

Beyond PubMed: Free Web Indexes to Journal and Report Literature

Part I: Medicine & Rehabilitation

Most special libraries cannot afford to subscribe to an array of indexes outside their specialty, even though researchers are often interested in cross-disciplinary or related topics. Free databases via the WWW are an alternative to paid indexes and are designed for end-user searching. That being said, some provide better searching capabilities than others. While a few offer fee-for-service copies, most materials will have to be obtained through library document delivery.

The Web has led to variants on the traditional journal index. Government organizations have posted databases which were created initially for internal use and which include an array of document types, some full-text. In addition, preprint servers are challenging traditional publishers as a source of peer-reviewed materials.

A selection of free indexes will be posted over the next few issues of *Library Letter*: Part I: Medicine & Rehabilitation; Part II: Health Promotion & Population Health; Part III: Science; and Part IV: Social Sciences & Psychology; Part V: Chemical Exposures. The Ministry of Health Library (MoH) has an excellent list posted on their website, so rather than duplicating their effort, links to their list are included whenever appropriate.

Part I: Medicine & Rehabilitation

BioMed Central Medicine

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/browse/medicine/>

An independent publishing house for peer-reviewed original research papers with open and immediate access.

Cancerlit

National Cancer Institute (U.S.)

http://www.cancer.gov/search/cancer_literature/

See the MoH website for further details: <http://www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/library/databases.html>

Cochrane Library

<http://www.update-software.com/cochrane/>

Indexes Cochrane reviews to promote evidence-based medicine. Abstracts only are free; access to the full-text of reviews is a subscription service.

HSTAT (Health Services / Technology Assessment Text)

National Library of Medicine (U.S.)

<http://hstat.nlm.nih.gov/>

A searchable collection of large, full-text documents, including but not limited to clinical practice guidelines, technology assessments, clinical reports, and consumer brochures.

PubMed

National Library of Medicine (U.S.)

<http://pubmed.gov>

Free version of Medline. Focuses on journal literature with some free full-text articles. Appears simple, but the advanced features are worth the time to learn.

*Submitted by Wendy Hunt, WCB Assistant Librarian
With thanks to colleagues of the Health Libraries Association of B.C.*