

S Campbell, U Harley, M ElSheikh, M Shah, V Chadha  
Tennent Institute of Ophthalmology, Gartnavel General Hospital, Glasgow

Introduction

Publications are an important means of communicating new research ideas and experiences, driving the practice of evidence-based medicine. For all ophthalmologists, in particular trainees, it is a vital process to develop engagement in research, analytical skills and promoting of critical thinking.

The aim of this study was to explore the trends of ophthalmology related publications in indexed journals in Scotland over a 10-year period and to compare this with trends from the rest of the UK.

Method

Retrospective review of all ophthalmology related publications between 1st January 2010 and 31st December 2019; identified by affiliation according to the UK Royal College of Ophthalmology Scotland Regions. A Pubmed search was undertaken by typing: city or town/hospital or trust [ad] AND ophthalmology [ad]. The data collected and analysed included the number of publications per year, the sub-specialities, type of publication and journals published. The same information was collated for all UK Deaneries and results compared.

Results

A total of 408 ophthalmology related publications were produced by the four Scotland Regions. The West produced the most publications (56%) followed by the South East (18%), East (16%) and North (10%) (Figure 1). There were 47 papers that had authors from more than one region; these were excluded in the region sub-analysis.

Types of publications produced were analysed with the highest number being original research articles (n=192) followed by case reports (n=93), Correspondence (n=59), review articles (n=30) and case series (n=14).

