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Medical Writing Doesn't Have to Be Complicated.

Last year kept me busy with many exciting projects and invaluable lessons learned. I developed content in a variety of spaces, including ophthalmological devices, biomaterials research, and pediatrics.

Reflecting upon my various projects and learnings in 2018, I realized that I encountered the following common concept throughout my work in the healthcare space:

Less is More Becoming a Common Theme in Medicine

Optimizing Patient Care Means Achieving Bigger Results with Less...

Perhaps one of my essential takeaways from the last two years of medical

and science writing is that scientists continuously strive to find innovative ways to improve healthcare outcomes and patient safety.
Several strategies seem to yield better treatment results. In some cases, these initiatives could mean altering the way the drug is carried into the body—or even modifying the active ingredient itself. Other tactics involve exposing the patient to the lowest possible effective dose for the shortest amount of time needed to help the patient heal. Doing so often reduces the potential for unwanted side effects.

I first touched on this concept in 2017 when I wrote about antifungal resistance for several different outlets. Researchers found that treating fungal infections for shorterperiods of time worked just as well as treating the condition for longer durations.

Three Examples of Medical Research Achieving Better Results with Less

Recent examples of the "less is more" concept I have encountered in new scientific research include:

1) Regenerative medicine is gaining traction in osteoarthritis treatment: New research found that altering the size of a drug delivery vehicle improves the interaction between the drug molecule and its target cells in injections for osteoarthritis of the knee. The enhanced effectiveness also reduces side effects. However, more studies are needed.

2) Modifying the features of immune-enhancing vaccine components called adjuvants can stimulate the immune system as well as conventional vaccines. Such modifications may include decreasing the size and changing the shape of the adjuvant. Another added perk: One study found that vaccines that contained lower concentrations of these particles caused fewer side effects.

3) Lower doses of radioactive iodine treatment work just as well as higher doses of radioactive iodine treatment. Patients who received low-dose radioactive iodine ablation (RAI) therapy had similar rates of side effects as people who received higher dose RAI. People who received radioactive iodine therapy also had low rates of thyroid cancer returning.

So, what do these findings mean for medicine in general?

The recurring theme that "less is more" suggests that the healthcare industry is getting better at treating diseases. As the patient care model continues shifting toward adding value and creating quality experiences, the concept of lower-dose, shorter-duration, and less-toxic treatments fits well into this scheme. I suspect we will continue to see more of this trend aligning with ongoing demand.

So… what's next?

I am re-exploring the contributions and challenges of integrating artificial intelligence in electronic healthcare records. I'll share some interesting takeaways of my latest work in this space in the next issue of my newsletter.

Stay tuned!

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