"I Want to Be Open, But How Can I?:" Publication Habits and Perceptions of Open Access Amongst Clinical & Research Fellows

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Introduction

Open Access publishing rates have risen dramatically in many disciplines within the past decade, including the biomedical sciences. Previous studies have assessed the Open Access publication rates of scientific researchers, but few have focused specifically on the publishing activities of early career researchers and trainees.

The aim of this study was to examine the current publishing activities of clinical and research fellows at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC), as well as perceptions of Open Access publishing amongst this population.

Methods

Publication (n=1489) data authored by clinical and research MSKCC fellows (n=218) between 2013-2018 were collected via an in-house author profile and publication system (Synapse) and citation indexes (Scopus and Web of Science).

Interviews were conducted with 15 MSKCC fellows to discern their perceptions of open access publishing. Interview responses were transcribed and thematically coded.

Results

The total number of publications was 1489. The total number of publications that were currently available Open Access was 28.6% (n=426). The journal publication model with the most publications represented was Hybrid, at 77.5% (n=1146).

The rate of publications that were available Open Access remained relatively flat between 2013-2018.

Conclusions

While the fellows in this study acknowledged the potential of Open Access to aid in research dissemination, they also expressed hesitation to publish Open Access. Despite on-going educational and advocacy efforts of Open Access proponents, including information professionals, misconceptions regarding Open Access publishing persist. This confusion, coupled with the pressure to publish in well-established, high impact journals, means early career researchers face unique challenges in navigating the scholarly publishing landscape.

References


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