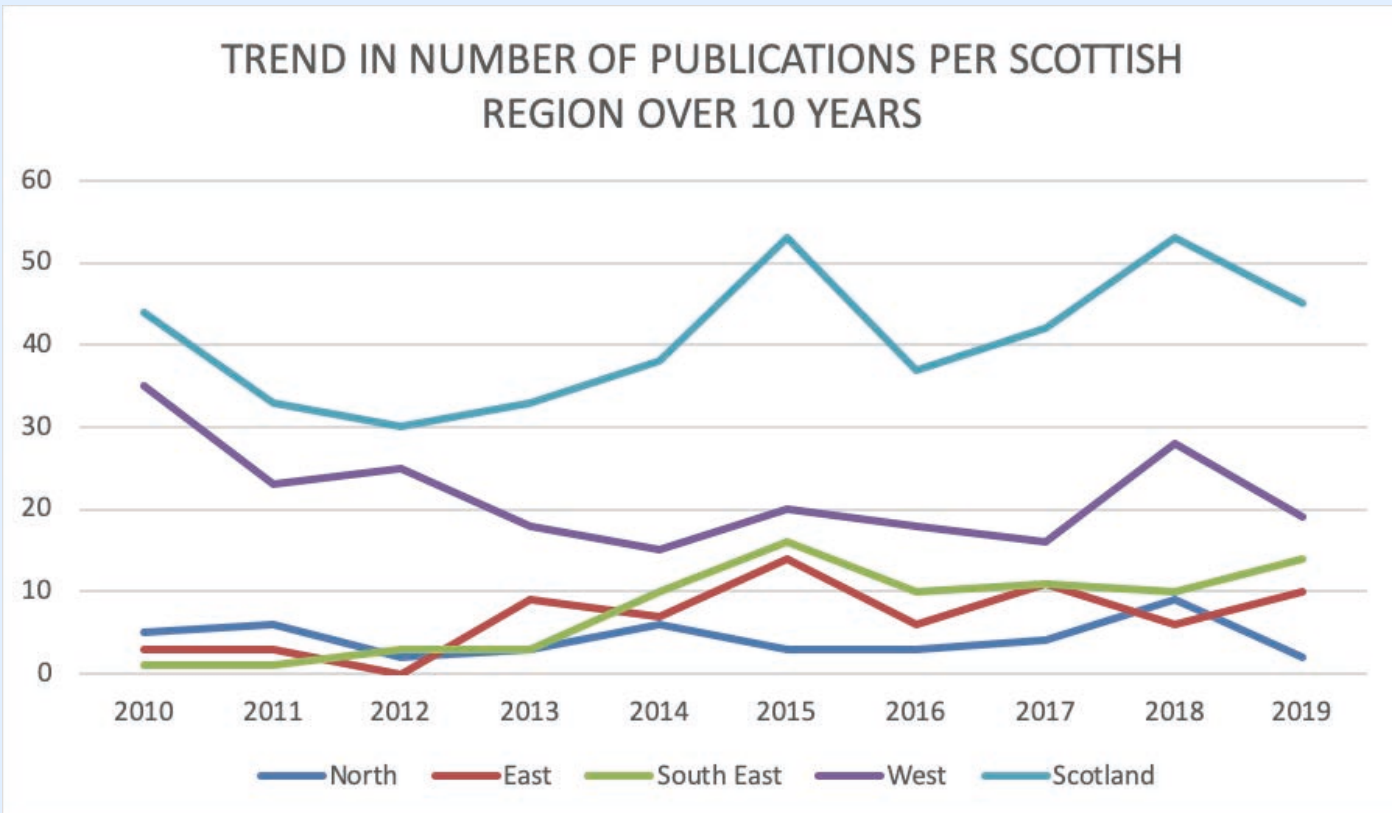


Figure 1

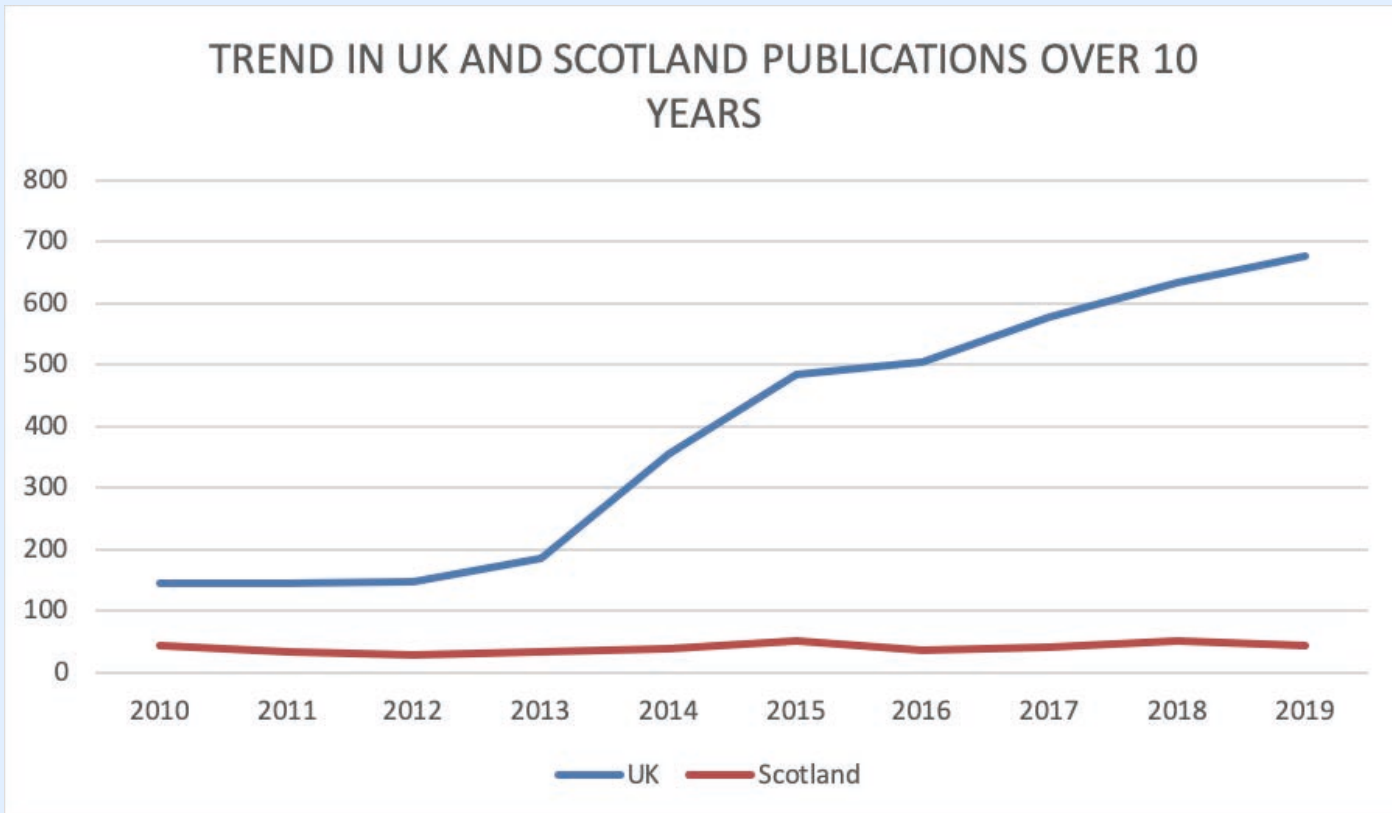


Figure 2

Figure 1, shows an increase in the overall number of publications between 2012 to 2015 and 2016 to 2018. There was no sustained increase between 2010 and 2019 which differs from the rest of the UK in which we can see an increasing trend (Figure 2). While West produces a large number of publications, this number actually shows a gradual decline over 10 years.

