



## PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY & MEDICINES DEVELOPMENT

BY DOMENICO CRISCUOLO  
& OLGA LUCIA ANGARITA

The Academy recently initiated a conversation regarding the importance of Professional Identity in Medicines Development/Pharmaceutical Medicine. We think it's important that our readers receive an insider perspective about this important matter and we are delighted to feature content from graduates of the Academy Medical Affairs course. The course required the completion of two essays as part of the End of Program Assessment, and we have selected some of the top essays prepared by students of the course. Keep reading for our first featured student selection (*See page 2*).

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Olga Lucía Angarita A. MD, MSc is a Master in Bioethics from the Universidad de la Sabana. She is experienced in Medical Affairs, R&D, and Integrity functions as Medical Operations Lead, Medical Manager, Development Quality Assurance, and Compliance officer in pharmaceutical companies such as Novartis and Takeda.

She recently completed IFAPP Academy-King's College London, Medical Affairs in Medicines Development Certification Program. Below is an excerpt from her End of Program essay, in which she was asked to "Characterize Professional Identity in Medicines Development and the need for a Professional Identity for professionals involved in the field."

Thank you, Olga, for sharing your insights with the Academy and its readers! To read the essay in its entirety, [please click here](#).

"Although Medical Affairs hasn't been recognized as an independent profession but a key component within Medicines Development, those of us who work in this field must intentionally strive towards the consolidation of a professional identity, understanding that this is a dynamic, individual process, influenced by internal and external factors<sup>2</sup>. The set of attributes that allow us individual and social recognition as well as a clear differentiation from other professions are:

**Patient-Centered Care:** We have patients as the cornerstone of our work, prioritizing their safety and well-being. The patient's interests must take precedence over any other commercial, organizational, or personal interest.

**Technical and Scientific Knowledge:** Our relationship with stakeholders is based on the exchange and delivery of scientific information; putting all our skills and existing knowledge about diseases and treatment options at their service, in order to provide the treating physicians, the needed information to ensure evidence-based decision-making processes.

**Quality:** Our daily work should reflect our commitment to operational excellence. We strive to achieve the highest standards of quality in each of our activities and interactions.

**Ethics:** We know and understand the ethical and compliance guidelines that govern the research and development of new pharmaceutical products, their commercialization and promotion, and the relationship with stakeholders.

**Innovation:** We have innovative thinking that seeks to develop technological solutions and useful practices to speed up the diagnosis of diseases, facilitating the treatment of patients and helping physicians to analyse and interpret the data generated through digital tools.

**Strategic Vision:** As we are part of the third strategic pillar of the pharmaceutical industry<sup>1</sup>, we understand the needs of the business and know how to define the medical tactics necessary to meet them effectively." [Click here to read the full article](#).

# PREVENTION PREVAILS: ASPIRIN AND CVD

BY DOMENICO CRISCUOLO

We all know that prevention in medicine is the best way to help people at risk. The medical community embraces prevention in oncology, CNS, and diabetes. However, we must improve the preventive actions taken in approaching cardiovascular diseases (CVD), as these remain the leading cause of death in the western world.

There is an ongoing debate regarding the use of aspirin, one of the oldest drugs used, discovered in 1899, for the prevention of CVD.



The varying considerations around the use of aspirin include how to use it, when to use it, and who are the ideal patients to receive it. In addition to the linked article, the last in a long series of position papers commenting on the use of aspirin in the prevention of CVD, we have also solicited the input of a cardiologist who serves on the Academy's Board. Look for part 2 in this series about prevention for his comments. In the meantime, [read more here](#).

## NEW ZEALAND BANS TOBACCO FOR THOSE BORN IN 2009 AND AFTER



Tobacco use is linked with a number of health problems including COPD and lung cancer, and these negative health correlations are primary reasons why many countries are implementing measures to curtail tobacco use, especially in younger generations. In fact, in 2022, New Zealand banned tobacco to all people born after 2009 and was not the first country to adopt this approach. Denmark has already enacted this ban, and Malaysia is soon to follow suit.

While there are pros and cons to this approach, most people believe this experiment is worthwhile and could have success. According to an article published in the Lancet, "It is a massive experiment. We don't yet know how it will pan out. Much will depend on young people and how they make sense of the law," said Gerard Porter, Senior Lecturer in Medical Law and Ethics<sup>3</sup> at the University of Edinburgh. [Read more here](#).

# THE GLOBAL PURSUIT OF NEW COVID-19 VACCINES

BY DOMENICO CRISCUOLO

“Does the World Still Need New Covid-19 Vaccines?” is the title of an article from the New England Journal of Medicine and a matter scientists around the globe are actively exploring. The editorial looks at the publication of two large Phase III trials of two new Covid-19 vaccines, whose development was based on two new technology platforms: one is derived from a plant-based coronavirus-like particle vaccine, and the second one is a receptor-binding domain (RBD)-dimer-based vaccine.<sup>4</sup>

The authors emphasize that the world still needs new Covid-19 vaccines in order to cover infections due to new emerging variants and to offer a wider choice to sub-populations like immunocompromised patients, elderly people or pregnant women. [Continue reading here.](#)



## WHO SAYS 14.9 MILLION COVID DEATHS IN 2020-2021

It is not uncommon for Medical Affairs professionals to receive questions about the COVID-19 pandemic. Namely, the general public wants to know how many people died from the virus. Indeed, it is a difficult answer to pinpoint for multiple reasons: Not all countries have a reliable system for data collection, and some countries minimize their data to avoid negative global perceptions (see the WHO article regarding data from India). The WHO released an excellent analysis of all available data and reached a worldwide figure of nearly 15 million deaths.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, mankind paid a significant toll to this deadly pandemic.

[Click here to read the complete article.](#)

# BEHIND THE SCREEN SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JEAN FERREIRA

BY WHITNEY ENGLISH



The Academy is thrilled to kick off its Behind the Screen Academy News Series with an introduction to our newest team member, Jean Ferreira. Jean took some time out of his busy schedule to allow us the opportunity to get to know him a bit better, and we've shared his interview with you here. We are humbled to work alongside this dynamic professional. Welcome, Jean!



Jean Ferreira  
Business Development Executive



The Medical Affairs profession is evolving rapidly, and with the efforts of the Academy in training and developing these professionals, we will have a legion of experts properly prepared for the challenges of the profession, aware of their role and relevance in the market, and with a fantastic sense of purpose and professional identity.



## **How long have you been with the Academy?**

I started at the Academy in April of this year.

## **What does your job entail?**

I am responsible for the Academy's Business Development initiatives so that we can extend our reach and results globally.

## **What piqued your interest in the position and the Academy?**

The opportunity to join a new and constantly evolving organization that has clear ideals, focused on the development of people and the Medical Affairs profession, contributing to its expansion and growth in the global Medicines Development market.

## **Who is your biggest professional inspiration?**

My biggest professional inspiration are my parents, who in their careers never allowed barriers and challenges to stop them from achieving success, while contributing to the people and companies they worked for, growing together.

## **What's a typical day in the life of Jean Ferreira?**

A typical day in my life begins with planning activities, focusing on execution, and relentlessly striving for results.

[Click here to read the full interview.](#)

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