**Paper: BB**

# ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN HEALTH CARE

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*Health is the prime desire of man and history records the efforts of men and nations to healthy status. In recent years unprecedented growth has occurred in the business of providing health and medical care to our populations. Under such circumstances information technology has emerged as boon to provide health care information in CD-ROMs, in the form of virtual libraries, Internet, etc.*

## 1.     INTRODUCTION

Health is a prime desire of man, and history records the efforts of men and nations to achieve healthy status. In recent years unprecedented growth has occurred in the business of providing health and medical care to our population. The reasons are many, people expect many services. Medical knowledge, which can be translated into improved health and medical care programs has expanded at a phenomenal pace. The process of learning for understanding has been enhanced by the applications of technology. The ever-changing elements of modern technology make this age different than past ages. In the field of medicine, information consists of research publications, case studies, policy statements, medical indicators such as vital statistics etc. This information is required by the medical professionals at different levels.

Computers have made it possible to do most of the routine tasks of clinical practice in an efficient manner. They allow more time to pursue knowledge, and provide access to the sources of knowledge as well. The Internet has opened up brand new ways of communication, so that keeping current with happenings all over the world is simple, fast, free and convenient. We recognize that information technology has played a vital role in health care, though significant developments are too numerous to outline, only few which have opened new areas for emphasis in health care are mentioned, in this paper.

## 2. INFORMATION ON CD's

### 2.1 CD-ROM on Ayurveda

The Dabur Research foundation has launched a CR-ROM on the ancient Indian medicine system of Ayurveda titled Ayurveda Authentica. The CD-ROM was jointly developed by DRF and Tata interactive system - a division of Tata Industries Ltd. This CD includes more than 800 pages of text, video clips on yoga, Ayurvedic therapies, comprehensive psychosomatic analysis and an exhaustive glossary cum pronunciation guide of Sanskrit words. The CD is an important electronic source of information for any Ayurveda expert.

### 2.2 Three CD-ROM title from the Medical Economics Company

Recently, three new titles on CD-ROM have been announced by the Medical Economics company. One of them is the PDR Electronic library. It containing 9,000 pages of the most popular medical references. Information includes chemical structures, and illustrations and full color full images. It is updated three times, in a year. The PDR Nurses handbook provides complete description of drugs including contents, side effects, overdose symptoms and treatment. WINMDR Medical Device Register is the third CD. It is a fully interactive computer programme for windows. The product enables swift access to more than 3,000 pages of detailed medical device listing on products and manufactures.

### 2.3 Medical Meta Map on Asthma

The Institute for Scientific Information has recently released a filtered clinical data set in its new Meta Maps product line. Asthma Meta map, a decision making tool for drug development team, is intended to guide clinical and marketing programs, and to improve research strategies and clinical study design. The information is delivered on a Y2K - compliant CD-ROM via Microsoft Access 97 software, and users can browse, filter, and sort the data.

Apart from CDs, there are a number of electronic sources is medical field on the Net. Some of them are mentioned below.

## 3. ON-LINE SEARCH TOOLS

### 3.1 NLM's Web-based On-line Catalog

The National Library of Medicine (NLM), US has announced its new web catalog called LOCATOR plus. One can access this through Internet to find out books, journals, audio visuals manuscripts and other items (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/locator plus). Users can search by author, subject, titles, conference name, keywords, etc. and download the results. New receipts of both special and monograph materials are displayed along with information that is on order

or available electronically - Hotlinks to online journals are available from many records. Direct access to a variety of other sources is available from  many records. Direct access to a variety of other sources is available from  LOCATOR plus, including  MEDILINE, MEDLINE Plus, images of the history of medicine,  TOXNET, HSTAT and other US medical library catalogs.

## 3.2    Virtual  Hospitals

Healthcare providers are in constant need of current authoritative medical  information. Until recently such information was usually available only in print form in libraries; the distance from the point of care or home was the barrier for accessing information.

The University of  IOWA(US) has recently launched a digital health science library called the virtual  hospital.  This library contains hundreds of books and brochures to meet the information needs of health care providers and patients.  Here the services range from advice on self-treatment  to online GP access.

## 3.3    E-Prescriptions

Web sites are potentially an area of profitable commerce and a growing number of companies have explored  it new opportunities and are set to exploit the potential.  The US-based home Access Corporation plans to offer an HIV testing service which will return results via Internet.  The public is finding and obeying medical advice on-line.  Those offering alternative medicine have eagerly embraced the Internet.  The most extensively used sites are those for cancer patients where many alternative therapies are offered.