Figure 5 shows a general decline in Case Reports being produced over 10 years while Original Research has shown to increase.

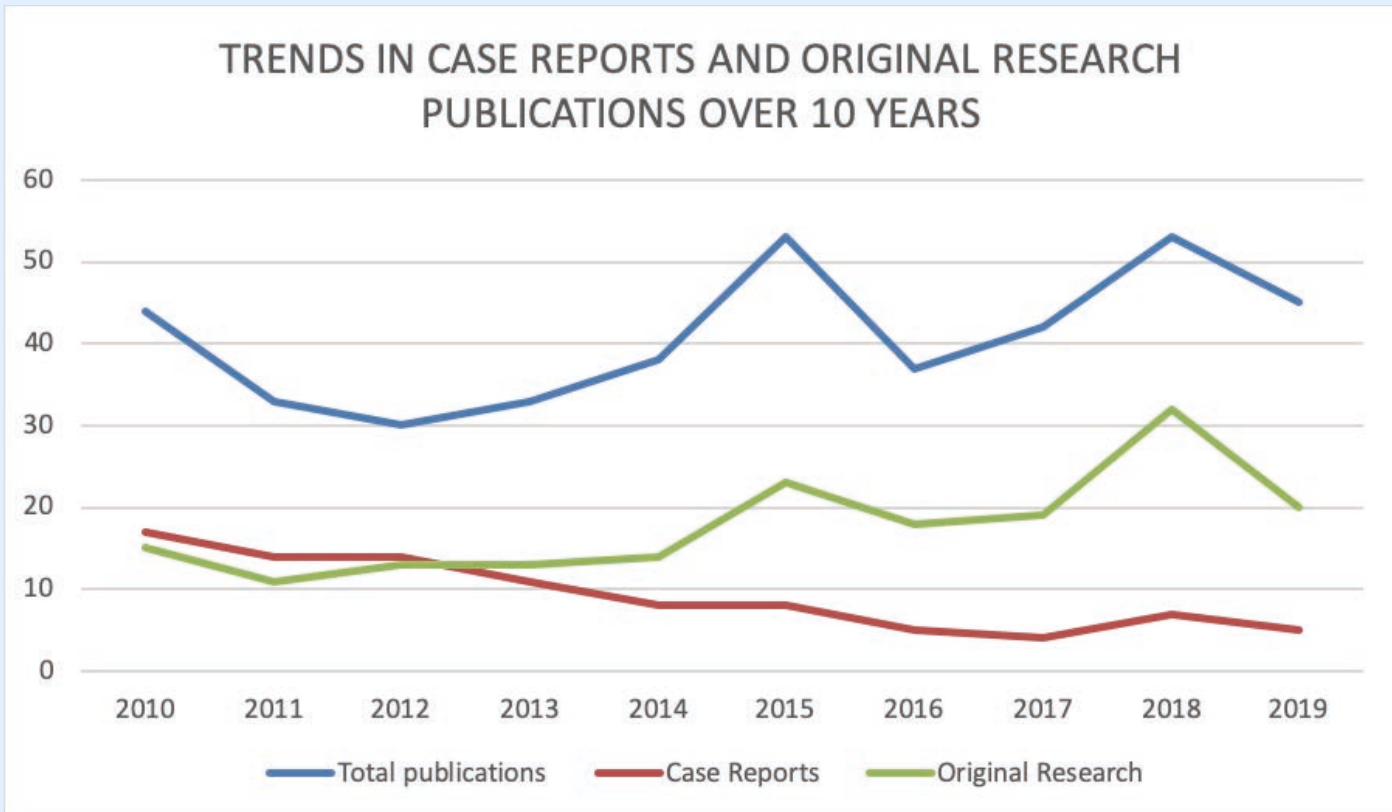


Figure 5

There were a total of 113 journals, the top ten journals show in Figure 6. The most published journal being the Eye which published 20% of all publications, followed by Br J Ophthalmology.

