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## Effectiveness of a Medical Writing Center in an Academic Teaching Hospital

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# Effectiveness of a Medical Writing Center in an Academic Teaching Hospital

Heather McNeill, MA, ELS, Jacqueline Hill, PhD, MPH, Myles Chandler, MS, Eric T. Rush, MD, and Martha Montello, PhD



# Disclosures

- No funding was received for this study
- The presenter and co-authors have nothing to disclose

# Background and Importance

- Physicians generally do not receive formal instruction in writing manuscripts and grant proposals during medical training<sup>1,2</sup>
- In-house editing services to improve clarity of scholarly writing are not common in independent teaching hospitals
- Few publications in the medical literature describe academic editing services and their associated outcomes<sup>3,4</sup>

1. Ariail J, et al. *Teach Learn Med.* 2013.
2. Yanoff KL, Burg FD. *J Med Educ.* 1988.
3. Breugelmans R, Barron JP. *Chest.* 2008.
4. Lim JS, et al. *PLOS One.* 2019.

# Research Question

- Is a medical writing center effective for supporting faculty and trainees in producing manuscripts and grant proposals?

# What Is the Medical Writing Center?

- Services:
  - Editing
  - Consultations
  - Manuscript Preparation Groups
  - Workshops
- Asynchronous Educational Resources:
  - How-to guides, templates, mini-  
didactic videos

**Medical Writing Center**  
Educational Series  
Children's Mercy

### How to Respond to Reviews

Responding well to reviewers' feedback is an important skill for authors. Although the feedback can be difficult to receive, it is common for reviewers to request edits and advisable to craft your response carefully and respectfully. Below are guidelines for effectively responding to reviewers' feedback about submitted manuscripts for the following types of editorial decisions:

- Rejected
- Revise and Resubmit
- Accepted (pending revisions or as is)

#### Types of Editorial Decisions

##### Rejected

Some manuscripts are rejected after review by the journal's editorial staff. Others are rejected after peer reviewers have critically examined the manuscript. Reasons for rejection include:

- The manuscript is outside of the journal's scope or is better suited to another journal.
- The manuscript is unclear, uninteresting, or seriously flawed (e.g., scientific data are missing, conclusions are unconvincing, data are missing).
- The journal has already published, or plans to publish, article(s) on a similar topic.
- The authors did not follow the journal's guidelines.

Rejection is never a desirable outcome, but remember that your manuscript may be resubmitted. If you decide to respond to a rejection letter, do so succinctly and respectfully to the journal's editors and reviewers. If you believe there's been an error, you could consider sending a respectful request for reconsideration to the journal's editors.

If you are fortunate enough to receive reviewer feedback, consider the comments and unclear text identified by reviewers, and identify a new target journal for the new manuscript according to requirements, and submit it.

## Responding to Reviewers

**Children's Mercy Medical Writing Center**  
Educational Series

**Martha Montello, PhD**

Children's Mercy KANSAS CITY | UMKC School of Medicine | BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS | MAGNET RECOGNITION

