Oliva’s Guide to NIH’s Public Access Policy

PubMed and PubMed Central PMC hold different information, and therefore the PMID and the PMCID are different numbers.  Both PubMed and PubMed Central are part of NIH’s **NCBI** National Center for Biotechnical Information, and the National Library of Medicine NLM.

**PubMed** has been around since 1996 [was called Medline before 1996] and is a free index (technically it is search engine) for journal citations and abstracts, but not the full text article. As you know, you use PubMed to search for these articles by specific topic, author(s), PMID if you know it, by institution, or by grant number (if grant was acknowledged). If an article is published in one of the thousands of biomedical journals indexed by PubMed/Medline it is automatically assigned the PMID number.

PubMed is not a database so it does not contain a copy of the full text article (tho many citations are linked to the full text elsewhere). Most publishers want readers to pay to read their articles. We at the University of Iowa have the benefit of the $4 million subscription Hardin Library pays to link UIowa readers using the Hardin’s PubMed site and the PubMed citation/abstract to the full text electronic article from the publishers’ sites. If we were searching PubMed from the public library or from home (not logged in to UIowa), we would not be able to link to most these articles in their full text form.

Soooo Congress declared since taxpayers pay for the NIH research, we taxpayers should be able to see the full article and not just the citation/abstract. That’s why the **NIH Public access policy/law** and **PubMed Central** came about in 2007. Now it is a legal requirement of the NIH grant owner, to make all peer-reviewed articles accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal after April 7, 2008, and directly funded by NIH funds, to be freely available/viewable in the NIH’s full text database called **PubMed Central PMC** (if the article is available in another free database, it does not count—must be PMC). The article is assigned the PMCID to indicate it is in the PMC database (a copy of the article is actually in the PMC database rather than linked to the publisher’s site). The article must be made viewable to the public in PMC within a year of the publication date (in print). Publishers often request embargo/delay for up to 12 months from date of publication (print) before the article is freely available/viewable to the public in PubMedCentral PMC—but the article ~~can be~~, ~~should~~ **must** be IN the PubMed Central database (but embargoed=not viewable) as soon as possible ***after acceptance***, so the authors get the PMCID number to include with the citation for progress reports, since lack of the PMCID on NIH-funded research articles indicates the paper is not IN the PMC database and may hold up release of renewal funding for the grant.  PMC honors the embargo so there is no reason to not get the manuscript into the NIHMS-PMC system right after acceptance.

Ok---so far so good. Now also know the system where the manuscript is uploaded and converted to the format used in PubMed Central PMC is called the **NIH Manuscript Submission system NIHMS**. This is where the manuscript is uploaded often by the publisher, since many publishers (Wiley, Elsevier, LWW, Springer) upload as a service to the authors **if NIH funding is acknowledged**—though also good idea to request they do this-- since the publishers really do not like the NIH public access policy because they feel it costs them subscription income. [*NOTE: when the publishers upload the manuscript as a service to the authors, one of the authors is designated the corresponding author and will receive an email from NIHMS-Help requesting he/she approve the initial PDF receipt to get the manuscript moving in the NIHMS-PMC system—an author must  go through all the steps of this initial approval otherwise it never gets past the first stage in the NIHMS-PMC system.]* If the publisher does not upload the manuscript, one of the authors can upload the manuscript  (not the .pdf of the article as it appears in the journal since that is the property of the journal). You can generally find the publisher/journal’s policy toward NIH public access by using google to find the journal website and then looking for author information/instructions. Please see NIHMS-Help on how to upload to the NIHMS and how to do the approval steps at <http://nihms.nih.gov/help/> .    
When the manuscript in progress in the NIHMS system on its way to PubMed Central, it is assigned the (temporary) **NIHMSID** number, so then we know the manuscript is in the system. Here it takes ~~6 – 8~~  2 – 3 weeks from initial approval to the email to the corresponding author requesting approval of the final  web version which must be done before the web version is loaded into PMC and the PMCID is finally assigned. . . .   NIH has determined this **NIHMSID is only “legal” for within 3 months of the print date** -- meaning if the paper is beyond 3 months from the print date, it needs the PMCID for a green light and funding released (if this is in a progress report). If it is beyond 3 months from print date and still has only the temporary NIHMSID, it will be red flagged (in NCBI-MyBibliography) -- but at least the NIHMSID number indicates the paper is somewhere in the NIHMS-PMC system; often there is nothing you can do until the corresponding author is emailed from NIHMS-Help asking for the final approval of the web version after which the PMCID is assigned and automatically is added to the citation in NCBI-MyBiblio and all flags are green in NCBI-MyBibliography  (see Using MyNCBI-Bibliography <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK53595/> )  You can always look up a NIHMSID number in the NIHMS (google nihms login) to check on its status and be sure it is not waiting on an approval or file upload.

