

In Which Journals Do Active Researchers of Palliative Care Publish Their Articles?

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Dear Editor:

The final question that a researcher asks once his or her work is completed is "which journal should I send this article to?" It is recommended that researchers publish their articles in one of the 3,700 leading world scientific journals that are included in the Science Citation Index (SCI); the highest impact factor (IF) is specified according to the Journal of Citation Report, with the higher position specified within its subcategory, Journal. There are criticisms relating to the equity, opportunity, and interest of measure¹ research within these criteria, but evaluation agencies constantly seek to obtain this quality indicator in order to compare curricula for professional promotion or in the competition for grants. Ultimately, researchers, like any other human beings, must make an income from their work, and the prestige emanating from these classifications may be important in enabling them to achieve that. Our research question could therefore be of relevance to many professional groups.

The objective of this work is to identify in the journals in which the most active palliative care researchers have published their works in the last three years. In order to find out who these active researchers are, we selected the authors that contributed in excess of six abstracts to one or both of the European Association of Palliative Care Research Congresses, which took place in Venetia² and Trondheim³ (2006 and 2008, respectively). Then, we searched the SCI in order to obtain references from the work of these researchers between 2007 and 2009. From the SCI references, we ranked the journals by frequency, noting both the 2008 IF and the best quartile position within the category of each journal.

We found the 28 most active researchers in the last two European Research Congresses. These authors contributed 516 references in 119 different SCI journals during the last three years (Table 1). In Table 2 we demonstrate the distribution by journal: 232 of the articles (45%) belong to five main journals of the Health Care Science and Service category: *Palliative Medicine* (18%), *Journal of Palliative Care* (13%), *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* (12%), *Journal of Palliative Medicine* (7%), and *Supportive Care in Cancer* (5%). It is also important to emphasize the contribution of palliative care researchers to journals classified within the category of Oncology: 72 articles (14%) were published in journals included in this category. Other categories where in excess of three

articles were published include anesthesia, health care science, general medicine, neurology, nursing, pharmacology, psychology and public environmental and occupational

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED BY MOST ACTIVE RESEARCHERS IN SCIENCE CITATION INDEX JOURNALS BETWEEN 2007 AND 2009

Researcher	Contributions in last two European Research Conferences	Articles in Journal of Science Citation Index, 2007-2009	
		n	%
Stein Kaasa	32	38	7
Luc Deliens	29	45	9
Lucas Radbruch	21	24	5
Declan Walsh	18	15	3
Jon Havard Loge	17	19	4
Sheyla Payne	17	14	3
Julia Addington-Hall	16	20	4
David Currow	14	34	7
Gerrit Van der Wal	13	32	6
Mellar Davis	12	12	2
Friedemann Nauck	12	10	2
Robin Fainsinger	11	21	4
Scott Murray	11	12	2
Marie Fallon	10	16	3
Sophie Pautex	10	10	2
Florian Strasser	10	17	3
Eduardo Bruera	9	59	11
Carlos Centeno	9	10	2
David Clark	9	11	2
Franco De Conno	9	6	1
Amy Abernethy	8	2	0
Richard Harding	8	18	3
Lesley Colvin	7	9	2
Irene Higginson	7	43	8
Javier Rocafort	7	3	1
Claudia Mazzocato	6	2	1
Carla Ripamonti	6	9	2
Carla Stiles	6	5	0
Total	344	516	100

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TABLE 2. JOURNALS WHERE RESEARCHERS OF PALLIATIVE CARE PUBLISH THEIR WORKS

<i>Journal of Science Citation Index</i>	<i>Category in journal citation report</i>	<i>2008 impact factor</i>	<i>Position (quartile) in category</i>	<i>Articles 2007-2009 N (%)</i>
<i>Palliative Medicine</i>	Health care science & service	1,874	Q2	94 (18)
<i>Journal of Palliative Care</i>	Health care science & service	0,985	Q4	15 (3)
<i>Journal of Pain and Symptom Management</i>	Health care science & service	2,601	Q1	62 (12)
<i>Journal of Palliative Medicine Supportive Care in Cancer</i>	Health care science & service	1,909	Q2	35 (7)
<i>Journal of Clinical Oncology</i>	Health care science & service	2,422	Q1	26 (5)
<i>Psycho-Oncology</i>	Oncology	17,157	Q1	17 (3)
<i>European Journal of Cancer</i>	Oncology	3,150	Q2	3 (1)
<i>Annals of Oncology</i>	Oncology	4,475	Q2	12 (2)
OTHER <i>Journal of Oncology</i>	Oncology	4,935	Q1	8 (2)
OTHER JOURNALS	Oncology	–	–	35 (7)
				209 (41)

health. Looking at IF, a significant number of papers were published in many of the leading journals in the field: for example, 17 articles were published in *Journal of Clinical Oncology* with IF 17,157.

In summary, five journals were the main target of the palliative care researchers (these journals had an IF less than three; however, two of them were in the first quartile of the category). These journals reflected the largest contribution of palliative care research⁴ and it is worth noting that the best palliative care researchers chose these journals for the diffusion of new knowledge. Furthermore, one half of the journal articles were disseminated in a huge number of journals (especially oncology ones) and this may be a further area of opportunity for publication by other palliative care researchers. Finally, the specialties of geriatrics and internal medicine are at the bottom of the categories; it can therefore be assumed that palliative care research may be closely aligned with the specialty of oncology.

Author Disclosure Statement

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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