



# The democratization of knowledge in clinical nutrition

## *La democratización del conocimiento en nutrición clínica*

### *A democratização do conhecimento em nutrição clínica*

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Science is a common good. However, there are multiple barriers to access scientific results. The main barrier is the economic one. For example, to access an article published in an indexed journal on the Internet, the author and the reader must pay an average of 40 dollars. In the case of universities, libraries, scientific societies and other academic institutions, they must pay significant sums for subscriptions to the publishing groups that monopolize access to knowledge.

This situation is a reflection of a paradox. In the information age driven by a knowledge economy of global dimensions, and where Internet access has facilitated the democratization of knowledge, universities cannot fully access their own research output. Even the best libraries of leading research universities cannot afford to provide access to everything. Journals are too expensive, even though there are more and more of them every day. Publishers have made the dissemination of scientific knowledge one of the biggest businesses: Elsevier, Springer and Taylor and Francis control 60 percent of publications with annual profits of millions<sup>(1)</sup>. These companies become intellectual owners, making significant economic profits from the work of authors, their institutions, and the money of funding organizations. Authors and institutions are left with the prestige of publication, a commodity that is difficult to quantify. What is at stake is, ultimately, the democratization of

scientific knowledge. According to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, knowledge frees us from the conventional social and institutional determinisms that underpin the logics of domination and inequality. For this reason, the democratization of knowledge is fundamental for the construction of societies.

Faced with the domination and monopoly of publishing companies, at the beginning of the 1990s, the academic community mobilized by proposing the Open Access system. This initiative leads to an integral modification in the science communication system. There are three international declarations that have defined and set the tone for this model: the Budapest 2002, Bethesda 2003 and Berlin 2003 declarations. In 2015, the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (Redalyc) defines it as: "An international movement whose objective is that any person in the world, with an Internet connection, may freely access without any economic, technical or legal restriction scientific, academic and cultural information".

Open Access is a model that allows access to and use of scientific information at no cost to the user. In short, it favors the democratization of knowledge. Although this model has also generated controversy, it is a question of increasing the impact of research by increasing access to it. In this model intellectual property exists, but the use is free. In other words, the reader is authorized to download, read, copy, distribute, print and link to complete articles without prior permission from the publisher or author, provided that the integrity of the published work is not altered and its authors are adequately referenced and cited each time the publication is used. This model does not imply that it is completely free. Certain jour-

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nals charge authors between 500 and 2500 euros for the publication of articles.

Mikael Laakso et al. point out that between 2005 and 2009, after a so-called pioneering stage (1993-1999) and an innovation stage (2000-2004), the Open Access model was consolidated. In these years of “consolidation” the number of journals and articles has continued to increase, (today there are more than 4 million journals in this system) and the infrastructure for publishing support was developed and established. Thus, the Open Journal System (OJS) was developed at the initiative of The Public Knowledge Project’s which brought together several universities to develop open source software (free of charge) and facilitate Open Access<sup>(3)</sup>. This system applies to peer-reviewed journals, facilitating the technical infrastructure not only for the online presentation of journal articles but also for the entire process. This includes article submission, peer review, editorial decisions and indexing.

This model is gaining strength every day as scientists emerge from inertia and become aware that there are also excellent quality journals published in Open Access and that copyright and publication are fundamental. In Europe, where the majority of research funds are public, Science Europe has been promoting, since September 2018, the Plan S initiative whose main demand is that by 2020 the research funded by public subsidy should be published in journals or open access platforms<sup>(4)</sup>.

It is a pleasure for us to present the fourth issue (2019;2(2)) of the Journal of Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism, the first to be published on the OJS platform in Open Access. The transfer of the Journal to this platform responds to the need to comply with current requirements in terms of scientific publications for national and international indexing. We will continue to publish with the Open Access model to allow full access at no cost to the reader, academic and funding institutions, libraries or the author. This is achieved thanks to the efforts of Dr. Charles Bermudez, president of the ACNC and its Board of Directors to seek the necessary resources for its funding. May this be the opportunity to thank you for the trust you have placed in me and which

has allowed me to take the Journal, two years later, to the OJS platform and its availability in various databases.

However, the main challenge of this type of publication, where neither the reader nor the author pays, is sustainability. We are convinced that the ACNC will continue to be strengthened and consolidated, so that through its affiliates, academic activities and commercial guidelines the necessary resources are obtained to maintain the Journal of Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism with the highest scientific quality, elevated ethical standard and great transparency. This effort is a reflection of the principles and clear policy of the ACNC to develop research and education in clinical nutrition.

Indexing in other databases and classification in Publindex (National Bibliographic Index of Colombia, under the umbrella of Colciencias) will be the challenges of 2020.

Thus, the OJS platform allows the Journal to have a better digital visualization and a better editorial management at the same time that it allows us to comply with the numerous demands of Publindex and other indexing systems.

We are convinced that science is a common asset, and access to scientific results, a right. Consequently, the editorial team of the Review and the NACC are committed to promoting democratisation of knowledge in the name of the progress of the science of clinical nutrition.

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