I'm guessing that we hear from a small percentage of the students who can't access the full text online.

Are people reading OA articles? Not only are scholars reading the articles, but they are citing those articles in their publications. Consider the Public Library of Science’s *PLoS One* (http://www.plosone.org/home.action), a peer-reviewed, open-access, online publication that features reports on primary research from all disciplines within science and medicine. In June 2010, *PLoS One* received its first impact factor of 4.351—an impressive number. That impact factor puts *PLoS One* in the top 25 percent of the Institute for Scientific Information’s (ISI) biology category. The impact factor is calculated annually by ISI and represents the average number of citations received per paper published in that journal during the two preceding years. In other words, articles from *PLoS One* published in 2008 and 2009 were highly cited.

Is OA making an impact in my medical library? I believe it is, although I won’t be happy until our students can access the online journals they want from off campus and the library won’t have to pay outrageous licensing fees. We have more than one thousand online OA journal titles in our list of online journals. The more full text they can access, the less they’ll have to settle for their second or third choice because their first choice is not available online.

I’m glad that LITA members included OA in their strategic plan. The number of OA journals is increasing, and I believe we will continue to see that the articles are reaching readers and making a difference. I don’t think ITAL will be adopting the “author pays” model of OA, but the editorial board is dedicated to providing LITA members with the access they want.

Interlibrary loans or pay-per-view are often offered by publishers as the solution to the access problem, but this misses an essential fact of how we use the scientific literature: We browse. It is often impossible to tell from looking at an abstract whether a paper contains needed methodological detail or the perfect illustration to make a point to one’s students. Apart from considerations of cost, time, and quality, interlibrary loans and pay-per-views simply do not meet the needs of those of us who often do not know what we’re looking for until we find it.2

I want our medical students and tomorrow’s doctors to have access to all of the most current medical research. We offer the service of providing *JAMA* articles to students, but

## References


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