

## **Access to and use of online evidence resources: a survey of key audiences in the NHS**

### **Survey Results**

**May 2006**

- Survey respondents regularly search for and use systematic review evidence and are searching DARE via the Cochrane Library
- Survey respondents are less likely to search for or use economic evaluations but when they do they search NHS EED
- High levels of awareness and use of CRD products by survey respondents
- Strong preference for easy access to research evidence that has been quality assessed / critically appraised
- Strong preference for topic specific email alerts
- All those interviewed indicated a strong preference for time saving 'bottom lines' on abstracts
- All those interviewed searched the CRD databases via the Cochrane Library – viewed as providing a one stop search
- Most respondents stated that lack of time and or lack of a subscription were the main barriers to use of online evidence resources

## Introduction

Between November 2005 and January 2006 we conducted a survey of NHS library managers, directors of public health and clinical governance leads. The survey aimed: to determine what online evidence resources key audiences find most useful and identify key factors determining their use; assess the use and perceived usefulness of the CRD databases, examining what actions audiences take with any information retrieved; to elicit views on how the CRD databases could be improved.

279 individuals from 477 acute and primary care trusts responded to the survey. Of these, 35% were library managers, 37% were directors/consultants of public health and 28% were clinical governance managers. Telephone interviews were also conducted with a purposive sample of survey respondents. These were arranged and conducted between February and April 2006.

## Question by question survey results

### How often do you search for health research online?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Librarian	67%	25%	4%	4%	
Public Health	10%	44%	32%	13%	1%
Clinical Governance	7%	35%	34%	19%	5%

### How often do you search for systematic reviews online?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Librarian	19%	55%	15%	9%	1%
Public Health		29%	42%	28%	1%
Clinical Governance		18%	38%	35%	9%

### How often do you search for economic evaluations online?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Librarian	3%	14%	25%	51%	7%
Public Health		5%	32%	57%	6%
Clinical Governance	1%	8%	17%	48%	26%

### Where do you access health research online?

	Only at work	Only at home	Both work and home	Both, but mostly at	Both, but mostly at	Never

				<b>work</b>	<b>home</b>	
<b>Librarian</b>	47%		9%	43%	1%	
<b>Public Health</b>	29%	2%	32%	35%		1%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	29%	1%	40%	23%	1%	5%

### How is the health research information you find generally used?

To improve knowledge of the clinical effectiveness of treatments/services			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	81%	18%	1%
<b>Public Health</b>	74%	25%	1%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	66%	28%	6%

To determine the cost effectiveness of treatments/services			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	14%	76%	10%
<b>Public Health</b>	47%	49%	4%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	27%	51%	22%

To inform commissioning of services			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	18%	66%	16%
<b>Public Health</b>	67%	30%	3%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	15%	51%	34%

To build a business case			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	5%	80%	15%
<b>Public Health</b>	26%	61%	13%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	19%	62%	19%

To inform clinical guidelines or policies			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	65%	31%	3%
<b>Public Health</b>	52%	46%	2%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	62%	31%	7%

To inform clinical audit			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	47%	49%	4%

<b>Public Health</b>	20%	62%	18%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	58%	41%	1%

To inform a clinical decision			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	64%	34%	2%
<b>Public Health</b>	28%	47%	25%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	32%	43%	25%

To inform research			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	77%	21%	2%
<b>Public Health</b>	18%	55%	27%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	29%	47%	24%

To help with education/training			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	77%	23%	
<b>Public Health</b>	24%	67%	9%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	47%	45%	8%

To keep up date professionally / clinically			
	<b>Regularly</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	74%	21%	5%
<b>Public Health</b>	46%	50%	4%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	62%	26%	12%

### **Top three online evidence resources that you find most useful**

#### **Librarians (n=98)**

82% of responding librarians selected the Cochrane Library as one of the top three online evidence resources that they found most useful. Other resources selected included: Medline (46%); Clinical Evidence (32%); NeLH/NLH resources (28%); CRD products (18%); CINAHL (15%); Embase (15%); Bandolier (10%); and the Trip database (9%).

#### **Public Health (n=102)**

50% of public health respondents selected the Cochrane Library as one of the top three online evidence resources that they found most useful. Other resources selected included: NICE (39%); Medline (27%); NeLH/NLH resources (20%); CRD products (17%); Bandolier (14%); BMJ (13%); Google (7%); and Clinical Evidence (7%).

#### **Clinical Governance (n=77)**

25% of clinical governance respondents selected the Cochrane Library as one of the top three online evidence resources that they found most useful. Other

resources selected included: NeLH/NLH resources (31%); Medline (30%); NICE (22%); Bandolier (14%); CRD products (14%); DH website (10%); CINAHL (10%); and the BMJ (10%).

