AMERICAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION AMWA JOURNAL V41 N1 / 2026

AMWA NEWS

Results of the 2025 AMWA Generative AI Member Survey

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INTRODUCTION

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is rapidly transforming medical communication, offering new tools for content creation, summarization, and editing. Although GenAI-assisted writing presents both opportunities and risks, data on how medical communicators are adopting these technologies are limited. To address this limitation, AMWA formed an AI Task Force in 2025 and conducted a survey to understand the current knowledge, experience, and needs of the AMWA membership with respect to GenAI technology. This article presents the survey's findings, first shared at AMWA's 2025 Medical Writing & Communication Conference in November. The responses will inform recommendations by the AI Task Force to the Board of Directors on initiatives to support members' understanding and use of GenAI in medical communication.

METHODS

An anonymous online survey was sent to AMWA members from August to September 2025. The survey comprised 11 items: 10 structured questions (including multiple-choice and Likert scales) covering GenAI usage, tools, interests, skills, concerns, and professional profile, and one open-ended question on anticipated work impact (Table 1). No personal identifiers were collected.

Quantitative results were summarized using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). Qualitative comments were analyzed using 2 complementary approaches. In one, a team of 3 independent human coders conducted an inductive analysis of open-ended survey responses, developing and refining sentiment and content codes to ensure consistency and reliability. This analysis was restricted to the large number (n = 354) of open-ended

Table 1. The Questions Used in This Survey With Their Response Type

AMWA GenAI Survey Questions	Response Type
How are you using GenAI or other emerging technologies?	Multiple choice
Which GenAI tools have you used?	Multiple choice
How would you rate your current proficiency in using GenAI for medical writing or editing (on a scale of 1 to 5)?	Likert scale
Which GenAI topics are most valuable to you as a medical communicator?	Multiple choice
What skills or learnings do you consider essential for GenAI integration in medical writing or editing?	Multiple choice
Which of the following (if any) might limit your professional use of GenAI tools?	Multiple choice
How confident are you in the accuracy and reliability of GenAI-generated content?	Likert scale
How confident are you in your understanding of the ethical, regulatory, and quality considerations in using GenAI in medical writing or editing?	Likert scale
In what ways do you think GenAI will affect your work?	Open text
What is your primary professional area of interest?	Multiple choice
For which type of organization do you work?	Multiple choice

GenAI, generative arti icial intelligence.

ISSN 2163-5315

(ie, free-text) comments received for Question 9, "In what ways do you think GenAI will affect your work?" This human-led analysis included a summary of respondent answers by sentiment type and topic.

In the other, a GenAI-driven analysis was conducted using advanced large language models (LLMs) to perform sentiment analysis and thematic categorization of free-text responses and Likert-type questions. This AI-driven analysis included all of the survey questions and was not restricted to Question 9.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 357 responses were received, representing approximately 9% of the AMWA membership. Respondents included a broad cross-section of medical writing roles (Figure 1). Approximately 40% reported being self-employed or freelancers, and 58% reported being employed in commercial or academic and nonprofit settings, primarily pharmaceutical, biotechnology, or medical device companies, academic or research institutions, and medical communication agencies or contract research organizations. The top 3 primary professional areas of focus were regulatory writing (32%), scientific publications (23%), and continuing education (9%), which is similar to the breakdown of professional focus in the overall AMWA membership.

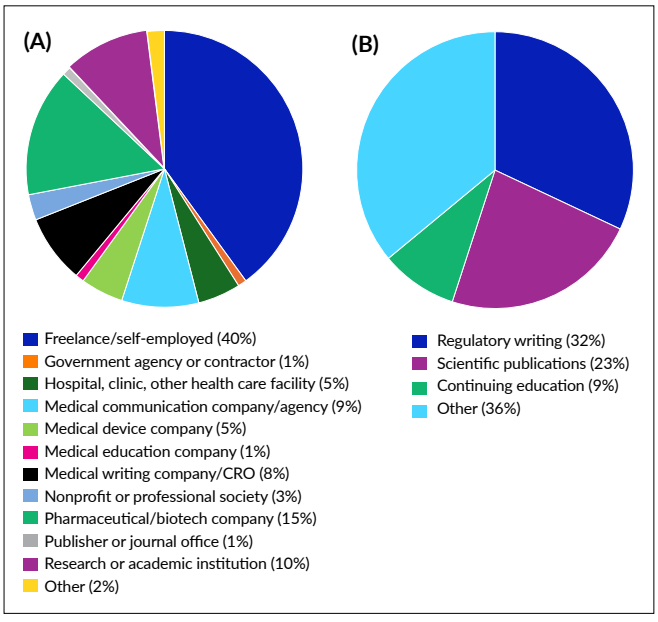

Figure 1. Respondent demographics. (A) Employment settings and (B) primary areas of specialization among respondents. CRO, contract research organization.

