

Learnings from a MAPS 2026 Roundtable Discussion Hosted by CCC

At the MAPS 2026 meeting, CCC hosted a roundtable discussion focused on literature monitoring in medical affairs. Thirteen participants from thirteen companies joined the conversation, bringing a wide variety of perspectives shaped by company size, geographic footprint, therapeutic focus and organizational structure. The discussion also reflected global diversity, with participants from the United States, Brazil, and Japan.

Despite differences in organizational maturity, resources and therapeutic focus, the conversation quickly coalesced around a shared perspective that literature monitoring is mission-critical, but remains difficult to execute efficiently. Even with advances in search platforms, automation tools and artificial intelligence, many organizations continue to rely on highly manual workflows. These workflows are time consuming, difficult to scale, and prone to inconsistency, creating both operational burden and strategic risk.

This paper summarizes the key themes that emerged during the discussion, including the most pressing workflow challenges, evolving perspectives on AI, and copyright considerations.

The Mission-Critical Role of Literature Monitoring

Participants emphasized that literature monitoring supports a broad range of core activities. While many organizations historically associated literature monitoring primarily with safety surveillance or regulatory submissions, the discussion highlighted its expanding importance. Medical affairs teams rely on literature monitoring to support both reactive and proactive activities across the product lifecycle including:

- Supporting FDA and other regulatory submissions
- Monitoring clinical trials for competitor activity
- Responding to HCP inquiries
- Updating Standard Response Documents (SRDs) annually
- Addressing internal stakeholder questions
- Educating commercial teams on emerging data
- Preparing Medical Science Liaisons (MSLs) for interactions with HCPs
- Looking for data gaps to inform safety or strategy decisions

The wide scope of activities supported by literature monitoring reinforces that it's a foundational function supporting multiple stakeholders and key business activities. Several participants noted that their literature monitoring outputs feed into publications planning, field medical training, launch readiness, and lifecycle strategy.

The Current State is Manual and Resource Intensive

Despite its importance, participants described workflows that remain largely manual. Teams typically conduct weekly searches across databases, manually review results, and then curate relevant publications for distribution to stakeholders. Outputs are often formatted into spreadsheets, tables, or email summaries before dissemination.

Participants described this process as time-consuming and difficult to scale. In some organizations, a single individual is responsible for reviewing hundreds of search results each week. In others, multiple team members divide therapeutic areas or product responsibilities. Regardless of structure, the burden remains significant.

Participants noted that manual workflows can make it difficult to maintain continuity. For example, search strategies may differ across team members. Additionally, when individuals change roles or leave the organization, knowledge about search logic, keyword strategy, and distribution practices can be lost, creating operational risk.

Too Much Information, Not Enough Precision

Another major theme was the challenge of managing volume. Participants consistently reported receiving a large volume of search results, making it difficult to identify the most relevant publications efficiently. While teams aim to be comprehensive in order to avoid missing safety signals, the resulting output often includes a large portion of irrelevant content. While overly broad search strategies are often intentional in order to reduce risk, this approach increases operational burden.

Keyword Strategy Remains a Persistent Challenge

Closely related to volume is the challenge of developing effective keyword strategies. Participants reported that identifying the right search terms is difficult and often requires iterative refinement. As therapeutic areas evolve, new mechanisms emerge, and competitor pipelines change, ongoing updates to search logic must be managed.

Companies also differ in how they manage search governance. Some maintain centralized search strategies, while others allow teams to develop their own. In decentralized models, variability increases, and duplication of effort may occur.

This challenge is compounded by the variance in terminology. Identifying whether a publication relates to a specific product or competitor asset requires careful review.

Fragmented Technology Environments

Switching between multiple platforms was another commonly cited challenge. Teams often use different databases for journals, conference abstracts, clinical trials and internal

repositories. Moving between systems slows workflows and increases the likelihood of missed information.

Participants described copying results from one platform into another, manually consolidating outputs, and formatting information for dissemination. These time consuming steps add little strategic value, yet they remain necessary in many organizations.

The lack of integration between search, review, and dissemination tools also creates inefficiencies. Even when automation exists for search retrieval, downstream processes such as formatting tables or preparing summaries are often manual.

Keeping Pace with Publication Volume

Participants also emphasized the difficulty of staying current with the pace of new publications. With increasing numbers of journals, preprints, conference presentations, and real-world evidence outputs, the volume of literature continues to grow.

The growth places additional pressure on teams to review and share information quickly. Delays in dissemination can reduce the value of insights, particularly in competitive therapeutic areas where new data emerge frequently.

Some participants noted that stakeholders expect near real-time updates, while existing workflows are structured around weekly or monthly cycles. This mismatch creates tension and highlights the need for more efficient approaches.

