Open Medical Education
Azad Mashari (azad.mashari@utoronto.ca) & Warren Luksun, Department of Anesthesia, University of Toronto

Can ugc and open access do for medical knowledge what Wikipedia has done for general information?

The ability to access, study, and build upon previous work is at the core of innovation. We stand on the shoulders of giants. Medical research and education are no exception.

Currently, most refined medical knowledge is available via read-only access via pay-for-access journals and collections. These limitations impair collaboration, new research enterprise, and knowledge dissemination ultimately. Knowledge translation fails to deliver maximal benefit to patients.

Inspired by public knowledge projects such as Wikipedia, researchers and educators are increasingly releasing their work under open access licenses. This paradigm can unleash a vast source of untapped creativity and knowledge to improve knowledge translation, medical innovation, and care on a global scale.

Pen Medicine: The Present

Research

There are currently over 400 open access medical journals, including Open Medicine and PLoS journals. OA journals in anesthesiology and related specialties include: BMC Anesthesiology, Critical Care, Open Anesthesiology Journal, Patient Safety in Surgery, Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine, Anesthesiology Research and Practice and Applied Cardiopulmonary Pathophysiology.

Reviews to date suggest that articles in OA journals are cited more quickly and more frequently than those published in non-OA journals. [Reference: 1. Plsek 2008 Narrative review]

Reference

Various medical reference projects are underway including the Wikipedia Medicine Portal, Medpedia.com, Radiopedia.org, and GANFYD.org. Cardioworks (Holland) hosts several growing sites including ECGpedia.org, PCPedia.org and EchoPedia.org.

PubMed Health, a project of the National Library of Medicine, provides open access reviews for health care professionals. The reviews include summaries for the general public.

Education

Currently there are few completely OA educational resources such as International Anesthesia Society's OpenAnesthesia.org or e-Mededucation.org. Most other resources allow no-free access but restrict reuse and modification of works to various extents. Examples include: ClinicalCases.org, a rich collection of case discussions, medical news and images; ECGlibrary.com and EMedu.org's ECG interpretation tutorials, and University Health Network's Perioperative Interactive Education a growing collection of sophisticated teaching simulations.

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