ADOPTION AND USES

Most respondents (75%) reported using GenAI or related tools for at least one work task; however, only 11% consider themselves very or extremely proficient in using GenAI for medical writing or editing. Among users, content-related applications were most common, including research, editing or proofreading assistance, and drafting or content creation (Figure 2). Collaboration and administrative uses such as meeting notes or task organization and personal productivity were less common, as were analytical assistance uses such as data analysis or workflow augmentation. The most widely used tools were LLMs (eg, ChatGPT) and Microsoft Copilot, followed by domain-specific tools for reference management and grammar or editing support.

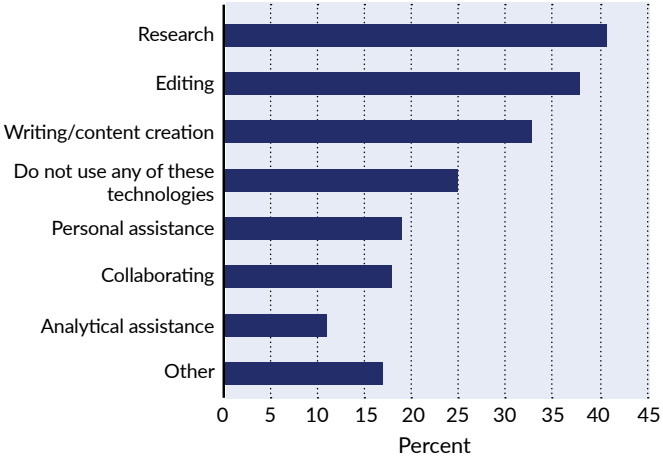

Figure 2. Use of GenAI among respondents. Respondents could select more than one choice; thus, totals will not sum to 100%.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL IN GenAI OUTPUT

Most medical communicators lack confidence in the accuracy of GenAI-generated content (Figure 3). On a 5-point scale ranging from "not confident at all" to "extremely confident," the majority of respondents (67%) fell below the midpoint of "moderately confident." Related to content quality concerns, when asked about their understanding of the ethical, regulatory, and quality considerations for using GenAI in medical writing or editing, about one-fifth of respondents felt very or extremely confident, with most (60%) expressing moderate or low confidence.

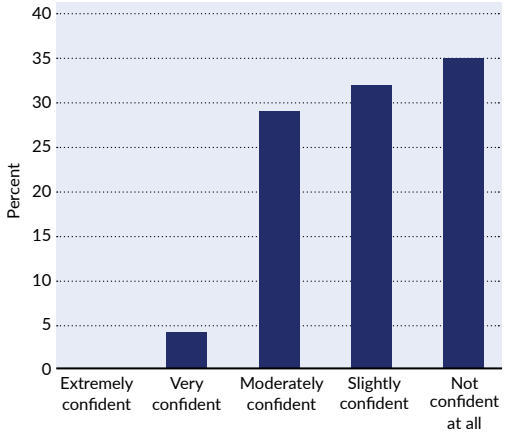

Figure 3. Respondents' confidence levels in the output of GenAI.

INTERESTS AND LEARNING NEEDS

Respondents expressed a strong interest in practical training and learning opportunities tailored to everyday research, writing, and editing work (Figure 4). Over half of respondents selected "use of GenAI in medical writing or editing" as one of the most valuable GenAI topics. "Ethics of GenAI," "workflow streamlining," and "literature review and evidence synthesis" were also highly valued. Nearly a quarter indicated strong interest in fact-checking best practices when using GenAI. The top skills considered essential by respondents for integrating GenAI into medical communication included understanding GenAI limitations and risks, evaluating AI-generated content, using GenAI for clinical or regulatory documents, generating or editing text, and customizing prompts.

