

# What is medical communications?

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# What is medical communications?

- Journalism? ✘
- Academic publishing? ✘
- Regulatory writing? ✘

*Medical communications provides consultancy services to the pharmaceutical industry to help raise awareness of medicines via education and promotion*

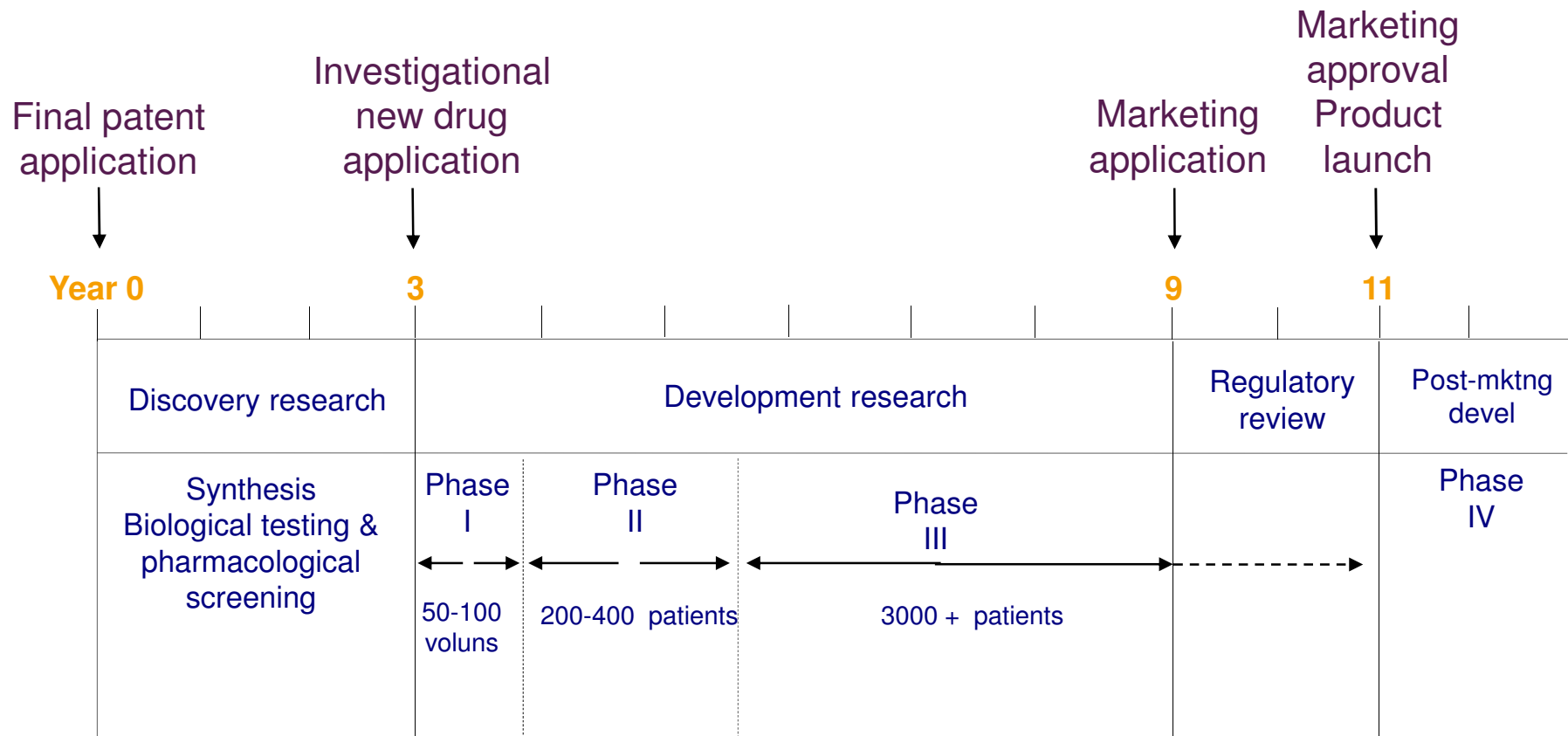


# What does a MedComms agency do?

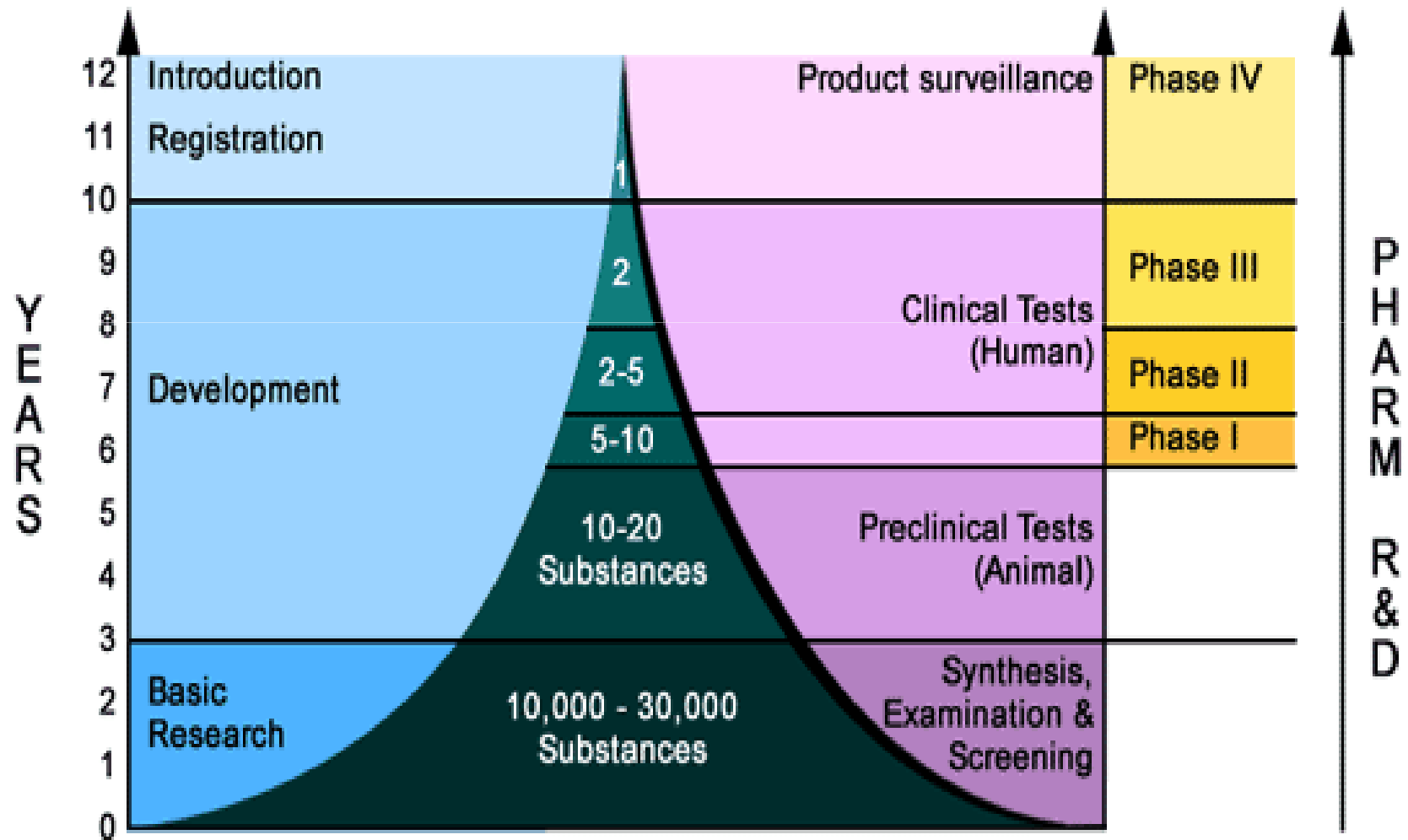
- Essentially advises pharma companies on how best to educate and inform their customers about the benefits and risks of [new] therapies, **supported by clinical and economic data**
- Provides strategic counsel to brand teams on how to maximise dissemination of data to all relevant target audiences in a variety of formats and media
  - Scientific and commercial communications to increase anticipation around the therapy and differentiate it from competitors, **supported by clinical and economic data**



# Average R&D cost of a new medicine up to launch >\$900 million



Only  $\approx 30\%$  of launched medicines earn revenues that exceed their lifetime costs



