect memories save the day, but our brains don't really work that way ([more...](#)).

Can Anthropic's invisible watermarks curb 'AI slop'? Researchers remain sceptical: New Claude models will watermark text and tag images as AI-generated, as Anthropic responds to EU AI regulations ([more...](#)).

Brain activity reveals how people juggle changing goals in real time: Nature never sits still, and neither does anything living within it, since paths keep shifting as things move through the world. Decisions work the same way, changing shape as we go rather than settling once and for all ([more...](#)).

1,000 AI Agents Started Agreeing Without Anyone Telling Them To: Imagine filling a virtual room with 1,000 artificial intelligence (AI) agents and asking each one to choose between two meaningless options. There is no right answer. They receive no reward for agreeing, no instruction to cooperate, and no help from a leader. Yet some of today's most capable AI agents can still end up making the same choice ([more...](#)).

The Good, the Bad, and the Awful of AI in Scientific Publishing: AI has changed the scale and plausibility of error. That should make us rethink not only what authors are allowed to do, but also how scientific integrity is protected at publication level and what editors should do ([more...](#)).

Biology journal pulls 100+ articles and counting from special issues for peer review manipulation: Elsevier's International Journal of Biological Macromolecules has issued more than 100 retractions and counting for manipulated peer review in guest-edited special issues. The publisher has said one more retraction is coming ([more...](#)).

Without guidelines academic authorship defaults to power politics: In many areas of social science co-authorship is the default. Drawing on a meta-analysis of academics in fields related to management, the author outlines a pervasive culture of questionable authorship practices and suggests practical steps to make authorship more transparent, equitable, and accountable ([more...](#)).

Co-authorship fraud: An academic scandal in plain sight. While data fraud and plagiarism are the conventional headline grabbers, it is estimated that almost a half of all co-authored publications fail to meet international ethical standards set by the Vancouver Protocol. This makes it a scandal lying in plain sight ([more...](#)).

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20260318091546917>

How to Use AI to Transcribe Handwritten Notes: There are those of us who still handwrite content pieces or even meeting notes. I love to handwrite, but I don't always love the time it takes to type it all up. AI tools are great for transcribing handwritten content so that you can save a little bit of time in the content process. Here's how you can do just that. ([more...](#))

Writing notes by hand does seem to help learning, but a new experiment shows the real advantage is smaller and stranger than the internet says: The handwriting advantage is real, but not because of the reason everyone thinks—it's about what your hand forces your brain to do differently ([more...](#)).

Potential language-specific brain network identified: The language network in your brain can be seen, even if you aren't saying a word ([more...](#)).

Integrity in Peer Review: What the Data Shows About Author-Suggested Reviewers: Peer review integrity is the backbone of scientific publishing, and it works best when it's free from bias. A new study by AIP Publishing offers some of the most comprehensive and current data about the common practice of allowing authors to suggest their own reviewers and if this practice contributes to a manuscript's acceptance ([more...](#)).

How is AI Changing Scholarly Publishing? New artificial intelligence (AI) tools for research and publishing practices are changing how researchers prepare, publish, and share their work. Understanding these changes can help you make better publishing decisions and protect the long-term impact of your research ([more...](#)).

We're already losing control of AI: And this isn't some theoretical future scenario. The evidence is sitting in the incident reports of the world's leading AI labs, published within weeks of each other ([more...](#)).

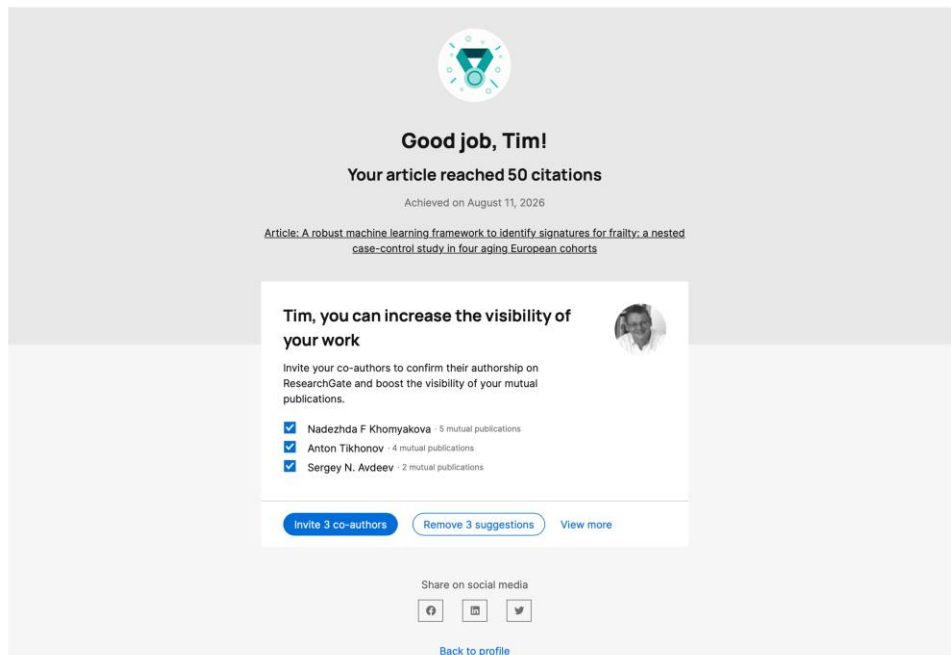
Make Diagnostic Doubt Visible in Healthcare