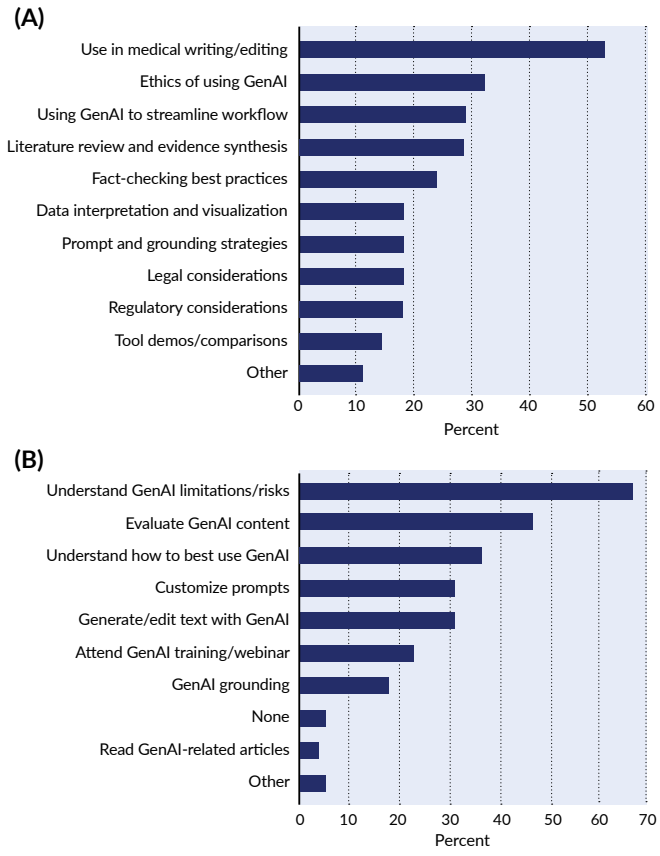

Figure 4. GenAI educational needs for medical communicators. (A) Most valuable GenAI topics and (B) GenAI skills considered essential for GenAI integration in medical writing/editing. Respondents could select more than one choice; thus, totals will not sum to 100%. GenAI, generative artificial intelligence.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Respondents identified significant barriers limiting their professional use of GenAI. Most respondents (>70%) reported that data privacy or security concerns and fear of GenAI-induced errors may limit their use of GenAI tools. Additional potential barriers reported by at least 25% of respondents included perceived misalignment between tool developers and medical writing requirements, poor integration with existing workflows and systems, and insufficient training or onboarding.

QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

Analysis of Responses to Question 9: "In What Ways Do You Think GenAI Will Affect Your Work?"

The open-ended survey question prompted a rich array of free-text responses, capturing respondents' hopes, fears, and predictions in their own words. Overall, 44% of evaluable responses (n = 354) had a negative view of the impact of GenAI on their work, whereas 36% had a positive view, and 20% had a mixed or unsure view. The sentiments were similar among freelance and non-freelance respondents. Positive view responses focused most often on efficiency, workflow, and new ideas, whereas negative view responses mentioned inefficiency, quality or accuracy, and loss of critical thinking as the top concerns.

GenAI-Guided Analysis of Responses to Questions 1 to 9

GenAI identified 4 major thematic areas in the survey responses.

1. **Polarized attitudes toward GenAI.** Nearly every respondent positioned themselves as *pro-* or *anti-*GenAI to some degree. This conceptual grouping helped the AI Taskforce understand that there is no consensus—currently, the profession is truly divided on the value of GenAI.
2. **Productivity versus quality.** The trade-off most frequently mentioned was that GenAI can make writing faster but possibly at the expense of accuracy and effort in verification. This duality highlighted that any implementation of GenAI must balance these factors.
3. **Evolving roles.** "Opportunities" versus "threats" was apparent in how respondents talked about their careers. Many see GenAI as changing *what* they work on—either upskilling them or replacing them. This theme underscored an essential insight: writers expect their job descriptions to shift (toward more review, strategy, or "prompt engineering") and worry about job security. Capturing this under one theme underscored the urgency of addressing workforce implications.
4. **Adoption divide and ethical stances.** Responses indicated stark differences in usage behavior and ethics. Some already integrate GenAI into daily work (using tools like ChatGPT, BingChat, or specialized LLMs for medical writing), whereas others refuse to use GenAI at all. This theme, including ethical concerns (data

privacy, plagiarism, environmental impact), suggested that any GenAI rollout in this field must consider user acceptance and ethical guidelines.

The section below presents a sample of the open-ended commentary received from the respondents. The text is provided here exactly as received and represents the overall sentiments of those surveyed.