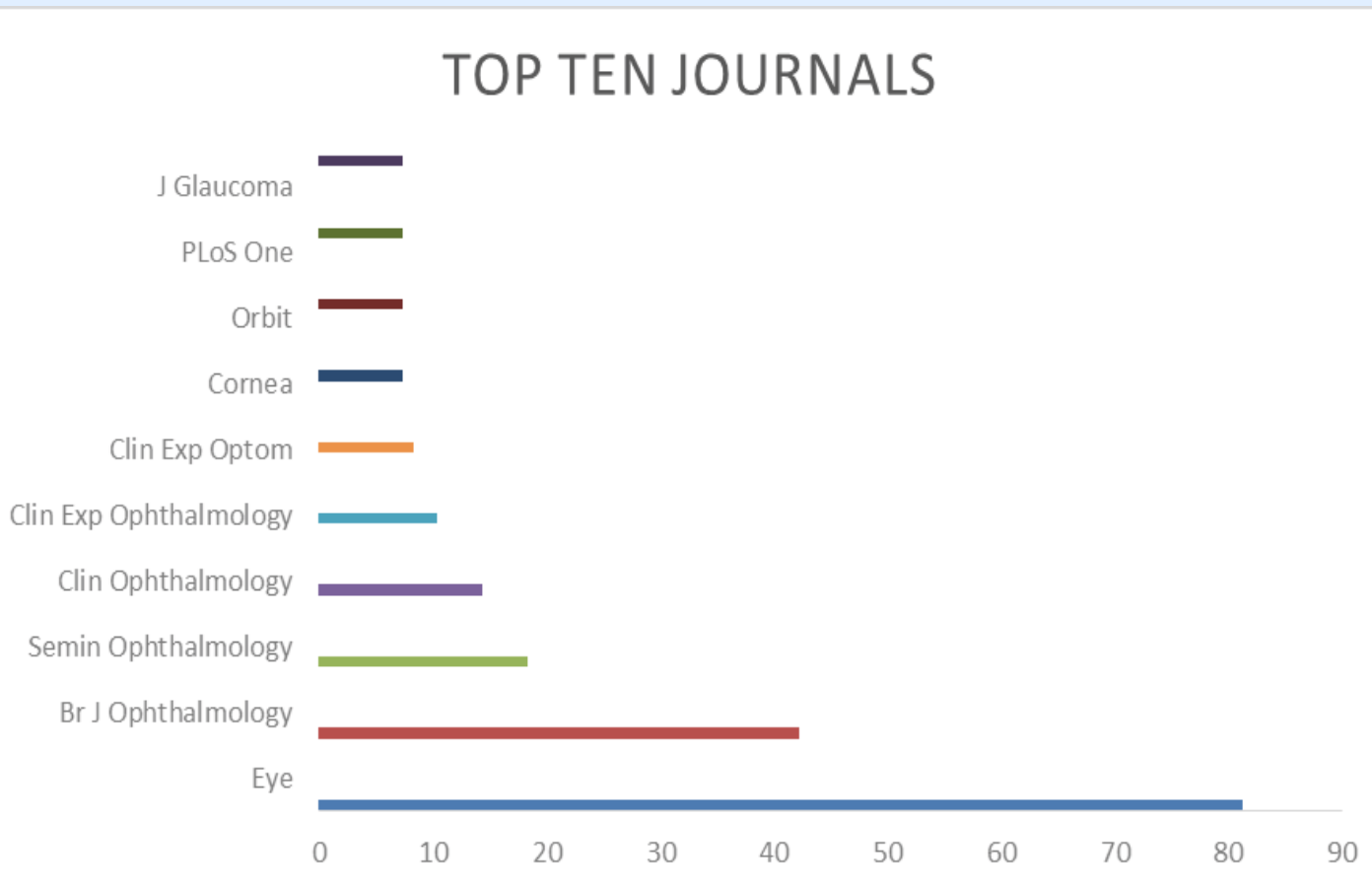


Figure 6

Figure 3, shows NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC) is the Trust that produced the most publications (49%) across Scotland followed by NHS Lothian and NHS Tayside.