# Many different agency services... and a lot of jargon

**Regulatory documentation**

**Positioning**

**Professional relations**

**Branding**

**Publications**

**Advertising**

**Medical education**

**Health economics**

**Public relations**

**Market access**

**Market research**

**Consultancy**



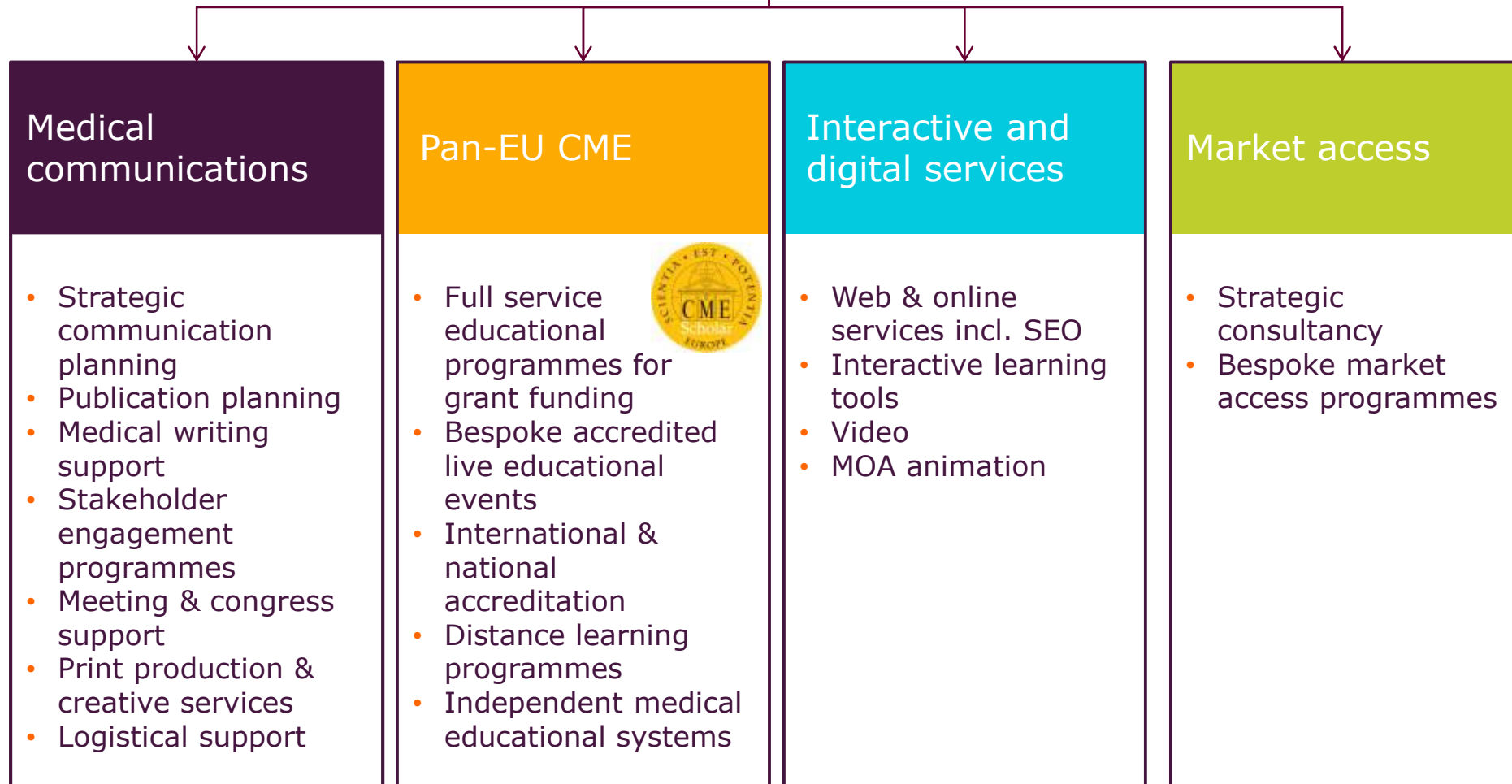
# You'll hear the term 'full service agency' a lot!

- There are good reasons for this:
  - Success in one activity potentially opens doors
    - Access to different budgets



- Therefore many agencies:
  - Have specialist divisions that deliver many or all of these services, or
  - Align themselves with, complementary, agencies, or
  - Are owned by global giants







# What does this look like?

- Develop materials such as:
  - Journal manuscripts [with authors, for peer review]
  - Congress posters and presentations for new data
  - Learning resources [internal & external]
  - Scientific slide kits and animations
- Also:
  - Commercially focused materials, e.g. brochures, leaflets for use by sales reps, or, e.g. at congress booths
  - Media materials to support PR
  - Affiliate materials for local adaptation/translation



# Role of medical writers

- Write high-quality, scientifically accurate copy
- Keep up to date with new developments in therapy area, competitors
  - Reading scientific literature
  - Attending scientific congresses
  - Online learning
- Build relationships with clients, colleagues, other agency teams and opinion leaders (external experts)
- Contribute to strategy for commercialisation of drug and identify opportunities to communicate relevant information to relevant audiences

...



