



Institute of Public Health in Ireland

Open Access Statement

October 2013

This document states the Institute of Public Health in Ireland's (IPH) commitment to an Open Access policy and outlines how it implements that policy.

Institute of Public Health in Ireland

IPH promotes cooperation for public health between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland by:

- strengthening public health intelligence;
- building public health capacity;
- supporting policy and programme development and evaluation.

We work with a range of partners to bring people and organisations from across the island together to promote collective action for sustained improvements in health. IPH promotes health and wellbeing on the island of Ireland by supporting evidence-informed decision making. Tackling inequalities in health by addressing the social determinants of health is a focus for all our work.

IPH is committed to promoting free, unrestricted, timely online access to its publications and other information for the benefit of public health.

What is Open Access?

Technological advances in internet publishing provide many opportunities to bring information to wider audiences who can apply it in new and innovative ways.

Open Access to information is defined as:

“The free availability of research on the public internet; permitting any users to:

- read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of articles;*
- crawl them for indexing and pass them as data to software; and*
- use them for any other lawful purpose;*

without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.

The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright, in this domain should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited” (1).

Open Access and public health

Public health is defined as

"the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society."

Sir Donald Acheson, 1988

Public health encompasses interdisciplinary approaches to health and wellbeing. It promotes healthy behaviours and supports communities and environments to improve health and reduce health inequalities.

Access to the most up-to-date health information is a key determinant of health and wellbeing for individuals, families, communities and places. It is necessary to support the development of effective healthy public policy and practice, clinical practice and health and social services management.

IPH believes that the current unequal access to information, particularly amongst community and voluntary sector organisations working with disadvantaged groups, contributes to existing social and health inequalities. Making information more broadly available will make a significant contribution to tackling these inequalities.

How the IPH will implement its Open Access policy

IPH was an original signatory to the Republic of Ireland's [National Principles for Open Access Policy Statement](#) and we adopt the common principles it sets out:

- The freedom to publish where most appropriate
- To increase the visibility of, and improve access to the outputs of research
- To support the free flow of information across national and international research communities; to support the principle of research-enabled teaching.

IPH is a member of the National Steering Committee on Open Access Policy which works to promote unrestricted, online access to wholly or partially State funded research and supports international developments on Open Access led by the European Commission, Science Europe and other international agencies.

As it has done since it was established, IPH will continue to provide free and open access to its reports, policy consultations and other materials through its websites, at its events and its other activities.

IPH will continue to develop and manage a health information website called [The Health Well](#) which brings together and provides free access to a wide range of other health-related information held by our partner organisations.

IPH will continue to actively advocate for Open Access policy across the island of Ireland and support the development of necessary research and information infrastructure.