Selection of Quotes from Respondents

Positive Tone

- "I'm hoping GenAI can do the lower-order tasks, allowing us to be faster and more creative."
- "Allow me more room for critical thinking"
- "GenAI can support faster cross-referencing of imaging criteria, regulatory guidance, and study requirements. My role will shift more toward validation, quality control, and ensuring scientific accuracy of AI-generated outputs."
- "It will mean I do not need to think so much about the way I write something because I can ask AI to make it more clear/concise/etc"
- "GenAI will take care of some of the nitty-gritty writing and editing, which will free up my time to research and select better references."

Negative Tone

- "While executives with a limited understanding of the field are quite taken with the potential for this new 'tool,' the need to painstakingly QC every drop of what's been generated is often more time-intensive than just generating the content yourself."
- "The more that people use these hallucations [*sic*] as part of their own work, the more this type of misinformation will spread as AI continues to 'train' on it."
- "It will take my job as I know it. Now, I am a writer. Soon, I'll just be a prompt engineer and factchecker/editor."
- "As a freelance [*sic*], I am concerned that I won't have access to the same AI tools as companies that provide added level of privacy. I'd love to see AMWA members share use-case scenarios, so we can share the learning curve."
- "Will allow quicker documents, but concerned that younger/newer, less experienced writers will not learn as AI is taking the learning out and they don't know what is correct data vs incorrect without doing the background work."

Mixed or Unsure

- "Researchers who use my editing services may turn to Gen AI more and leave me with less of that work. And I might adopt some of the AI-driven tools to add efficiency to my editing as well, hopefully meaning that leaves added bandwidth for me to work on more intellectual activities."
- "Some clients will use AI, so I might lose some work, but in regulatory writing, there hasn't been a big push to use AI."
- "I think it will be used as a time-saving tool, but humans will still be needed for fact-checking and final editing."
- "I think accuracy is lacking and I've spent a great deal of time fact checking and citation checking to come across myriad errors or just 'made up' data."
- "GenAI will allow writers to produce documents more quickly, and those expedited timelines will become the standard expectation—reinforcing the need to use GenAI."

The survey results pointed to broad opportunities, highlighted by the need to strengthen confidence in GenAI. This can be done through targeted education and clear guidance, enabling medical communicators to use AI tools more effectively and responsibly. Further, the results underscored the dual challenge of ensuring technical fit and building trust through demonstrable accuracy and secure handling of content.

There is also a strong need for more understanding of what future needs may be as the technology continues to develop. This will be an ongoing challenge, but one we hope can strengthen how our work is done.

SUMMARY

The 2025 AMWA GenAI Survey indicates broad experimentation with Gen AI among medical writers, concentrated in research, editing, and drafting support. Respondents placed high value on practical guidance and ethical clarity, but trust hinges on accuracy and data privacy. Persistent barriers, especially data security concerns and risk of errors, continue to limit broader adoption, and confidence in the current regulatory and ethical landscape remains moderate to low. Based on these results, the respondents' stance is best characterized as cautious: GenAI is viewed as a potential productivity ally that requires strong human oversight, rigorous quality control, and fit-for-purpose tools to safeguard scientific integrity.

THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

The many detailed comments received and the clear sentiments voiced indicate that the AMWA membership is

beginning to adapt to AI technology. Key to everyone's success is education, knowledge, support, and a practical understanding of how these tools function and when they are well-suited to tasks at hand. AMWA is committed to addressing these needs and working to support the membership; we will progress together.

The highly complex documents delivered by the membership require great care and stewardship. Our responsibilities have not changed, but our tools likely will. We owe it to ourselves to learn together and continue the high standards and work ethic that our audiences deserve.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Shari Rager for her diligent coordination efforts throughout the article writing process and Amy Boches for graphic design. This article was partially drafted with the help of AI. This survey was developed and executed through the collective contributions of the AMWA AI Task Force, comprising Dominic De Bellis, J. Kelly Byram, Kimberly Jinnett, Mario Morel, Lisa Chamberlain James, Lauren Coles, Pallabi De, Ibukun Fowe, Brian Geldziler, Erin Jo Killion, Amy Loercher, Jennifer Nepo, Shari Rager, Ravi Ramachandran, Angela Russell Winnier, Michelle Sauer Gehring, Shawn Watson, Kim Korwek, and Susan Krug.

Author declaration and disclosures: *Mario Morel is a Microsoft AI Cloud Partner. Lisa Chamberlain James has been involved in the development of AI tools for medical writing for the last 9 years. Ravi Ramachandran has been involved in the development of an agentic AI SaaS platform for the automation of regulatory and clinical document generation. The other authors report no commercial or other conflicts of interest. The views expressed represent those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of any affiliated entities.*

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