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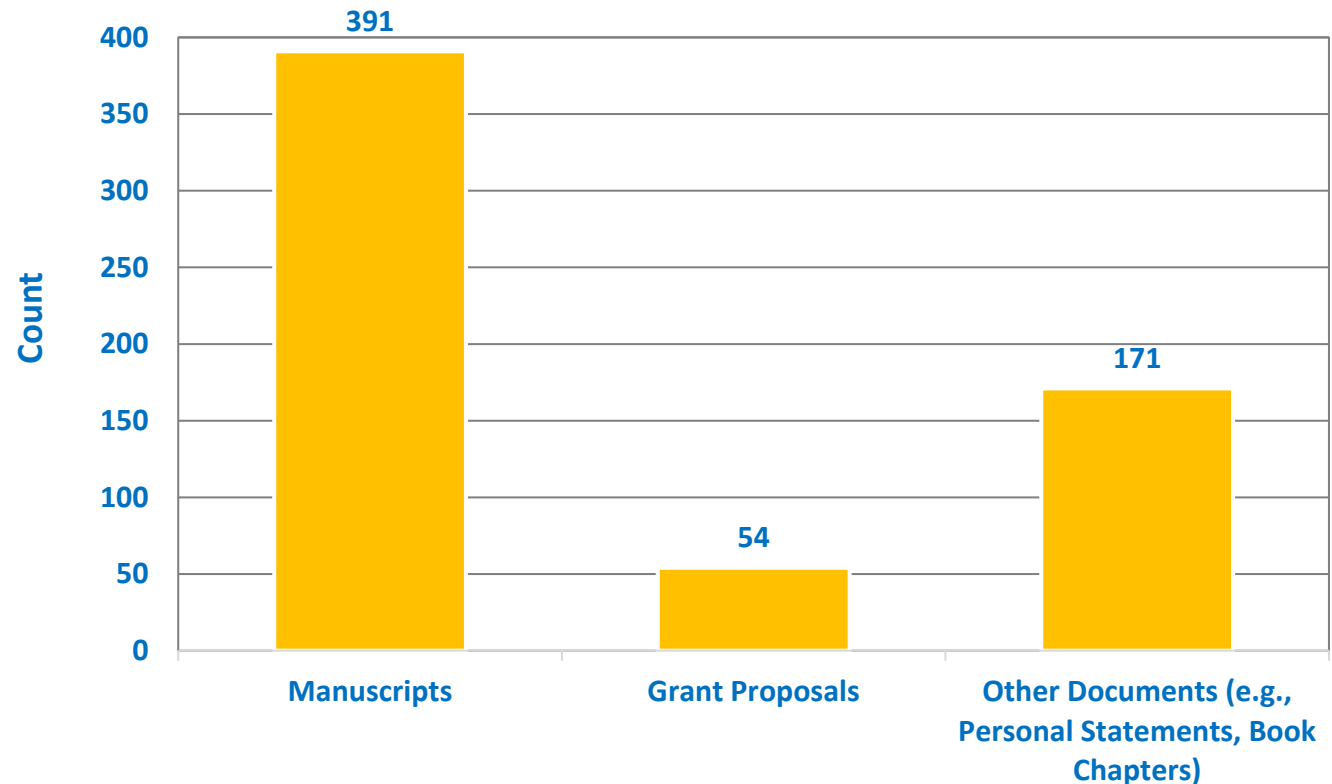
# Methods

- Evaluated user satisfaction and writing product outcomes data collected in service request database from 2015 through 2022
- Gathered number of views of asynchronous educational resources (how-to guides and templates) April 2023-March 2024
- IRB designated study as non-human subject research

# Results: Editing Services

- 697 service requests
  - 88.4% (n=616) to edit a document
  - 72.2% (n=445) to edit a manuscript or grant
- 9.7% of documents submitted more than once for review

