

**Physicians and their use of information: a survey comparison between the United States, Canada,  
and the United Kingdom**

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**APPENDIX**

**Online questionnaire**

**Demographic data**

- 1. Year of medical school graduation \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Medical specialism \_\_\_\_\_
  - Accident and emergency \_\_\_\_\_
  - Anaesthetics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Cardiothoracic \_\_\_\_\_
  - Cosmetic and plastic surgery \_\_\_\_\_
  - Critical care \_\_\_\_\_
  - Dermatology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ear, nose, and throat \_\_\_\_\_
  - Endocrinology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Gastroenterology \_\_\_\_\_
  - General practice \_\_\_\_\_
  - Geriatrics or elderly medicine \_\_\_\_\_
  - Haematology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Immunology and allergy \_\_\_\_\_
  - Infectious and communicable diseases \_\_\_\_\_
  - Neurology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Obstetrics, gynaecology, and fertility \_\_\_\_\_
  - Oncology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ophthalmology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Orthodontics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Orthopaedics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Paediatrics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Pain management \_\_\_\_\_
  - Palliative care \_\_\_\_\_
  - Pathology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Psychiatry \_\_\_\_\_
  - Public health \_\_\_\_\_
  - Respiratory medicine \_\_\_\_\_
  - Rheumatology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Sexual health \_\_\_\_\_
  - Surgery \_\_\_\_\_
  - Urology \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Country  
 United Kingdom \_\_\_\_\_  
 Canada \_\_\_\_\_  
 United States \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Need for information**

4. Which of the following information needs do you access electronically?  
 (Please select all that apply). All the time Sometimes Never
- 
- Information to assist with diagnosis
  - Treatment options for common diseases
  - Information on rare diseases and syndromes
  - Drug information (including new drugs and contraindications)
  - Information to give to patients
  - Information for study for further qualifications
  - Continuing professional development
  - Research
  - Teaching

5. How often on average do you formulate specific questions that require searching external evidence?
- Less than once a month \_\_\_\_\_
  - Less than once a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - Between one and five times a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - Between six and ten times a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - More than ten times a week \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often on average do you search the literature?
- Less than once a month \_\_\_\_\_
  - Less than once a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - Between one and five times a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - Between six and ten times a week \_\_\_\_\_
  - More than ten times a week \_\_\_\_\_

7. At work, how do you currently access electronic information and how would you like to?
- 
- |   | Currently access | Would like to use |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Networked computer                                  |                  |                   |
| Wireless laptop                                     |                  |                   |
| Personal digital assistant (PDA)                    |                  |                   |
| Mobile phone, short message service (SMS) messenger |                  |                   |

**Terms and skills used**

8. If you search MEDLINE (or PubMed), which of the following search facilities do you use? (Please select all that apply).

- Searching by keyword in a basic search entry box \_\_\_\_\_
- Using the “related articles” or “similar titles” facility \_\_\_\_\_
- Combining two concepts using “AND” \_\_\_\_\_
- Using Medical Subject Headings terms \_\_\_\_\_
- Applying limits (English language, human subjects only, date of publication) \_\_\_\_\_

9. The following are terms used in journal papers about evidence-based medicine (EBM). Please indicate your reaction to them by ticking the appropriate box.

|                           | I am<br>unaware<br>of this<br>term | It would not<br>be helpful for<br>me to<br>understand | Do not<br>understand<br>but would<br>like to | Some<br>understanding | Yes,<br>understand<br>and could<br>explain to<br>others |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| Relative risk             |                                    |   |  |                       |   |
| Absolute risk             |                                    |   |  |                       |   |
| Systematic<br>review      |                                    |   |  |                       |   |
| Number needed<br>to treat |                                    |   |  |                       |   |
| Confidence<br>interval    |                                    |   |  |                       |   |
| Publication bias          |                                    |   |  |                       |   |

**Evidence-based medicine resources**

10. There are a growing number of database resources available electronically. Please indicate those that you have used or are aware of online.

| (Please tick for each source)  | I have never<br>heard of<br>this | Aware of<br>but never<br>used | Aware of, but<br>would like<br>more training<br>before using | Use<br>occasionally | Use<br>regularly |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------|------------------|
| Bandolier (Oxford)   |                                  |                               |  |                     |                  |
| TRIP Database  |                                  |                               |  |                     |                  |
| Cochrane Database<br>of Systematic<br>Reviews                        |                                  |                               |  |                     |                  |
| Database of<br>Abstracts of<br>Reviews of<br>Effectiveness<br>(DARE) |                                  |                               |  |                     |                  |

DynaMed  
 InfoPOEMs and  
 InforRetriever  
 MDConsult  
 MEDLINE or  
 PubMed  
 UpToDate

11. There are also a number of specialised resources available electronically. Please indicate those which you have used or are aware of online.

| (Please tick for each source)      | I have never heard of this | Aware of but never used | Aware of, but would like more training before using | Use occasionally | Use regularly |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|------------------|---------------|
| BestBETs (Manchester)              |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| Clinical Evidence (BMJ)            |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin     |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| Evidence Based on Call             |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| Health Technology Assessments      |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| EBM Guidelines                     |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| NICE Guidance                      |                            |                         |   |                  |               |
| Critically Appraised Topics (CATs) |                            |                         |   |                  |               |

12. Please rank the following in order of importance to you as an aid in clinical decision making. (Please put a "1" beside your most preferred/most used source, and a "2" beside the next most preferred/most used, and so on up to "5").

- Textbooks or journals (in paper format) \_\_\_\_\_
- Full-text electronic journals \_\_\_\_\_
- EBM resources listed above \_\_\_\_\_
- Colleagues \_\_\_\_\_
- Other health professionals, such as pharmacists \_\_\_\_\_

**Views and attitudes toward evidence-based medicine**

13. Please respond to the following statements.

|  | Strongly<br>disagree | Disagree | Not<br>sure | Agree | Strongly<br>agree |
|--|----------------------|----------|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Practising EBM improves patient outcomes   |                      |          |             |       |                   |
| EBM requires critical appraisal skills to assess the quality of research                       |                      |          |             |       |                   |
| Busy doctors do not have the time to find and critically appraise the relevant research papers |                      |          |             |       |                   |
| EBM is a good concept that fails in practice   |                      |          |             |       |                   |
| In most areas of medicine, there is little or no evidence to guide practice                    |                      |          |             |       |                   |
| The whole medical information “explosion” is overwhelming                                      |                      |          |             |       |                   |

14. Please rank the most significant barriers to accessing health information for patient care?

(Rank from 1–5, with 1 being the most significant barrier.)

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Time it takes to search                              | _____ |
| Lack of searching skills                             | _____ |
| Too much information that is not clinically relevant | _____ |
| Lack of knowledge of resources                       | _____ |
| Lack of easy access to electronic resources          | _____ |