

Current research

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Cheyne FN. Editorial peer review in biomedical publishing: an overview. *EAHIL Newsletter to European Health Librarians*. 2004 May;67:22–5.

This brief article illustrates the fundamentals of the peer review process and highlights the main topics of debate. It defines and explains peer review, editorial peer review, different approaches to this topic, and open or blinded peer review process.

Vasas L. The role of human factors in information seeking in medicine. *EAHIL Newsletter to European Health Librarians*. 2004 May;67:33–7.

The author performed an extensive survey among Hungarian physicians, medical students, and medical librarians — experts in medicine and borderline sciences. Its aim was to elucidate as to whether personality parameters, especially the locus of control (LOC), of the surveyed people have any influence on the process methods and success of searches into medical literature. As yet, such an investigation has not been performed in Hungary, and indeed, the literature rarely refers to similar surveys.

Calabretta N, Cavanaugh SK. Education for inpatients: working with nurses through the clinical information system. *Med Ref Serv Q*. 2004 Summer;23(2):73–9. PMID: 15148021 [PubMed – in process].

Librarians at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Cooper Library have been filling orders for patient education materials through Cooper University Hospital's Clinical Information System (CIS) since December 2000. This service was instituted in response to a Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) survey that revealed that although patient education was being provided, it was not being routinely documented. Patient education orders fall into two categories: customized disease and (or) procedure information and smoking cessation information. Nurses note the condition(s) and (or) procedure(s) regarding which information is needed and indicate the education level of the material desired (basic, intermediate, or advanced). Requests are received via a dedicated printer in the reference office. Librarians rely heavily upon a wide variety of Web-based consumer health resources, including proprietary resources such as MD Consult and Micromedex CareNotes. Patient Transport staff delivers two copies of all materials to nursing stations on patient care floors. One copy is for the patient to keep, while the other is attached to the patient's chart. To complete and

document that patient education was provided, librarians record the order as filled in the CIS system.

Linton AM, Wilson PH, Gomes A, Abate L, Mintz M. Evaluation of evidence-based medicine search skills in the clinical years. *Med Ref Serv Q*. 2004 Summer;23(2):21–31. PMID: 15148016 [PubMed – in process].

The librarians of the Health Sciences Library at Washington University worked with the director of the Primary Care Clerkship to reinforce the principles of evidence-based medicine (EBM) searching taught during the first 2 years of medical school through an intensive workshop. The purpose of the program was to ensure that students apply EBM principles in a timely and effective manner in clinical situations. Working in teams led by a resident and librarian, students researched real cases and then evaluated the effectiveness of their approach to the problems. This paper outlines the rationale for the team approach, reviews the administration of a computer-based workshop, and discusses the evaluation process. Evaluation focused on both the current workshop and its implications for the informatics program presented to students during the first and second year.

Bryant SL. The information needs and information seeking behaviour of family doctors. *Health Inf Libr J*. 2004 June;21(2):84–93.

This study explores the information needs and information seeking behaviour of family doctors, identifying any differences in attitudes and behaviours derived from membership in a training practice and investigating the impact of a practice librarian. A case study of general practitioners (GPs) in Aylesbury Vale incorporated a quantitative study of the use of the medical library, two qualitative techniques, in-depth interviews, and group discussions. The study illuminates the information needs and preferences of GPs and illustrates the contribution that librarians may make at practice level, indicating the importance of outreach work.

Sladek, RM., Pinnock, C., Phillips, PA. The informationist in Australia: a feasibility study. *Health Inf Libr J*. 2004 June;21(2):94–101.

A clinical informationist could provide the best available published evidence in response to clinicians' questions identified during the process of care. This study sought to assess the feasibility of an informationist service and to propose a

model for its delivery in an Australian teaching hospital. While similar services are increasing in the UK (the USA has a long history of providing these services), this is the first Australian study in an acute public hospital. The views of 40/49 (82%) of the medical staff at the Daw Park Repatriation General Hospital, South Australia, were canvassed using a questionnaire designed to address key issues relating to a proposed service.

Hall A, Walton G. Information overload within the health care system: a literature review. *Health Inf Libr J*. 2004 June;21(2):102–8.

There is a widespread view held by health clinicians that their work effectiveness is impaired by “information overload”. Building upon a previous work by Wilson, a review of the literature was undertaken to look for evidence of this. It was found that the literature, particularly in the context of the clinical environment, was limited. This review explores the diverse overarching theories of information overload, effects of the phenomenon that are perceived to occur, and proposed solutions to this problem. Many of the papers noted an information explosion, but only three authors explicitly attempted to measure both the quantity and the com-

plexity of this information. It was also found that the typology of the information studied was severely limited, with most studies exploring information such as guidelines, access to journals, research findings, and other knowledge intensive areas. Solutions proposed seem to concentrate on technological means rather than exploring the use of humans either in management of information or as a step in the filtering process.

Stephenson PL, Green BF, Wallace RL, Earl MF, Orick JT, Taylor, MV. Community partnerships for health information training: medical librarians working with health-care professionals and consumers in Tennessee. *Health Inf Libr J*. 2004 June;21(s1):20–6.

In Tennessee, several medical library outreach projects have involved collaborative work with health-care professionals, public librarians, consumers, faith-based organizations, and community service agencies. The authors are medical librarians who worked as consultants, trainers, and project directors to promote health literacy using PubMed MEDLINE and other health information resources in the several funding projects described here.