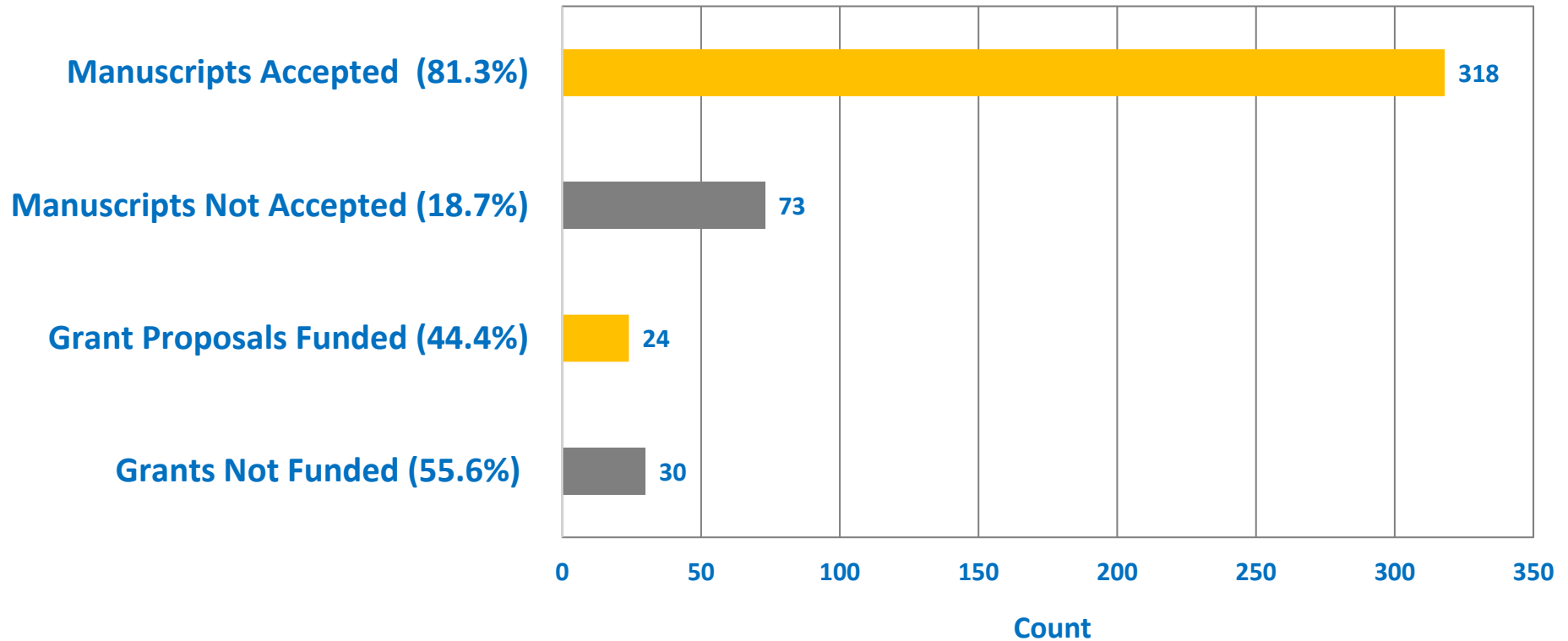
Document Types Edited (2015-2022, n=616)