Hope for the Future: Automation and Integration (and AI)

When discussing future improvements, participants consistently expressed interest in greater automation. Specifically, they highlighted the potential benefits of:

- Reducing manual screening effort
- Minimizing human error
- Allowing natural language search capabilities
- Streamlining formatting and dissemination
- Creating end-to-end workflows from search to communication

Participants described an ideal state in which it's less time consuming to identify, categorize and distribute content to stakeholders – but keeping a human in the loop at all stages. In this vision, outputs could feed directly into presentations, briefing documents and training materials.

Several participants also expressed interest in tools that could organize information thematically, identify trends and highlight potential data gaps. Such capabilities would shift literature monitoring from a reactive task to a more strategic activity.

Divided Perspectives on AI

The conversation around artificial intelligence revealed mixed sentiment. Some expressed skepticism, citing concerns about accuracy and reliability. The phrase “garbage in, garbage out” was used to describe the risks. Another participant voiced that their headquarters is skeptical about AI adoption due to confidentiality and security concerns.

At the same time, several participants felt some individual tools were helpful in specific workflows and targeted use cases. One example discussed involved transforming literature summaries into alternative formats. After conducting a literature review and preparing content, teams can upload materials to a tool that uses AI to create an audio podcast for MSLs. This allows field teams to consume information in a format that fits their workflow, such as listening during travel.

This example illustrates how AI may provide value in downstream communication rather than primary search. Participants generally appeared more comfortable using AI to enhance dissemination rather than to replace core monitoring processes due to the black box nature of most AI.

Overall, the group’s perspective suggested cautious optimism. AI is seen as promising, but organizations require greater transparency, governance and validation before wider adoption can take place.

Copyright Compliance Considerations

Copyright emerged as another important topic. Because literature monitoring involves handling published content, often across multiple stakeholders, copyright is a key consideration. However, understanding of how to compliantly share content was limited across organizations. While many in the room had a strong grasp on copyright rules, the group felt that their broader teams would benefit from a deeper understanding.

Some participants noted uncertainty about what content can be shared internally versus externally. Others highlighted questions about storing full-text articles, distributing excerpts, or incorporating figures into presentations.

The group agreed that broader teams would benefit from greater awareness of copyright requirements, including understanding licensing agreements, appropriate sharing practices, and compliance considerations when using automated tools.

As literature monitoring becomes more automated and integrated into broader workflows, these considerations become even more important. Promoting compliance must remain a priority as new technologies including AI tools are introduced.

Moving from Operational Burden to Strategic Capability

The themes from this roundtable highlight a critical inflection point. Literature monitoring is widely recognized as essential, yet many organizations still rely on workflows that are manual, fragmented, and difficult to scale.

At the same time, emerging technologies—particularly AI—offer opportunities to transform how literature is identified, analyzed, and disseminated. However, adoption requires careful governance, validation, and stakeholder alignment.

Medical affairs leaders have an opportunity to reposition literature monitoring from an operational burden to a strategic capability. By investing in process improvement, exploring automation, and strengthening compliance awareness, organizations can improve efficiency while enhancing the value of insights.

As publication volume continues to grow and stakeholder expectations increase, the importance of effective literature monitoring will only expand. Organizations that proactively evolve their approaches will be better positioned to deliver timely, accurate, and actionable scientific intelligence.

The MAPS 2026 roundtable demonstrated that while challenges remain, there is strong interest in innovation and collaboration. With thoughtful leadership and incremental progress, literature monitoring can move beyond manual workflows toward a more integrated and strategic future.

Leadership Imperatives for Medical Affairs Organizations

1. Engage in Shaping the Future

Participants emphasized the importance of medical affairs leaders actively participating in AI governance and technology strategy discussions. Rather than waiting for enterprise decisions, medical affairs teams should help shape how tools are evaluated and implemented.

Engagement may include participation in governance committees, pilot programs, or cross-functional working groups. By contributing domain expertise, medical affairs leaders can ensure that solutions address real-world workflow needs.

2. Avoid Waiting for a “Magic Wand”

Companies should not wait for a single transformative solution. Instead, organizations should explore incremental improvements and emerging capabilities. Many vendors continue to release new features that can improve efficiency without requiring full workflow transformation.

Teams should regularly engage with technology partners, review roadmap updates, and test new capabilities. Even small improvements—such as automated tagging or improved search filtering—can reduce workload.

This iterative approach allows organizations to evolve gradually while maintaining compliance and stakeholder confidence.

3. Address Compliance and Awareness Gaps

Finally, participants highlighted the importance of strengthening compliance awareness related to literature monitoring. This includes copyright considerations, appropriate sharing practices, and governance for AI tools.

Leadership can support this effort by developing guidance, providing training, and establishing clear policies. Proactive education reduces risk and enables teams to adopt new tools with confidence.

Thank you

We had participation from 13 medical affairs professionals. We'd like to offer our thanks to all of them for the candor and insights. Participants included:

Cindy Gode, Structure Therapeutics

Lucas Poiani, Edwards Lifesciences

Maya Morrison, Baxter Healthcare

Shawn Jeng, Ono Pharmaceutical

Bukola Oladokun, Xeris Pharmaceuticals

Lara Facó, Libbs Pharmaceutical