# Role of medical writers

- Ultimately. . .



Ensure new therapy is added to the prescriber's "mental formulary" and remains on his/her radar during its lifecycle



# The typical agency team



# Why join a MedComms agency?

- Broad experience to be gained
- Fast paced and deadline driven
- Career progression: scope to progress rapidly
- Opportunities for change in direction within agency
  - Editorial & creative
  - Client services
  - Event management
  - Interactive/digital specialism
- Opportunity to work in a range of therapy areas
- Opportunity to work with global experts in their field



# Think about whether you like travel

In the past 18 months Darwin has....

Organised...

- 8 large (250+ pax) standalones
- 15 satellite symposia
- 50+ advisory boards
- 12 steering committees
- 4 MDT meetings

By working with...

- 10+ logistics companies
- More than 15 AV suppliers
- 8 creative agencies
- 12 client teams
- 8 purchasing departments

In doing so we have...

- Worked with over 200 speaking faculty
- Created more than 50 presentations, edited more than 80 others
- Produced more than 10 supplements, 60 reports / minutes
- 15 electronic minutes and 10 newsletters

# What makes a good medical writer?

- Established scientist – PhD is highly advantageous
- Enjoy writing – thesis is not ‘necessary evil’
- Pedantic – aka attention to detail
- Good listener – knowledge, not opinion
- Excellent research skills
- Able to absorb new concepts rapidly
- Comfortable with statistics
- Take feedback well!



Deliver what the clients want, not what you think they should want



# Writers should be well rounded





# Adopt the highest ethical standards

- **Those directed at pharmaceutical companies (and their agents)**
  - OIG guidance – treated as statutory in US
  - Pharmaceutical Association guidelines (voluntary, regional)
  - ICMJE Clinical Trial registration
  - FDA Amendment Act
  - Good Publication Practice
- **Those directed at journal editors**
  - e.g. ICMJE Uniform requirements
  - WAME, COPE and CSE guidelines
- **Those directed at authors**
  - e.g. ICMJE Uniform requirements, individual journal instructions
  - The Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT)
- **Those directed at professional medical writers**
  - AMWA (US) and EMWA (Europe) guidelines



# A typical day for a Darwin medical writer

- ~~Teleconference~~ Teleconference! with client and authors of publication to take direction from author on content
- Finalise core slide deck for use by physicians in national educational meetings
- Prepare CME accreditation application for a satellite symposium on behalf of faculty
- Brainstorm ideas and prepare presentation to client for salesforce training programme and assessment

...



# A typical day for a Darwin medical writer

- Review another writer's work and provide feedback
- Research new disease area and prepare slides for pitch presentation
- Check content and links on website following live event
- Attend planning meeting at client offices to discuss national roll out of pilot nurse education programme
- Eat jaffa cakes!



# Resources available

<http://www.medcommsnetworking.co.uk/startingout>



Managed by  
NetworkPharma

## MedComms Networking

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### STARTING OUT IN MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS

Medical communications provides consultancy services to the pharmaceutical industry to help raise awareness of medicines via education and promotion. Read on if you want to know more about a career in medical communications.

More information will be added to these pages over the coming weeks. Meanwhile if you have any questions at all, anytime, please do contact [Peter Llewellyn](#)

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**Careers guide now available.**

*From academic to medical writer: A guide to getting started in medical communications*, written by Dr Annick Moon, Published by NetworkPharma, March 2009.

[\[DOWNLOAD HERE - PDF FORMAT 3.0MB\]](#)

This guide focuses primarily on the role of the Medical Writer in medical communications agencies. The Medical Writer's role is to use science and language to deliver education and communication programmes for the pharmaceutical industry, while working to the highest ethical standards and adhering to industry regulations and guidelines. The aim of this guide is to give the industry information you need to decide if you are suited to the role of Medical Writer, and to provide the insider knowledge you need to excel at interview.

[\[DOWNLOAD HERE - PDF FORMAT 3.0MB\]](#)

**Note if you have difficulties** reading this PDF file it's most likely you need an updated Acrobat Reader from <http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader>.

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UPCOMING EVENTS... UPCOMING EVENTS...

### WHAT ELSE?

**Be well informed...**

If you would like to be alerted about new information and events aimed at people interested in a career in Medical Communications (MedComms) please...



**From academic to medical writer**  
A guide to getting started in medical communications  
Written by Dr Annick Moon  
Published by NetworkPharma

currently graduates to job Project Assistants in Hitchin, Herts. - [see details here](#). (Posted 17 February 2010)

UBC-Envision are currently looking for