### Factors influencing use of online evidence resources

Hardly any respondents rated the factors listed as unimportant

Nine out of every ten respondents rated relevance and quality of the information found as important factors influencing use.

Eight out of every ten respondents rated speed of access, free access and ease of search as important factors influencing use.

Six out of every ten respondents rated readability as an important factor influencing use.

Four out of every ten respondents rated quantity of the information found as an important factor influencing use.

### Barriers to use of online evidence resources

Limited / shared access to computer at work			
	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Librarian	7%	8%	85%
Public Health	3%	1%	96%
Clinical Governance	2%	6%	92%

Lack of time to search			
	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Librarian	22%	32%	46%
Public Health	60%	32%	8%
Clinical Governance	50%	41%	9%

Lack of searching skills			
	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Librarian	4%	6%	90%
Public Health	5%	42%	53%
Clinical Governance	12%	51%	37%

Speed of connection/download time			
	Important	Somewhat important	Not important

<b>Librarian</b>	37%	35%	28%
<b>Public Health</b>	29%	26%	45%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	36%	31%	33%

Lack of subscription/ free access to online resource			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	42%	28%	30%
<b>Public Health</b>	44%	24%	32%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	47%	34%	19%

Low quality of research information found			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	33%	23%	44%
<b>Public Health</b>	26%	38%	36%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	41%	33%	26%

Readability of the research information found			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	21%	39%	39%
<b>Public Health</b>	27%	37%	37%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	34%	44%	22%

Not enough computer training			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>		18%	82%
<b>Public Health</b>	6%	9%	85%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	6%	21%	74%

Not enough internet training			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	1%	14%	85%
<b>Public Health</b>	7%	10%	83%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	8%	17%	75%

Little support for internet use in professional setting			
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	1%	8%	91%
<b>Public Health</b>	4%	12%	85%
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	7%	21%	72%

**Which of the following would enhance your access to and/or use of online evidence resources?**

Easy access to evidence that has been quality assessed / critically appraised			
	I would find useful	I would not find useful	Not sure
Librarian	99%		1%
Public Health	95%	1%	4%
Clinical Governance	96%		4%

Email alerts about current best evidence from research, tailored to your own health care interests			
	I would find useful	I would not find useful	Not sure
Librarian	66%	21%	13%
Public Health	64%	21%	15%
Clinical Governance	79%	8%	13%

Email alerts quality assessing the latest systematic reviews generally			
	I would find useful	I would not find useful	Not sure
Librarian	52%	29%	19%
Public Health	44%	28%	28%
Clinical Governance	61%	22%	17%

Email alerts quality assessing the latest systematic reviews tailored to your own health care interests			
	I would find useful	I would not find useful	Not sure
Librarian	59%	25%	16%
Public Health	65%	16%	18%
Clinical Governance	75%	11%	14%

RSS feeds – where a website will send you a message every time there is something new			
	I would find useful	I would not find useful	Not sure
Librarian	49%	24%	27%
Public Health	17%	54%	29%
Clinical Governance	29%	36%	35%

## Awareness and use of CRD evidence resources

DARE - Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects						
	Use daily	Use weekly	Use monthly	Use rarely	Aware of but never used	Never heard of
Librarian	14%	40%	27%	11%	7%	1%
Public Health		6%	36%	33%	16%	9%
Clinical Governance		5%	12%	26%	33%	24%

NHS EED - NHS Economic Evaluation Database						
	Use daily	Use weekly	Use monthly	Use rarely	Aware of but never used	Never heard of
Librarian	3%	19%	33%	30%	7%	8%
Public Health		5%	16%	31%	17%	30%
Clinical Governance		1%	8%	18%	33%	40%

HTA Database						
	Use daily	Use weekly	Use monthly	Use rarely	Aware of but never used	Never heard of
Librarian	3%	22%	34%	27%	7%	6%
Public Health		10%	24%	39%	13%	14%
Clinical Governance		3%	9%	18%	25%	45%

Effective Health Care						
	Use daily	Use weekly	Use monthly	Use rarely	Aware of but never used	Never heard of
Librarian	3%	16%	35%	33%	7%	6%
Public Health		3%	39%	43%	7%	8%
Clinical Governance		5%	24%	38%	16%	17%

Hitting the Headlines						
	Use daily	Use weekly	Use monthly	Use rarely	Aware of but never used	Never heard of
Librarian	11%	37%	17%	25%	2%	8%
Public Health		2%	5%	23%	13%	57%
Clinical Governance	1%	7%	1%	17%	13%	61%