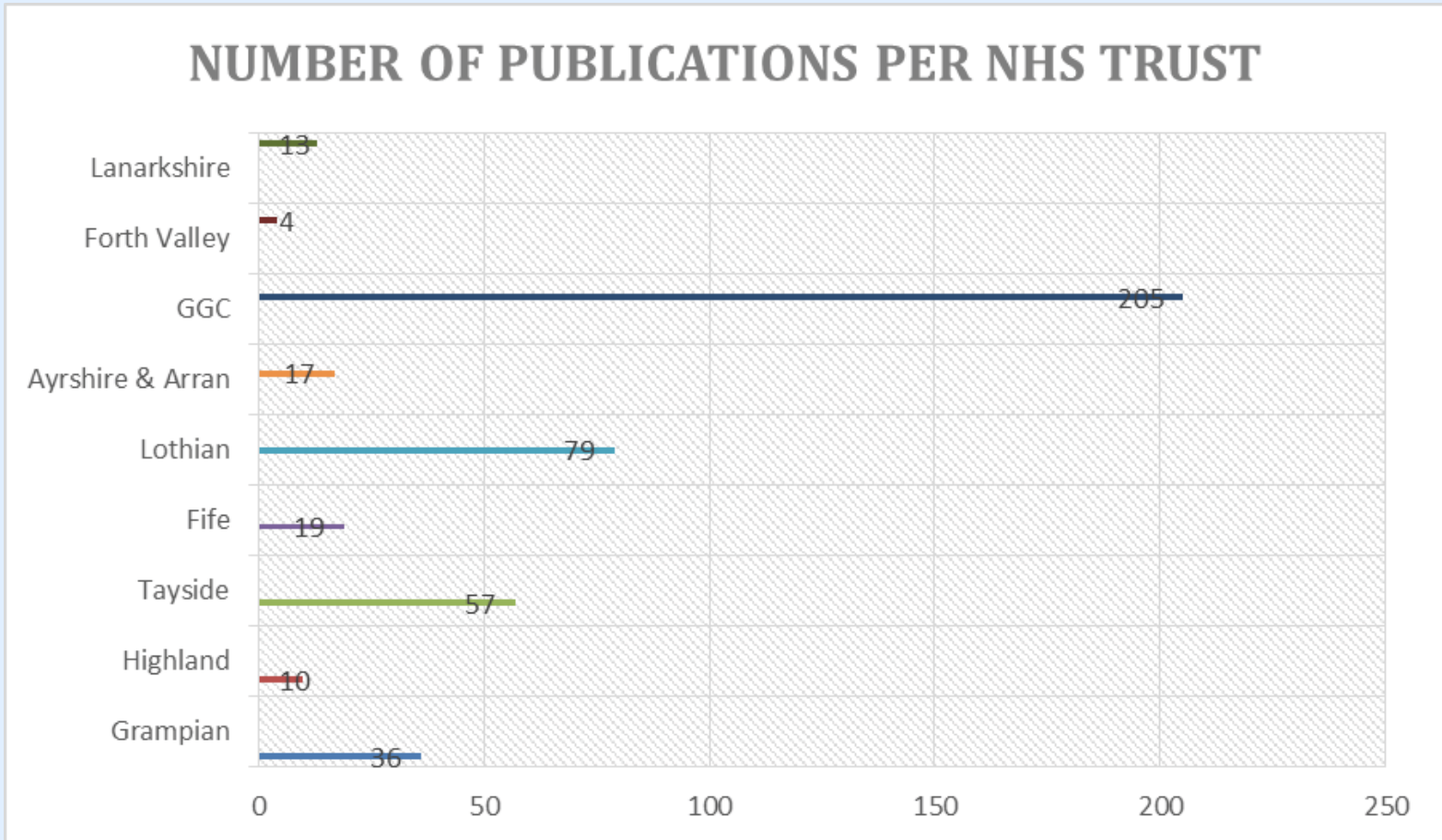


Figure 3

Figure 7, shows the West of Scotland had the highest average number of publications per trainee at 0.74. The East had the largest average number of publications per consultant at 0.43 (consultant and trainee figures taken from 2020).

