



National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892  
[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

DATE: February 3, 2005

TO: All NIH Extramural Scientists and Research Institutions with Active NIH Support

FROM: Director, NIH

SUBJECT: NIH Policy on Enhancing Public Access to Archived Publications Resulting from NIH-Funded Research

The research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is essential to improving human health. Public access to this research is vital – today and for generations to come. Therefore, the NIH is committed to preserving permanently peer-reviewed research publications resulting from NIH-funded research. This powerful archive will also assist NIH in managing its research portfolios, monitoring scientific productivity more efficiently, and ultimately, helping inform research priorities.

To ensure these benefits, I have issued an NIH Public Access Policy. It was published in the *NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts* on February 3, 2005 (<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-022.html>), and will appear in the *Federal Register* in the near future. Additional relevant information, including Questions and Answers and details regarding implementation of this Policy, is available at the following Web site: <http://www.nih.gov/about/publicaccess/index.htm>.

This Policy applies to all research grant and career development award mechanisms, cooperative agreements, contracts, and Institutional and Individual Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards, as well as NIH intramural research studies.

The Policy requests that beginning May 2, 2005, NIH-funded investigators submit to the NIH National Library of Medicine's PubMed Central (PMC) an electronic version of the author's final manuscript, upon acceptance for publication, resulting from research supported in whole or in part with direct costs from NIH. The author's final manuscript is defined as the final version accepted for journal publication, and includes all modifications from the publishing peer review process. These manuscripts will be preserved permanently in the PMC archive for use by the public, health care providers, educators, scientists, and NIH.

This NIH Public Access Policy is the result of NIH's consideration of the more than 6,000 comments received in response to a policy proposed in September 2004 (<http://www.nih.gov/about/publicaccess/index.htm>). The most significant change in the final policy is to provide authors with greater flexibility to specify when their final manuscript will be made available to the public through PMC. The draft policy proposed

that manuscripts would be made publicly available 6 months after final publication in a journal. After considering public comments both from those who advocated faster release and from those concerned with potential negative impact on certain types of journals, NIH decided to provide a more flexible approach to allow authors to determine the time of public release ranging from immediately to 12 months after final publication in a journal.

The Policy requests that authors designate public release as soon as possible. NIH strongly encourages authors and institutions to exercise their right to inform publishers, and if necessary specify in any copyright transfer agreement, that the author or institution retains the right to provide their manuscripts to PMC for public accessibility as soon as possible after journal publication. NIH expects that only in limited cases will authors deem it necessary to select the longest delay period.

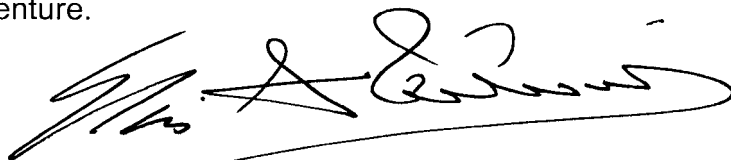
Please note that the submission of the final peer-reviewed manuscript to PMC provides an alternate means of fulfilling the current NIH requirement to provide a copy of each publication in progress reports. With your approval, the author's final manuscript submitted to PMC will be available to your assigned NIH program official(s) prior to the time you specify for public accessibility. This will allow us to manage more efficiently NIH's research portfolios and understand more about your research.

To further support the implementation of this Policy, PMC will provide a secure Web site for you to log in, deposit, and manage your manuscript(s). You can deposit manuscripts created in a wide range of electronic word-processing formats, along with any other files containing figures, tables, or supporting information. (Special arrangements will be available for unique circumstances.) No further formatting of your manuscript, beyond that required by the accepting journal, will be necessary. A PDF receipt will be generated for you to verify that all content has been received before it is converted to a standardized digital format in XML. After conversion to XML, you will be able to preview the article as it will appear in PMC. The article will appear in PMC after the time delay you specified, based on the publisher's official date of final publication.

Information for submitting authors can be found at <http://nihms.nih.gov>. This site will provide more details as they become available, including model language specifying authors' and institutions' rights to submit manuscripts to PMC.

We strongly encourage you to submit your final manuscripts to PMC to ensure the permanent preservation of vital published research findings. Given the critical importance of this Policy, NIH is establishing a Public Access Advisory Working Group to advise us on our progress in meeting the goals of the NIH Public Access Policy.

I wish you great success in all your research endeavors and look forward to your participation in this exciting new venture.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elias A. Zerhouni', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D.