



# Does presentation at a national meeting lead to publication? Evaluating the quality of the Scottish Ophthalmological Club

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## Introduction

Despite the 2005 Walport Report's reforms to encourage trainee research and clinical academic training, there are still intrinsic limiting factors impacting publication rates (such as project type, journal scope or access to facilities or supportive authorship networks) [1–5]. The Scottish Ophthalmological Club (SOC) is the historic ophthalmic society for Scotland (current membership 139). First constituted in March 1911, it provides a platform for discussion and dissemination of ophthalmic ideas via biannual meetings. We wished to assess the content and quality of our national meetings, and evaluate if presenting at the SOC translated into a future peer-reviewed publication.

## Methods

We reviewed 5 years of past SOC meeting programmes (2010–2014) to allow for a minimum publication lag time of 2 years. We identified if the subject matter was originally presented as a paper or poster, and categorised it by subspecialty and type (from the title). We then cross referenced the authors' names with PubMed-indexed journals to identify subsequent publication.

## Results

There were 9 meetings in this time period (2011 was the Centenary year with a single event) comprising a total of 150 oral paper presentations (average per meeting 17, range

12–25) and 179 poster presentations (average 20, range 10–36). There were 157 research studies, 77 audits, 61 case reports and 26 “other” types of presentation, equating to an average of 17 research studies, 9 audits and 7 case reports per meeting.

We identified 93 related publications on Pubmed, correlating to a 28% conversion rate for all types of presentation. These publications originated from 55 oral papers (37% of all oral papers) and 38 posters (19% of all posters). Research projects were the most common type of publication (47 oral papers and 25 posters; 77%), followed by case reports/series (7 oral papers and 12 posters; 20%) and then audits (2%). The most successful subspecialty genre for publication from oral papers was cornea (14/55; 25%), followed by oculoplastics (10/55; 18%), then paediatric ophthalmology (8/55; 15%). [See Table 1]

The most successful journal for publication was EYE (22/93; 24%), followed by British Journal of Ophthalmology (11/93; 12%), then Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology and Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology (5/93; 5% each).

## Conclusions

This is the first study to objectively evaluate the quality and impact of SOC presentations. We have demonstrated a healthy conversion ratio of publications following presentation (37% oral papers, 19% posters). The genre of project (research) was seen to be a more accurate predictor of subsequent publication success, rather than solely the presentation format. This statistic provides a quality control for the selection process, and reassures trainees regarding the validity and potential impact from engaging in meaningful research [1–5].

It is noteworthy that final publication was more common in the national College-linked journals, which would encourage targeted article submission. Trainees in Scotland are contributing positively and supporting UK-based peer-

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**Table 1** Table detailing the original presentation format, type of project and subspecialty subject in 93 successful publications following presentation at the Scottish Ophthalmological Club (2010–2014)

Subspecialty	Oral papers				Posters			
	Research study (%)	Case report/case series (%)	Audit (%)	Total (%)	Research study (%)	Case report/case series (%)	Audit (%)	Total (%)
Cataract	4 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (7)	2 (5)	1 (3)	1 (3)	4 (11)
Cornea	12 (22)	2 (4)	0 (0)	14 (26)	4 (10)	1 (3)	0 (0)	5 (13)
Glaucoma	4 (7)	1 (2)	0 (0)	5 (9)	3 (8)	1 (3)	0 (0)	4 (11)
Miscellaneous/education	5 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (9)	6 (16)	1 (3)	0 (0)	7 (18)
Medical Retina	6 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (11)	4 (10)	1 (3)	0 (0)	5 (13)
Neuro-ophthalmology	0 (0)	3 (5)	0 (0)	3 (5)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (5)
Oculoplastics	10 (18)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (18)	1 (3)	5 (13)	0 (0)	6 (16)
Paediatrics	6 (11)	1 (2)	1 (2)	8 (15)	1 (3)	2 (5)	0 (0)	3 (8)
Vitreo-retinal	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (5)
Total	47 (85)	7 (13)	1 (2)	55 (100)	25 (66)	12 (32)	1 (3)	38 (100)

reviewed journals, despite the reduced numbers of historical academic ophthalmology departments. National meeting attendance should be prioritised by trainees due to the afforded opportunities, and we invite other regional societies to perform similar evaluations.

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### Compliance with ethical standards

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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