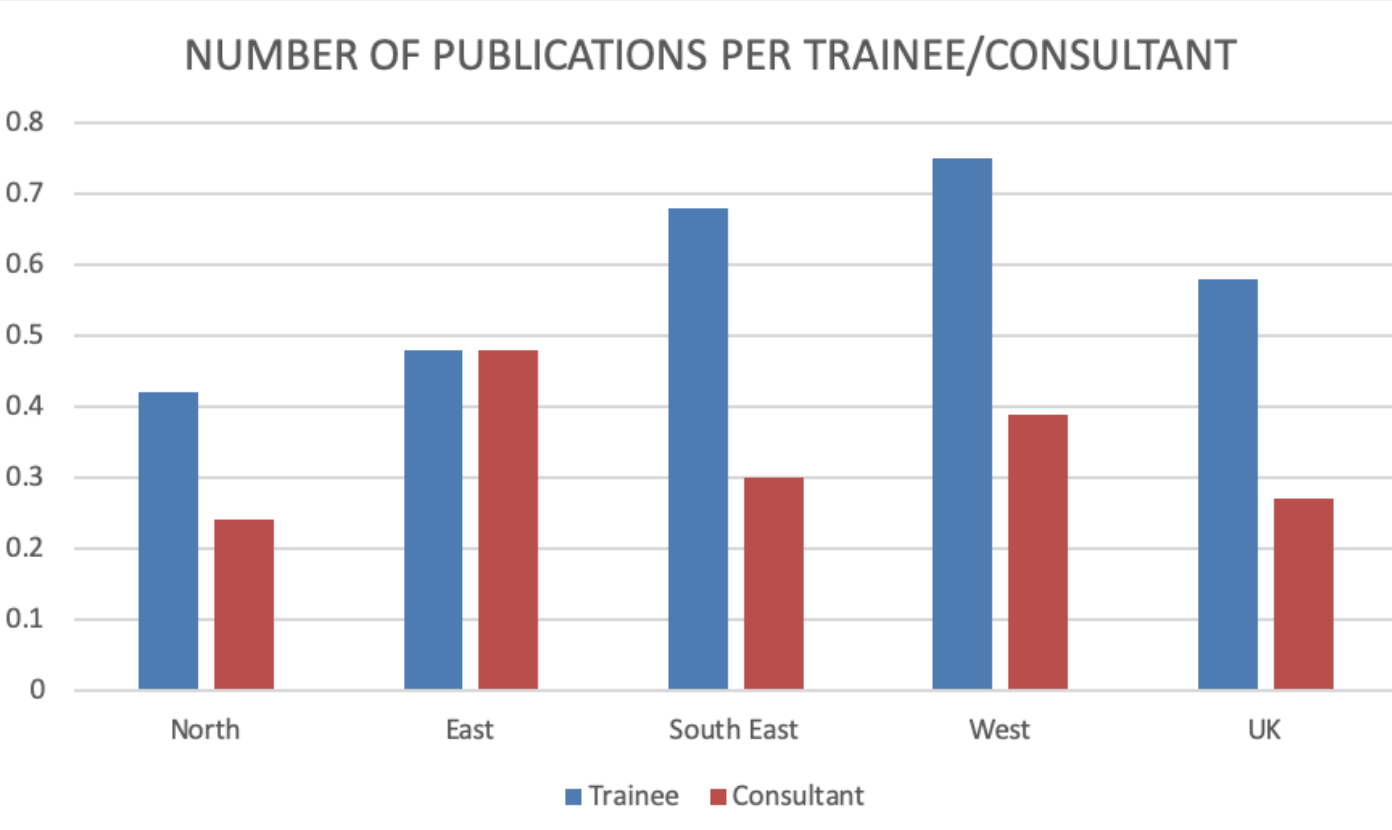


Figure 7

The top five sub-speciality publications were in Cornea/Ocular Surface (n=89), Medical Retina (n=69), Glaucoma (n=66), General (n=35) and Oculoplastics/Orbit (n=34) (Figure 4). West of Scotland produced the most publications in Cornea/Ocular Surface, East was in Medical Retina, South East and North regions were in Glaucoma.