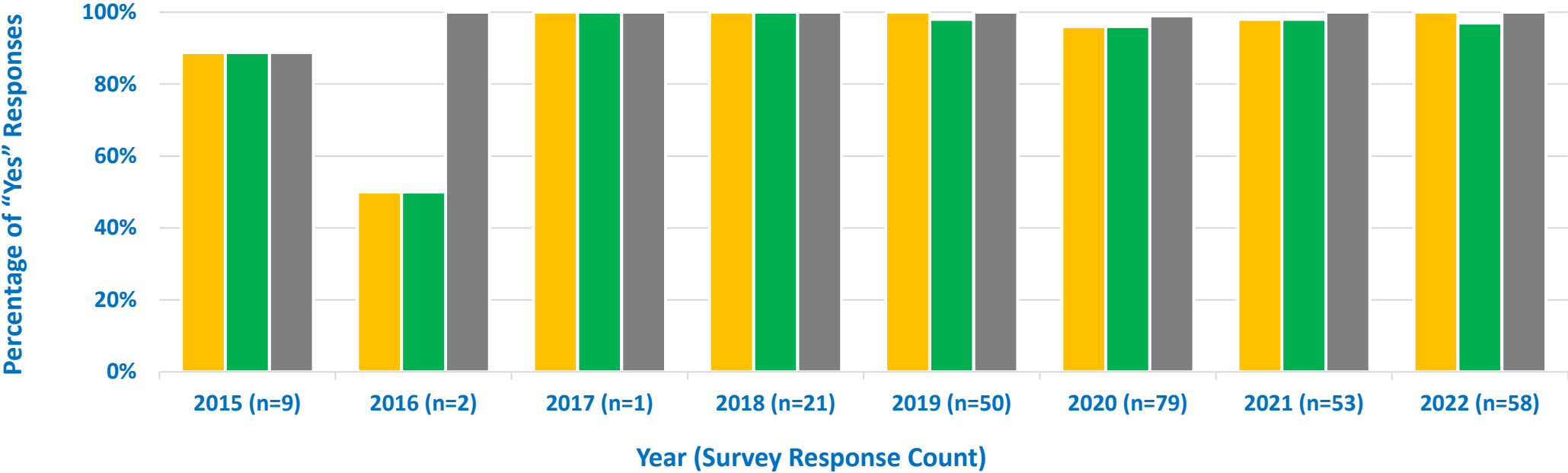
# Results: Publication & Grant Outcomes

Publication & Grant Outcomes (2015-2022, n=445)



# Results: User Feedback

MWC User Feedback (2015-2022, n=273, 44.3% response rate)



■ Did you find the MWC edits helpful?

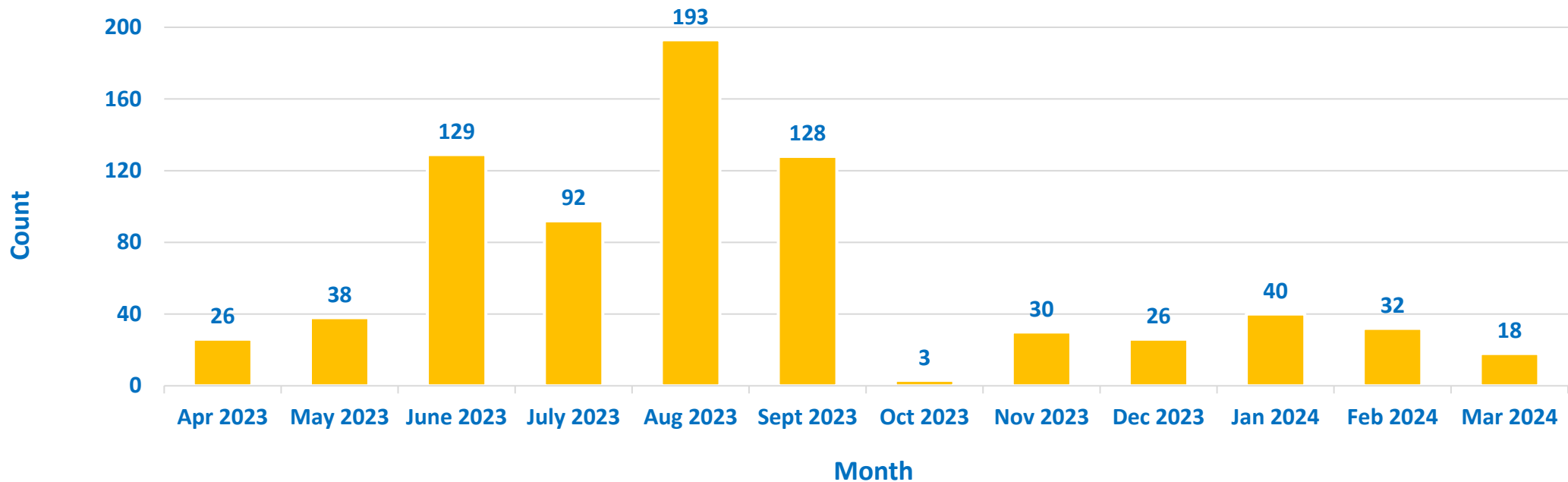
■ Did the MWC edits improve readability?

■ Do you plan to use the MWC in the future?



# Results: Asynchronous Educational Resources

Asynchronous Educational Resource Views (2023-2024, n=755)



# Conclusions

- Our data over 7 years show:
  - Steady use of services and resources
  - High satisfaction (limited by 44% response rate)
  - High publication rates (though challenging to measure true impact of editing)
- Writing center appears to be an effective tool to assist faculty and trainees in producing scholarly products for dissemination



# Next Steps

- Perform more rigorous evaluation of effectiveness (e.g., compare publication rates of users vs. non-users of writing center)
- Develop additional writing resources and expand services to include CV review
- Actively market available writing services and resources to faculty and trainees



# Thank You

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