Approximately 25% of consultations in primary care do not result in a clear diagnosis. For those referred to hospital, the estimate is 40%. Don't visit your doctor with vague aches and pains, problems affecting different body parts or a long and complex history.

Don't make things worse by delivering a rambling story full of irrelevancies. You know that the GP is probably playing for time in the hope of spontaneous resolution if you get sent for a seemingly irrelevant blood test. Our modern health service works well if you are suffering from recognised symptoms in one organ and have a definitive diagnosis for which there is a widely agreed treatment algorithm [Read on](#).

Fifty Times, But What Does It Mean?



Getting that ResearchGate notification is undeniably satisfying. After all, a paper published five years ago is still being read, discussed and cited. But a citation is not necessarily an endorsement, and a high citation count does not automatically mean high-quality science. Nor does a low count mean poor research.

So why have we become so obsessed with the numbers?

This article takes a closer look at what citation milestones really tell us, the psychology behind that little hit of academic validation, and why attention, impact and scientific quality are three very different things.

Read on: <https://niche.org.uk/citations-not-impact>

Upcoming Events

[Redefining Healthcare in the Age of AI](#), September 8 - 10, 2026, Paris, France, <https://natureconferences.streamgo.live/healthcare-ai/lobby>

Health optimisation conference: 11-13th September, London <https://uk.healthoptimisation.com/>

[A Question Time Panel on Weight-loss Drugs and the Future of Obesity Care](#), 14th September from 5:30-7:30PM. Organised by the RSM, London, UK.

Innovation in MedTech and Diagnostics Conference: 6th October 2026,
London <https://shorturl.at/cyHs4>

CancerCare 2026: The NHS Oncology Conference: A Strategic Conference on Advancing
Oncology Pathways Across the NHS. 6TH OCTOBER
2026 <https://sehta.co.uk/Events/?permalink=cancercare-2026-the-nhs-oncology-conference>

[Crick Cancer Symposium 2026 Monday, October 5-Tuesday, October 6, 9 AM-5 PM](#), London, UK

Life sciences and the NHS: delivering the next generation of health innovation: 13th October,
London: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/life-sciences>

[Reframing Precision Medicine: Innovation to Implementation](#), **October 13-15, 2026**, The Royal
Institution, London, England, <https://precision-medicine.conferences.nature.com/>

[Delivering cancer care now and for the future \(in-person conference\)](#), **Wednesday 21 October**,
London, UK

ESMO 2026 Madrid, Spain, on 23-27 October 2026, <https://www.esmo.org/meeting-calendar/esmo-congress-2026>

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 November
<https://targeting-exosomes.com/>

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

[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](#)

Titbits

What can we learn from Australia's social media ban for teens? The Aussie experiment comes amid a lack of clear evidence that the apps harm the majority of adolescents. It may take a dramatic research pivot to finally reveal what's going on and how to fix it ([more...](#)).

Too hot to think? Why extreme heat can affect how well our brain works: Ever feel that the arrival of summer sun makes you feel a bit dopey? You wouldn't be the only one. Soaring temperatures are known for their ability to slow our thought processes, making even everyday tasks seem like a baffling ordeal ([more...](#)).

Caught in the backlash over AI, book publishers face mounting questions: The controversy is at once new and familiar, reflecting both the dramatic changes that the proliferation of AI has wrought on book publishing and echoing other skirmishes this year in which authors have been accused of using AI ([more...](#)).

Resistance, Strategic Compromise, or Complicity? Physicians' Choices under Ethical Pressure: Faced with pressure to violate professional ethics, how can physicians tell the difference between a strategic compromise and complicity in hurting patients, undermining science, or damaging other core professional values? ([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.

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