

HRB Position Statement in Support of Open and Unrestricted Access to Published Research (Open Access)

Background

The Health Research Board (HRB) funds a wide range of health-related research in approved host institutions, with the aim of improving human health. The main output of this research is new ideas and knowledge, which the HRB expects its researchers, both clinical and non-clinical, to publish in quality, peer reviewed journals. The HRB has a fundamental interest in ensuring that the availability and accessibility of this material is not adversely affected by the copyright, marketing and distribution strategies used by publishers (whether commercial, not for profit or academic).

Position Statement

The HRB supports the principle that ideas and knowledge derived from publicly-funded research should be made available and accessible for public use, interrogation and scrutiny, as widely, rapidly and effectively as practicable. Such published research output must be subject to rigorous quality assurance through effective peer review mechanisms. With advances in internet publishing, the HRB seeks to encourage initiatives that broaden the range of opportunities for quality research to be widely disseminated and freely accessible.

Therefore:

1. The HRB strongly encourages authors of research papers to maximize the opportunities to make their results freely available, and where possible, to ensure that copyright is retained by their employer or institution.
2. The HRB requests the deposition, in PubMed Central (PMC) or other recognised Open-Access repository, of electronic copies of any research papers that have been accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and are supported in whole or part by HRB funding.
3. If author/institution-ownership of copyright is not permitted by the publisher, the HRB would encourage authors to publish in journals that permit the deposition of published papers in PubMed Central (PMC) or other recognised Open-Access repository.
4. The HRB strongly encourages authors to make freely available those papers as soon as possible after the journal's official date of publication, taking into account any embargo period imposed by the publisher.
5. This position statement applies to peer-reviewed, original research publications that have been supported, in whole or part, by the HRB. This position statement does not apply to book chapters, editorials, book reviews or conference proceedings.

General guidance relating to this position statement can be found in the *HRB Guidelines for Public Access to Archived Publications Resulting from HRB-funded Research (Open Access)*. Please refer these guidelines for more information on how to be Open Access compliant and for links to the current policies of major publishing houses and journals.

This position statement owes much to the Wellcome Trust Position Statement in support of Open Access¹ and the Medical Research Council Policy on Open Access².

¹ Wellcome Trust (2007). Position Statement in support of open and unrestricted access to published research. http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/print/wtd002766_print.html [Accessed 16/11/2007].

² Medical Research Council (2007). Policy and guidance: Open access publishing. <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/PolicyGuidance/EthicsAndGovernance/OpenAccessPublishingandArchiving/index.htm> [Accessed 16/7/2007].