## 3.4    British Library's Medical Databases

Ovid Technologies have announced licensing agreement with the British Library's Healthcare information services to offer its  AMED database.  The  AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine Database) covers a selection of journals in  complementary medicine, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, rehabilitation, paediatries and other subjects allied to medicine.  In addition  to basic bibliographic information many records consists of abstracts for articles published from 1995 onwards.  Each record includes controlled indexing terms using the  AMED Thesaurus, it is based on  MeSH (MEDLINE) indexing terms.  The AMED covers relevant references to articles from  over 400 journals, many not indexed by other biomedical sources.  The scope of coverage is mainly European with the majority of titles in  English.    The  list  of  journals  indexed  in    AMED  can  be  found  at http://www.bl.uk/service/stb/amlist.html.

As I had mentioned earlier then are number of electronic sources.  The title of the source, its address and the context are given in  Table 1.

## 4.      CONCLUSION

We are now witnessing a change in the information media, from CD-ROM based products to web-based information resources, accessed via the Internet.  The key to success in health care information systems & services depend on our understanding of availability of electronic sources.  The usage will have a substantial effect on medical libraries.

The internet has a vast number of resources at its disposal and using these resources intelligently could add to our knowledge and aid us professionally in more ways than one. Using e-mail to communicate, becoming a part of a news group, owning a web page, which is fast drawing the world closer, shrinking boundaries of age, culture and distance.

The major attraction of the web for doctors is that it contains a wealth of medical information that is increasing daily-seems like it is the world's largest medical library, open round-the clock.

## 5.      REFERENCES

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## Table-1

**Navigating Medical Sites (Web Guide)**

| Sl. | Title | Web Address | Content |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Medical Matrix | www.medmatrix.org | Link to news, full text /multimedia, abstracts, textbooks, case images, patient education, directories, educational materials and forums |
| 2 | MEDILINE Plus | www.nlm.nih.gov/medlinePlus. [National Library of Medicine at National Institute of Health, UDA] | This site is virtual encyclopedia of research work, journal articles, databases and health organs. [ It can connect physicians to just about the major source on clinical trails and laboratory research] |
| 3 | Martindale's health science guide 1999 | www.ci.lib.uci.edu/hsg/medical.html | Multimedia specialized infor-mation resources, containing thousands of teaching files, medical cases, multimedia courses / text books, multimedia tutorials, databases and movies. This virtual medical centre is classified & includes subjects on nursing nutrition, pharmacy, veterinary and public health centre as well. |
| 4 | Health Library | www.healthlibrary.com/news/index.htm | News about health and medicine in India |

| 5 | Medical products, equipment and supplies | impg.medmarket.com/home.htm | Provides searchable list of companies and medical products, acts as an efficient tool for obtaining up-to-date information on the latest products and services, including operating room products, home care products, physician office products, in-patient products, and products for clinical testing. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Medical Conference locators | www.medicalconferences.com | Internet database can locate medical conferences by region, topic and date. Can search for the conference most suited to the educational needs by title, date, location and keywords and other information |
| 7 | Guidelines and protocols | www.guidelines.gov/index.asp AHCRP (Agency for Health Care Policy and Research) | Offers a compre-hensive list of evidence based clinical practice guideline for physicians, which suggest to doctors the best treatment protocols for common problems. News guidelines are posted on a weekly basis. This site allows to browse through guidelines for various conditions and pinpoint information on particular disease. |

| 8 | General Surgery | www.klinik.uni-frankfurt.de/surgery-online/ | Is an online medical journal providing surgeons worldwide with information on interdisciplinary surgery and related fields. You can also read the full text of the American medical association journal |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | (Medical Image) HON Media Gallery | www.hon.ch/media/media.html | Offers a searchable database of medical movies, which includes x-rays, movies of surgery, and other areas of interest to medical professionals and students. |
| 10 | Alternative Medicine | www.people.virginia.edu/~pjb3s/complementary-Practices .html | Provides an extensive index to the alternative medicine websites. The index covers over 50 topics, presenting a smorgasbord of alternative therapy options including many you may never have heard of like 'Amma therapy' and cryogenic medicine! |