European Medical Writers Association

53rd EMWA Conference, Berlin, 3 - 7 May 2022

WORKSHOP MSA1

Advanced Epidemiology for Medical Communicators

Dear Workshop Participant,

Welcome to “Advanced Epidemiology for Medical Communicators”.

The objective of this workshop is twofold: to sharpen your skills for critical appraisal using epidemiological principles, and to motivate you to integrate these skills in your medical writing projects.

Your pre-workshop assignment consists of two exercises. These form an integral part of the group discussions.

This assignment and the needs-analysis questionnaire should reach me by e-mail at **rita.wellens@telenet.be** latest by **29 April 2022**.

Please, respect this due date. I will confirm receipt of your assignment.

I look forward to meeting you soon in Berlin.

Best regards,

Rita Wellens, PhD, MSc

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NEEDS ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE*

To ensure that the workshop corresponds – *as much as possible* – to your needs, please complete this questionnaire and return together with the pre-workshop assignment.

Name:

How much experience do you have with applying epidemiological principles in your job ?

Do you have any other relevant experiences that link up with epidemiology ?

What is your key motivation to enroll in this workshop ?

Which two questions would you most like to see answered during the workshop?

1)

2)

Please rate each topic in terms of its importance to you. As far as possible, time during the workshop will be allocated to the items with the highest scores.

1 = I do not want much time on this 2 = I need some time on this 3 = I need lots of time on this

Topic	Score (tick appropriate box)		
	1	2	3
Common research designs			
Association - causation			
Use of reporting guidelines			

***Optional - not filling out this questionnaire will not influence the evaluation of your assignment.*

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PRE-WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENT

- **EXERCISE 1:** "Incidence" measures are part of the basic statistics' toolkit of epidemiology. During the COVID-19 pandemic we were bombarded with a plenitude of incidence measures related to COVID-19 morbidity and mortality. Please select 1 incidence measure, explain why it is your chosen one and what information did you gain from it?

- **EXERCISE 2:** Read the following article by Ho et al –free copy at https://academic.oup.com/ajcn/article/113/5/1137/6154824

Chocolate consumption and risk of coronary artery disease: the Million Veteran Program
Yuk-Lam Ho, Xuan-Mai T Nguyen, Joseph Q Yan, Jason L Vassy, David R Gagnon, J Michael Gaziano, Peter W F Wilson, Kelly Cho, Luc Djoussé, VA Million Veteran Program
The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Volume 113, Issue 5, May 2021, Pages 1137–1144

1) Research the "key" medically recognized risk factors for cardiovascular disease (websearch – max 30 minutes). Which resource(s) did you consult and list the "main" medically recognized risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

2) Critical appraisal guidelines – please address all questions below:

Objectives	List the specific objective(s), including any prespecified hypotheses - please note how many times/where (indicate section) the objective(s) was spelled out
Data sources/ measurement	For the exposure variable of interest "chocolate consumption" - did the authors give the source of data, details on the methods of assessment, and quality control measures (such as reliability)? Delineate the enrollment period for the participants.
Bias	Were efforts made to address potential sources of bias?
Study size	Briefly summarize how the study size was arrived at? On page 1138 " we collapsed adjacent categories with sparse data..." Can you list any specifics regarding the collapsing procedures used?
Quantitative variables	Reporting on the variable "chocolate consumption" - do the authors explain how they decided on the selected groupings/cut-offs ? in your opinion, was this clearly addressed?
Statistical methods	How were missing data addressed ?
Descriptive data	Were numbers of participants with missing data for each variable of interest provided?
Interpretation	Was a cautious overall interpretation of results provided? (hence considering objectives, limitations, analyses, results from similar studies, key medically recognized risk factors and other relevant evidence) *Consult your list of medically recognized risk factors for cardiovascular disease!*
Generalisability	Is your critical mind satisfied after reading this publication? Yes? No? List your key arguments.

E-mail the needs-analysis questionnaire and the pre-workshop assignment (max 1 ½ pages) to **rita.wellens@telenet.be** by latest **Friday, 29 April 2022**, and please bring a copy of the paper and your assignment to the workshop. Thank you !