

CMPP Spotlight

Originally published in *CMPP Matters* – a quarterly newsletter written by CMPPs for the CMPP community, and anyone considering certification



Name: Gary Dever

Affiliation: Envision Pharma Group

Role: VP, Portfolio Director and Team Lead, Scientific

Q: What is your current role, and how would you describe what you do in 3 sentences?

I'm a Scientific Portfolio Director & Team Lead at a medical communications agency, where I lead teams partnering with pharma and biotech on publication strategy and scientific deliverables. After 16+ years in agency med comms, I still love the core challenge: turning complex data into clear, accurate stories that stand up to scrutiny. Day to day, I balance people leadership, client partnership, and quality oversight – making sure we deliver work that's rigorous, ethical, and genuinely useful.

Q: 2. Do you have any prior experience that you feel has significantly impacted or shaped your career?

I've had a fairly conventional agency path. I started as a medical writer and grew through roles with increasing responsibility, but a few experiences have shaped how I work. Having the opportunity to work in both the UK and the US helped me appreciate different internal- and client expectations, communication styles, and ways of building effective partnerships, while keeping the fundamentals of good publication practice constant. Writing taught me discipline and curiosity. Over time, leading teams taught me that the best work happens when people feel supported, expectations are clear, and quality is designed into the process rather than inspected at the end.

Q: How has receiving your CMPP™ certification impacted you?

Earning my CMPP had a real impact on my confidence, especially because I obtained it when I was a senior medical writer. It wasn't only the certification itself; it was the journey to get there that helped consolidate my understanding of publication ethics, transparency, and best practice. That stronger foundation made it easier to speak up, explain the "why" behind guidelines, and handle tricky situations with more clarity and poise. It also deepened my connection to ISMPP. Serving on the CMPP Certification Board has been especially meaningful – it's a practical way to give back and help uphold standards that benefit the whole profession.



Q: What advice would you give someone new to industry, interested in obtaining their CMPP?

My biggest advice is to think of the CMPP as more than an exam – it's a great way to build all-round knowledge and understanding of the industry. Focus on the principles behind the guidelines (authorship, transparency, conflicts of interest), because that “why” helps you apply best practice confidently in real situations. Use day-to-day work as practice by asking yourself what the most ethical, defensible choice is. If you think it would be useful for your own style and approach, ask ISMPP for a mentor – talking through scenarios is incredibly helpful. It's very achievable, and the learning you gain along the way will pay off well beyond the credential – it's not as a badge, but a way to really deepen understanding of the bigger picture of our industry.

Q: What ISMPP/industry projects or initiatives are you currently excited about?

I'm excited by initiatives that strengthen trust in scientific communication and support publication professionals in practical ways. Through my involvement with the CMPP Certification Board, I'm particularly energized by efforts that keep the credential robust, relevant, and aligned with evolving best practices – I've really enjoyed being part of the team that's overseen implementation of several new resources for candidates and certificants!

Q: What's one thing people might be surprised to learn about your day-to-day work?

How much “quality” is about early choices: agreeing objectives, defining responsibilities, and anticipating where misunderstandings might happen. It sounds a little cliché, but when those pieces are in place everything downstream becomes much better! Writing and editing still happen, but they're part of a bigger system that supports consistent, ethical, high-quality delivery.

Q: What's something you're learning or hoping to develop this year?

I'm watching the industry's thoughtful shift toward responsible use of AI-enabled tools (we can't ignore it, right? ;-)) – not just what's possible, but what's appropriate, traceable, and ethical. Anything that helps teams deliver clear science with less friction gets my attention.

