

# Research Communication in the age of COVID-19

Antoine Bocquet

Managing Director, Springer Nature (Japan),

Vice President, Institutional Sales for Japan, Southeast Asia and Oceania

\*E-mail: [antoine.bocquet@springernature.com](mailto:antoine.bocquet@springernature.com); +81-(0)3 4533-8091

Key words: Research Publications, Preprints, In Review, Bronze OA

Between January and October 2020, over 170,000 research publications related to COVID-19 have been published by almost 16,000 organizations<sup>1</sup>. This represents 3.6% of total research output and 14% of Medical and Health research output during this period. 17% of all COVID-19 research output has been in the form of preprints. COVID-19 researchers have embraced preprints as a form of publication that can

garner credit for early research findings, generate global feedback through non-traditional channels such as social media, and generate visibility and citations for their research.

Although the growth of preprints can assist the rapid open dissemination of important COVID-19 results and provide a forum for discussion outside traditional peer review, preprints may be misunderstood by the media and general public to have the same standing as peer reviewed studies, potentially promoting poor quality science. The increase in preprints also places a burden on the peer review system. In general, it is found that preprints with high impact rapidly are published as high impact articles.

At this time, 80% of all COVID-19 articles are free to access in some form<sup>1</sup>. Since the start of the pandemic, publishers such as Springer Nature have provided free access (“Bronze OA”) to large amounts of COVID-19 related content. Pure Gold OA COVID-19 articles account for 20% of all COVID-19 articles, only slightly higher than the global average of 17%. As the pandemic progresses an increasing number of articles are appearing in non-OA formats emphasizing the importance of Gold OA publishing for future rapid dissemination.

## References

- 1) COVID-19 Report: Publications, Clinical Trials, Funding <https://reports.dimensions.ai/covid-19/>