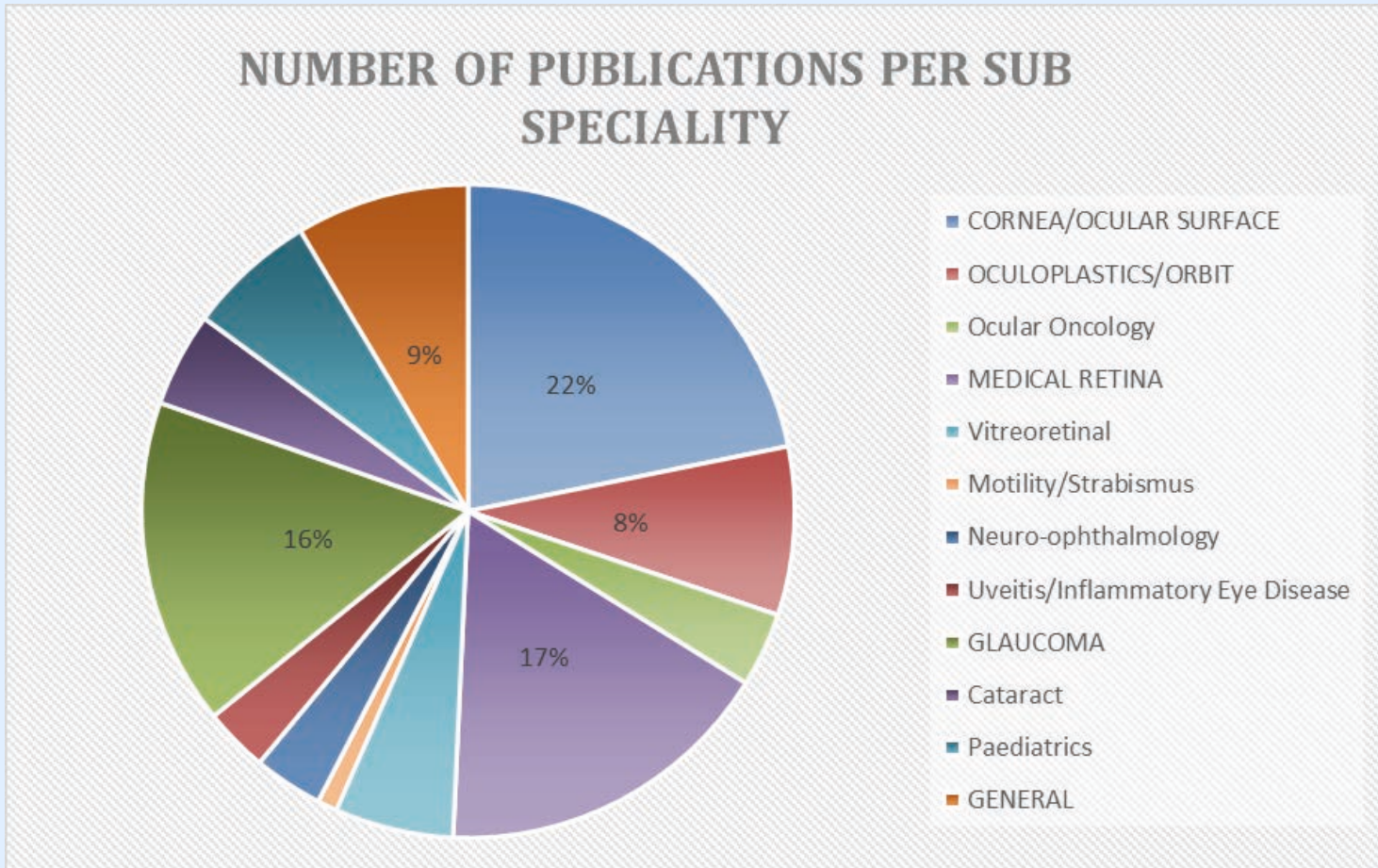


Figure 4

The publications per catchment population<sup>1</sup> for each deanery (Figure 8) show the South East Deanery had the highest number of publications per population.