**QUESTION:** How do you know if a citation is somewhere in the NIHMS-PMC system/how do I find the NIHMS ID number? The best place (only?) to find the NIHMSID is by adding the citation to NCBI-MyBibliography, where the temporary NIHMSID was added automatically to the citation when started/uploaded in the NIHMS-PMC system. If no temporary “NIHMSID” or no “PMCID” or no “PMC Journal” or no “N/A” then this means article (be sure it is not exempt as not directly funded or not peer reviewed review, method, etc. . .  more on this in the last paragraph) needs to be uploaded into the NIHMS and initial approval completed <http://nihms.nih.gov/help/>. NOTE to keep track of public access status for the citations,  be sure you are **in Display Settings: Award View** (upper left in NCBI-MyBibliography)

Finally, there is a subset of journals called “**PMC journals”** with formal agreements with the NIH saying they will send all final articles directly to PMC without the authors having to do any approvals  . . . . so if you see in your NCBI-Bibliography “PMC journal – In process” you should rejoice since it means they are taking care of everything; it will have a yellow flag until the PMCID is assigned (but yellow is good enough to not delay funding) . . . . I wish they were all  like that.  Link to find PMC Journals <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm>  However when you add the citation to your NCBI-Bibliography it till tell you if it is a PMC Journal.

**PRACTICAL QUESTION**: how does one keep track of these NIHMSIDs, PMCIDs, PMC journals??  **You must use NCBI-MyBibliography to manage the citations and associate citations with grants for progress report. Also use NCBI-MyBibliography** for **Biosketches** called ScienCV. NCBI-MyBibliography automatically adds the NIHMSID as well as the PMCID to the citation (you have to add the citation first)— NCBI-MyBiblio is only way the NIH accepts lists of publication for progress reports and the only way to have publications included in the Products section of the RPPR progress report. . . .  **Papers that are exempt from the NIH public access policy** include those papers that are not directly funded by the NIH grant in question, such as literature reviews, editorials, commentaries, many case studies. Also papers that outline laboratory protocols/methods/techniques (such as publ in *Tetrahedron Letters* or in *Methods in Molecular Biology* for example) are also exempt as these methods described were not peer-reviewed in the same sense as new research findings are peer-reviewed. These exempt publications can be included in NCBI-MyBibliography but you must “Edit Status” to indicate N/A exempt so the NIH reviewer does not question why the citation lacks the PMCID and red flags it.  Summary: if a paper is listed in NCBI-MyBibliography and is associated with a NIH grant, its citation must include either the “NIHMSID” or the “PMCID” or is a “PMC Journal-in process” or “N/A” where you designated it as exempt.   
For help: using NCBI-MyBibliography  <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK53595/>   NOTE: be sure you are **in Display Settings: Award View** (upper left in NCBI-MyBibliography).

ONE more thing: if an article is **exempt**— Do not upload an exempt manuscript to NIHMS-PMC system thinking it is just ‘easier’ to get the PMCID. Yes it will get the temporary NIHMSID but once the NIHMS editors see this article is really exempt, they often stop processing (since they are already backlogged 6 weeks) so this citation sits with the NIHMSID forever and is red flagged; you will have to fix it as N/A since the NIH reviewer of your progress report will question it. . . .

**QUESTION:** what about grant applications—do the citations need to include the PMCIDs? PMCIDs must be included on applicable citations authored or mentored by the grant applicant/PI who submits an application, proposal or report to the NIH <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/citation_methods.htm> . If an article written or mentored by the grant applicant is exempt but included in the grant application, I suggest including in the citation why it exempt such as the N/A or not directly funded by the NIH—to save the application’s reviewer from asking why the citation does not have the PMCID.   However, when another scientist (anyone other than . . authors or . . mentor) as from another university, cites this paper in their NIH application as a reference, they are not required to include the PMCID. . . . but if the PMCID is available go ahead and include it. Also use **NCBI-MyBibliography** for **Biosketches** called **ScienCV** (why they just can’t stick with the name “Biosketch” is beyond me.)

I should have reminded all that NCBI is not supported by Internet Explorer 7, but works ok with Firefox, Chrome and IE8. I tend to stick with Firefox when using NCBI-MyBibliography.

Browser advice when using webpages from NCBI  <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/guide/browsers>

Ok—kind of a long-winded overview; if you have questions try some of these helpful links:

Using **NCBI-MyBibliography**  <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK53595/>     
Log in to NCBI: use google.com   ncbi login

**NIH Manuscript Submission System NIHMS** Log in  <http://www.nihms.nih.gov/db/sub.cgi>   or google   nihms login

How to submit manuscript to the NIHMS-PubMed Central system <http://nihms.nih.gov/help/>  as well as complete the approvals in the system.

NIHMS Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.nihms.nih.gov/faq.html>

**Research Performance Progress Report RPPR**  <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/rppr/rppr_instruction_guide.pdf>

RPPR Step-by-step Guide  <http://dsp.research.uiowa.edu/files/dsp.research.uiowa.edu/files/NIH%20RPPR%20Basic%20Guide.pdf>

RPPR Frequently Asked Questions <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/rppr/faqs.htm>  
Erin Brothers here in DSP will help you with questions on the RPPR progress report  [Erin-brothers@uiowa.edu](mailto:Erin-brothers@uiowa.edu)

**Public Access Compliance Tips** (Duke University Library blog)  <https://mclibrary.duke.edu/about/blog/2013-07-30/nih-public-access-compliance-tips>

UIowa - **DSP Public Access webpage** <http://dsp.research.uiowa.edu/nih-public-access-policy>  which will soon include the slides from “Using NCBI to Manage Publications for NIH Public Access” at the top of this webpage.

**Hardin Library – NIH Public Access** <http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/nihpublicaccess>  Hardin will upload manuscripts to NIHMS for you but the author will still have to complete the initial approval to get this going in the NIHMS-PMC system. Janna Lawrence [Janna-lawrence@uiowa.edu](mailto:Janna-lawrence@uiowa.edu) is a great resource at Hardin Library.

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