



Medical and Scientific Communications Network

Newsletter

8 September 2026

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

Biomedical Publishing Metrics as a Barrier to Knowledge Dissemination: The Journal Impact Factor (JIF) is an outdated biomedical metric that hinders knowledge dissemination. Relying on citation counts creates a skewed, easily manipulated system with a temporal lag that ignores global equity ([more...](#)).

Who is responsible when AI helps to write science? As generative AI becomes embedded in research and publishing, the deeper challenge is preserving accountability for scholarly work ([more...](#)).

Ready for the robot reviewers? As AI's capabilities grow, researchers and publishers are exploring how it can support peer review - and where it still falls short ([more...](#)).

Bland new world: is AI making us all think the same? Researchers worry that generative AI is homogenizing culture and cognition ([more...](#)).

AI scribes may fail to capture patients' experiences: The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to take notes can change the nature of interactions between patients and clinicians, sometimes missing vital information, according to the results of a new review ([more...](#)).

A four-step workflow for reading scientific papers: Discovering, triaging and skimming papers before engaging deeply with the right ones has helped Shea Andrews to stay on top of the literature ([more...](#)).

Who is responsible when AI helps to write science? As generative AI becomes embedded in research and publishing, the deeper challenge is preserving accountability for scholarly work ([more...](#)).

Bland new world: Is AI making us all think the same? Researchers worry that generative AI is homogenizing culture and cognition ([more...](#)).

The real reason most men have worse handwriting than women: When pen meets paper, you may have noticed that some men produce spidery scribbles rather than neat shapes ([more...](#)).

Claude can turn your handwriting into a font. Here's how: Your chicken scratch rendered as a usable font. Sure, why not ([more...](#)).

AI Getting Boring? You're Probably Doing It Right: We have always normalized new technology over time, no matter how innovative. Ultimately, technology may become more transformative as it become less of a novelty and more of a resource. We still need to use human judgment and experience to make decisions, even if AI is giving us more data ([more...](#)).

Did the Evolution of Language Take a Huge Leap Around the Fireplace? A new theory links storytelling, firelight and the rise of spoken language ([more...](#)).

The Hidden Role of Motion Throughout the Patient Journey: Every patient journey begins with a need for answers and continues through treatment, recovery, and ongoing support. While the technologies supporting each stage may look very different, they share a common thread - one that quietly enables the precision, reliability, and performance healthcare providers depend on every day ([more...](#)).

Why paying peer reviewers works, according to a journal's editor-in-chief: A biology journal that paid peer reviewers found that the approach cut the time to a first editorial decision by 85% and maintained high-quality reviews ([more...](#)).

Editors Mass Resign from Elsevier Journal After Editor-in-Chief Let Go: Six editors and 58 out of 62 advisory editors at an economics journal gave up their positions after the publisher did not renew the editor-in-chief's contract ([more...](#)).

Journalists test how co-authorship of scientific papers is sold: The experiment involved so-called paper mills and, within several hours, received offers to buy co-authorship on papers for academic journals for \$200 - 800. The outlet contacted seven active sellers via WhatsApp who advertised their services in Facebook groups ([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!

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

Afternoon Session

Save the date - **details coming soon!**

AI Watermarks: Closing the Gate

(After the Horse Has Bolted?)



Can a hidden mathematical fingerprint protect scientific integrity, or are we chasing ghosts?

As regulators demand AI watermarks to flag generated text, an arms race has exploded. Detection tools claim to catch machine-written prose, but simple rewrites weaken the signal - and false positives risk falsely accusing innocent researchers.

Worse, watermarking fails to answer the question that actually matters in research: Who takes responsibility for the work?

AI assistance isn't inherently scientific misconduct, but relying on statistical probability instead of human accountability is a dangerous gamble.

Read the full article (sorry it is a little long) to discover why text watermarks won't save scientific publishing - and what must happen instead]: <https://niche.org.uk/ai-watermarks>

Upcoming Events

[Redefining Healthcare in the Age of AI](https://natureconferences.streamgo.live/healthcare-ai/lobby), 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

Humans Are Surprisingly Good at Predicting When They Will Die - With One Big Bias: Many underestimated how much time they had left. Among participants whose outcomes could be determined, the researchers report that approximately 59 percent outlived their expected lifespan ([more...](#)).

Smart drugs can now spot the chinks in cancer's armour: This killer disease evolves to hide and avoid detection from the cells that would destroy it, but as recent trials show, scientists are wising up to cancer's defences ([more...](#)).

Don't Try to Be Interesting. Be Interested: Genuine curiosity activates learning and quiets anxiety in the brain, boosting conversation quality. Being interested in others is more engaging than trying to appear interesting yourself. Curiosity widens focus and helps suspend judgment, fostering deeper genuine connections ([more...](#)).

The Science of the Silence: Live music transforms a room of strangers into an empathetic, unified community. Shared anticipation in silence can synchronize heart rates and brain activity in an audience. Tuning an orchestra shifts individual focus into collective neurological alignment ([more...](#)).

Researchers Warn AI Could Be Changing Us in an Unexpected Way: A new theoretical paper published in *AI & Society* argues that spending a lot of time interacting with customer-support AIs could lead us to adopt patterns these robotic agents can more easily process, including mimicking how they communicate ([more...](#)).

Why does music ease pain? Many studies have demonstrated that music-based interventions - such as listening to music - can help reduce pain from a variety of conditions, but we do not know how or why. A new review study examined biological, psychological and social mechanisms that may explain the pain-reducing effects of music ([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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