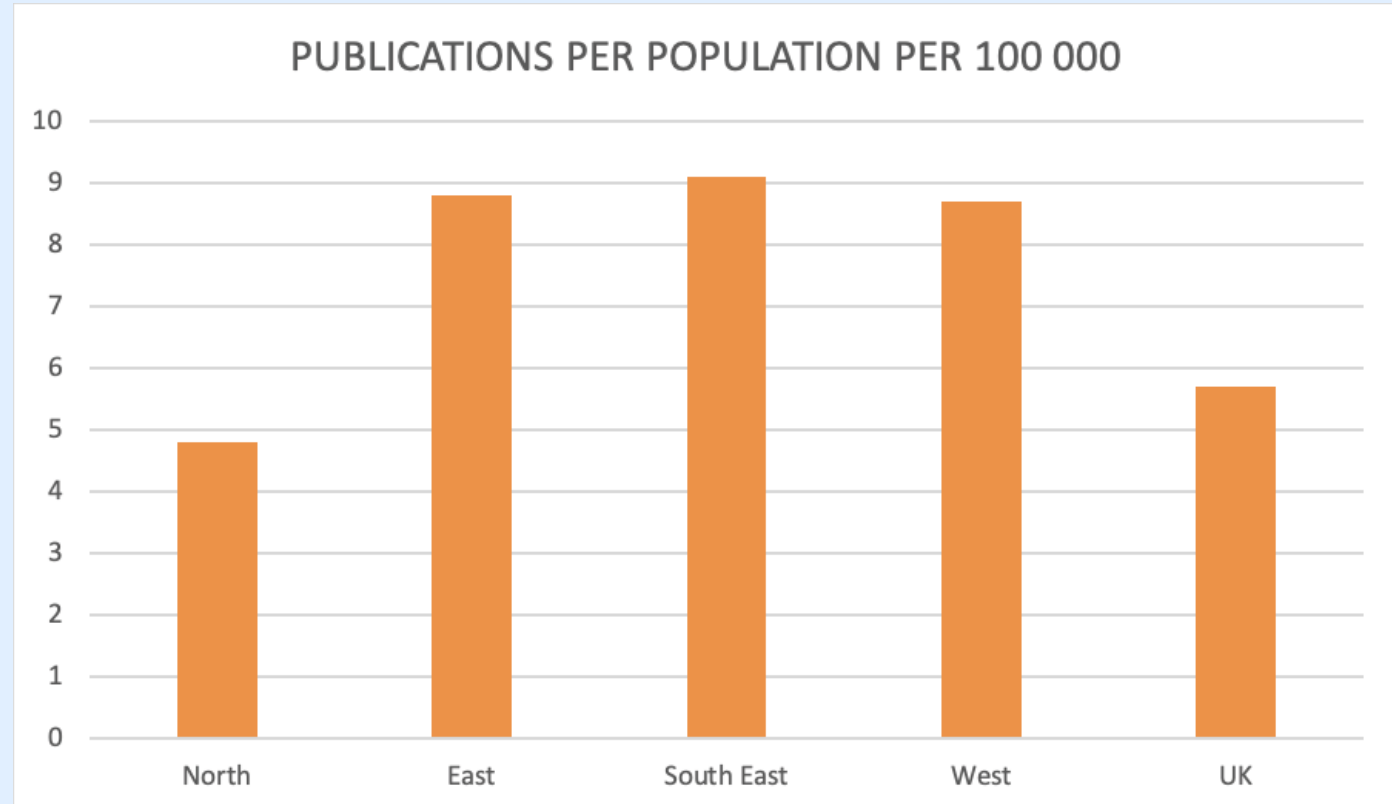


Figure 8

Conclusion

This is the first study to explore the trends of ophthalmology publications from Scotland in peer-reviewed journals. While the overall number of these publications has shown an year on year increase for the UK as a whole, it has remained relatively static for Scotland. There was a variation between the four regions within Scotland with reference to all parameters studied. 'Eye' was the most popular journal and 'Cornea/Ocular Surface' was the highest publishing sub-speciality.

References

1) Opendata.nhs.scot. 2021. Population Estimates - Health Board (2019) Population Estimates - Scottish Health and Social Care Open Data. [online] Available at: <<https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/dataset/population-estimates/resource/27a72cc8-d6d8-430c-8b4f-3109a9ceadb1>> [Accessed 5 February 2021].