

# "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<sup>1,2</sup> 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

Fellows in this study represented 13 MSK clinical and research specialties.

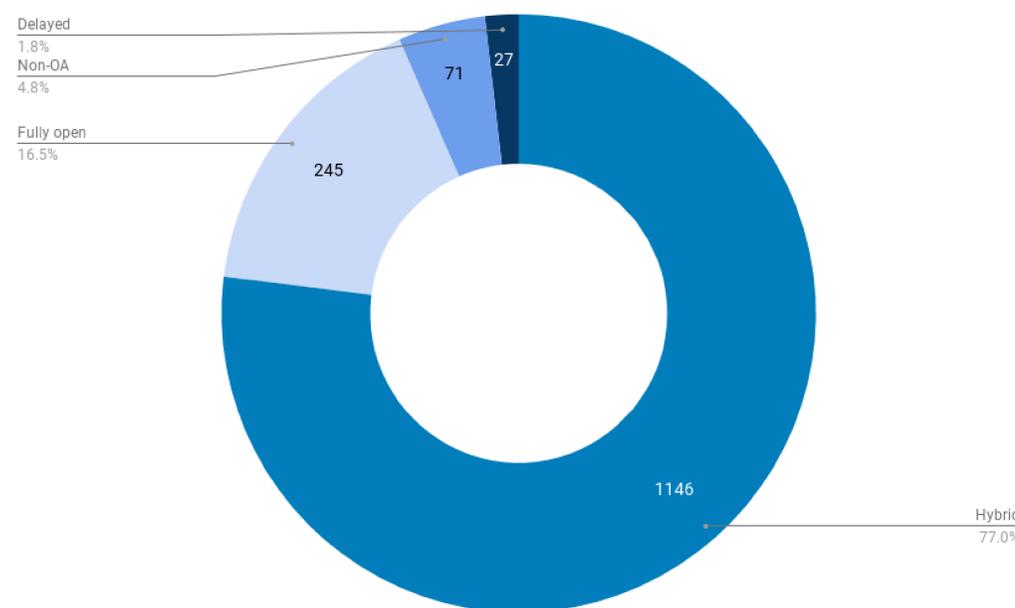
### MSK Fellows by Clinical and Research Specialties

■ Medicine (33.49%) ■ Surgery (20.64%) ■ Pathology (14.66%) ■ Radiology (7.34%) ■ Pediatrics (6.88%)  
■ Anesthesiology & Critical Care (4.13%) ■ Urology (4.13%) ■ Neurology (3.21%) ■ Psychiatry (2.75%)  
■ Laboratory Medicine (0.92%) ■ Neurosurgery (0.92%) ■ Psychiatric Behavioral ... (0.46%) ■ Radiation Oncology (0.46%)



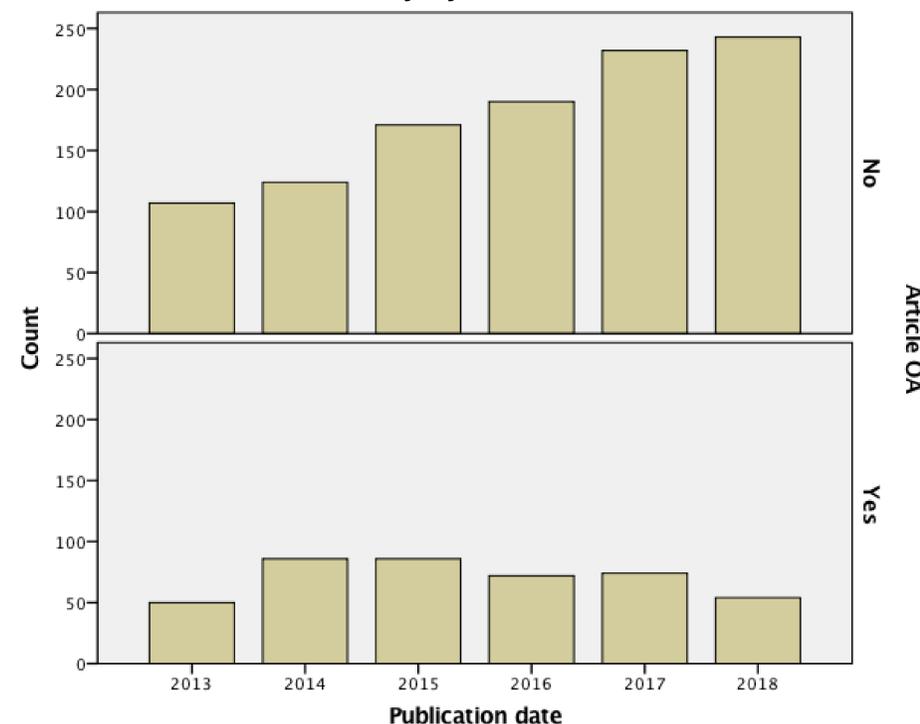
The total number of publications was 1489. The total number of publications that were currently available Open Access was 28.6% (n=426). The journal publication model with the most publications represented was Hybrid, at 77.5% (n=1146).

### Publications by Availability



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

### Publication Availability by Year



A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between first authorship and whether or not a fellow's publication was currently available Open Access. The relation between these variables was not significant,  $X^2(1) = 1.941, p=0.184$ .

Fellows cited high Author Processing Charges and perceived lack of journal quality/prestige as barriers to Open Access publishing.

## 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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