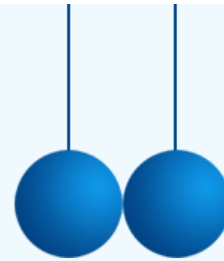


OPENUCT INITIATIVE

opening scholarship



Open access medical textbooks: sharing knowledge globally

Blog post by Sarah Goodier
5 May 2014

When you visit a medical specialist, you trust that he or she is keeping up with cutting edge knowledge in the field to provide you with the best medical care possible. However, the cost of new reference resources and the latest textbooks can be prohibitively high, **especially in developing countries where a new textbook may cost ~2 months' salary**. Fortunately for otolaryngologists (the medical specialists focussing on diseases of the ear, nose and throat – ENTs for short), two free, high quality textbooks are available online.

UCT's Prof Johan Fagan, **Head of the Division of Otolaryngology** has taken the initiative to develop freely available, high quality reference resources for ENTs. Prof Fagan is the editor of *The Open Access Atlas of Otolaryngology, Head & Neck Operative Surgery* and the *Open Access Guide to Audiology and Hearing Aids for Otolaryngologists*, both available on **UCT's OpenContent site**. These two textbooks are available at no cost under a **Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License**. This open license allows anyone to copy and redistribute the material as well adapt and build on it as long as the authors are acknowledged and the resource isn't being used for commercial purposes.



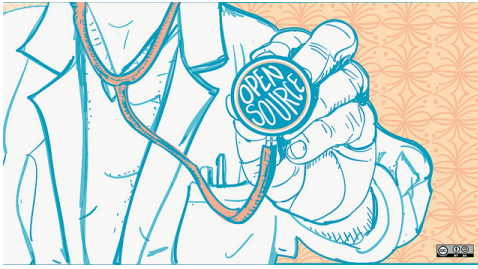
Image: Prof Johan Fagan (right) pictured here with Veronica Mitchell from **UCT's Health OER team**.

To date, across both textbooks, about 70 chapters have been written by international experts free of charge with more chapters currently being worked on. Volunteers have translated some chapters into Portuguese and Spanish. By September 2014 all current chapters will have been translated into French.

And there's clearly a demand for it. "Chapters have been downloaded 260,000 times, currently at a rate of >700 chapters per day; a chapter is downloaded every 2.2 minutes," says Prof Fagan. These hits are coming from not just South Africa but all over the globe, including countries such as the USA, UK and Sweden as well as Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt.

Prof Fagan's textbooks can make all the difference to both doctors and patients. A wonderful ongoing success story of open, accessible and online educational resources – and it is taking place here at UCT.

Visit [UCT's OpenContent site](#) to view more openly-licensed resources in the [Health Sciences](#) as well as [many other subject areas](#).



([Open Health stethoscope image](#) by [OpenSourceWay](#) available from Flickr under a [CC-BY-SA license](#))

by SarahG

CC-BY-SA

[Blog post](#)



Add comment

Your name

Subject

Comment *

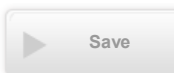
Text format Filtered HTML ▾

[More information about text formats](#) ?

Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.

Allowed HTML tags: `<a>` `` `` `<cite>` `<blockquote>` `<code>` `` `` `` `<dl>` `<dt>` `<dd>`

Lines and paragraphs break automatically.



[Preview](#)

Search...

[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Output](#)

[Events](#)

[Blog](#)

[Support](#)

[Contact Us](#)

This site and its contents are licensed in terms of a [Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike](#) license, unless specified otherwise - Open UCT 2012.

A [Drupal Website](#) by 2Stroke Interactive