



## Background

Some health science journals post articles to preprint servers that have been submitted or accepted for peer review. *The Lancet*, for example, now offers to post articles that have been accepted for peer review to the preprint server from [SSRN](#) (Social Science Research Network), a leader in online bridge-building between the worlds of working papers and scholarly publications that joined forces with Elsevier in 2016.

Preprint servers have been in use for almost 30 years in some areas of scholarly publishing such as high-energy physics, where collaboration and co-authorship are common, and in economics, where a prolonged review process is common. Why is the use of preprint servers growing among scientific authors and health science publishers today?

## Here are some of the reasons

1. Authors find preprint servers attractive and the information is posted online under the author's control and can be rapidly shared at no charge.
2. Posting to a preprint server, much like presenting at scientific conferences, does not jeopardize subsequent publication in most peer reviewed health science journals.
3. Articles posted to a preprint server are assigned a unique Digital Object Identifier (DOI) — a series of numbers, letters, or symbols that facilitate the sharing, managing and tracking of specific digital scientific information across its digital life cycle.

## Risks and Benefits

1. When an article has been accepted for peer review by a scholarly journal prior to posting to a preprint server the risk of scientific misinformation is reduced.
2. Clinical health research reporting guidelines and checklists ([PRISMA](#), [CONSORT](#), [STROBE](#), and [CARE](#)) are widely available to both author and journals on the EQUATOR Network ([www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org)). They support the publication of systematic, accurate, and transparent articles in the health sciences.
3. For case reports, reporting guidelines and checklists, and SSRN's preprint server – [Health Science Case Report Research Network](#), help support the publication of early signals of effectiveness and cost savings, stimulating evidence-based research from real world healthcare.

## Conclusion

Preprint servers are a platform for accelerating the dissemination of new scientific discoveries and improving clinical outcomes for patients around the world.