

# Literature Searching for Research

Lambeth Research Forum

14<sup>th</sup> February 2002

*Catherine Ebenezer*

*Multidisciplinary Library, Reay House*

South London and Maudsley NHS Trust

2002

# Purposes of literature searching

- ◆ Identify extent and quality of work already carried out in the subject area
- ◆ Identify key contacts
- ◆ Avoid duplication!

# Types of literature: 1

## Primary literature

- ◆ Preprints
- ◆ Conference proceedings
- ◆ Informally published reports ("grey literature")
- ◆ Journal articles

# Types of literature: 2

## Secondary literature

- ◆ Reviews
- ◆ Books: edited collections
- ◆ Books: monographs/surveys

# Types of literature: 3

More on "grey literature"...

- ◆ Theses
- ◆ Reports
- ◆ Official publications (not Stationery Office)
- ◆ Conference proceedings

# Sources for literature searching: 1

Databases of articles and books

*Bibliographic* e.g. MEDLINE, PsycINFO etc.

*Full text* e.g. PsycArticles, Cochrane Database

Library catalogues (COPAC, British Library, South Thames Libraries etc.)

Research databases

e.g. National Research Register, MRC (UK),  
CRISP (USA)

# Sources for literature searching: 2

...not forgetting....

- ◆ Handsearching of core journals
- ◆ Reference lists/ Footnote chasing
- ◆ Printed bibliographies
- ◆ World Wide Web search engines (e.g. Google)
- ◆ Picking colleagues' brains (such as they are...)

# Characteristics of the literature

Mental health literature is *problematic*:

- ◆ "Poorly controlled"
- ◆ Scattered across many different databases
  - ▶ *none is comprehensive*
  - ▶ *all need to be looked at in a comprehensive search*

*Brettle A J and Long A F (2001) Comparison of bibliographic databases for information on the rehabilitation of people with severe mental illness. Bull Med Libr Assoc 89(4) 353-361*



# Bibliographic databases: 1

## MEDLINE

- ◆ 4000+ journals indexed
- ◆ Produced by National Library of Medicine (USA)
- ◆ Available free at <http://www.pubmed.gov>
- ◆ European journals not particularly well covered
- ◆ Mental health coverage not especially good
- ◆ Strong on acute medical specialities

# Bibliographic databases: 2

## Psychological Abstracts

(PsycINFO, PsycLIT, ClinPsyc-*clinical subset*)

- ◆ Produced by American Psychological Association
- ◆ A “cash cow”—not available anywhere free, but short-term access via WWW can be purchased
- ◆ Covers all aspects of psychology
- ◆ Comprehensive but some US bias

# Bibliographic databases: 3

## EMBASE Psychiatry

- ◆ European commercial product
- ◆ Comprehensive psychiatry coverage
- ◆ Strong on pharmacology and drug therapy issues
- ◆ Thesaurus terms very “old-fashioned”
- ◆ First resort!

# Bibliographic databases: 4

## CINAHL

- ◆ Covers nursing, PAMs, health management
- ◆ Recent records include references
- ◆ US bias but increasingly strong coverage of UK and Australasian literature
- ◆ Good for psychiatric nursing
- ◆ Some journals very obscure

# Bibliographic databases: 5

## AMED: Allied and Complementary Medicine

- ◆ Produced in UK by British Library
- ◆ Aims to complement MEDLINE
- ◆ Best source of UK PAMs literature

# Bibliographic databases: 6

## Cochrane Library

- ◆ Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- ◆ NHS Economic Evaluations Database
- ◆ NHS CRD Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effectiveness
  
- ◆ Medical Editors' Trials Amnesty
- ◆ HTA Database

# Bibliographic databases: 7

## Citation indexes

- ◆ Identify a significant piece of published research
- ◆ Find out who has cited it in later work
  - ▶ *SciSearch*
  - ▶ *Social SciSearch (includes nursing)*

# Bibliographic databases: 8

## Others....

- ◆ ChildData (child health and welfare)
- ◆ ASSIA (applied social sciences)
- ◆ caredata (social work)
- ◆ ENB database (nursing)
- ◆ HMIC (health management)

See <http://slamlibrary.net> for these and more....



# Bibliographic databases: 9

...lots of web-accessible databases on specialist areas, e.g.:

- ◆ **BiblioSleep:** sleep
- ◆ **HealthPromis:**  
health promotion
- ◆ **PsycheMatters:**  
psychotherapy
- ◆ **Aegis AIDS-HIV**
- ◆ **NARIC:** disability
- ◆ **PIE:** mental health policy
- ◆ **BEI:** education
- ◆ **ETOH:** alcohol abuse
- ◆ **CHID:** public health
- ◆ **ERIC:** education
- ◆ **SPIN:** science policy
- ◆ **JourLit/BookRev:**  
psychoanalysis

...more at <http://www.leidenuniv.nl/ub/biv/freebase.htm>

# Citation styles: 1

- ◆ Harvard style – *social sciences*

Ebenezer, C M (2001) The trials of life: the work of a mental health librarian. *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 18(4) 234-239

- ◆ Vancouver style – *biomedicine*

Ebenezer C M. The trials of life: the work of a mental health librarian. *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 2001; 18(4) 234-9

...more on citation styles at <http://slamlibrary.xiy.net>

# Citation styles: 2

## Citing electronic sources

Styles less established than for citing printed formats--

--need to include:

- ◆ Bibliographic details (as applicable): author, title, etc.
- ◆ URL
- ◆ Date downloaded

Ebenezer, C M (2001) From nether hell thy people save: BMA  
Library open day 12/09/2001. *London-1* 5 12-14 At  
[http://www.londonlinks.ac.uk/london\\_1/](http://www.londonlinks.ac.uk/london_1/) [17/01/2002].

# Research information: 1

- ◆ Research in progress
- ◆ Findings/outcomes
- ◆ Research funding and opportunities

# Research information: 2

- ◆ National Health Service R&D pages

<http://www.doh.gov.uk/research/rd3/nhsrandd/rd3index.htm>

Information on all aspects of NHS research: includes

**National Research Register**: ongoing and recently completed research projects funded by or of interest to the NHS

**Research Findings Electronic Register (ReFeR)**: findings of completed NHS research

**Health Technology Assessment (HTA)** programme monographs

- ◆ R&D Info

<http://www.rdinfo.org.uk>

A digest of health-related funding and training opportunities

# Research information: 3

- ◆ Current Controlled Trials: *mRCT*

A register of randomised controlled trials currently in progress

<http://www.controlled-trials.com/>

# Research information: 4

## Medical research charities

- ◆ Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC)

<http://www.amrc.org.uk/>

Links to individual charities, funding guide

- ◆ WISDOM database of biomedical research funding

<http://wisdom.wellcome.ac.uk/wisdom/fundhome.html>

Information on 400+ funding schemes offered by UK organisations supporting biomedical research

# Research information: 5

## Higher education 1

### Research councils:

- ◆ Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- ◆ Medical Research Council (MRC)

### NEST database:

provides information on current research funded by the UK research councils:

[http://www.nest.ac.uk/research\\_g.html](http://www.nest.ac.uk/research_g.html)



# Research information: 6

## Higher education 2

HERO research zone:

Information on research opportunities and funding within  
UK higher education

<http://www.hero.ac.uk/research/>

# Further training: 1

## Online resources

- ◆ Literature searching for research (Bath)

[http://www.bath.ac.uk/Departments/PostMed/rdsu/hints\\_search.htm](http://www.bath.ac.uk/Departments/PostMed/rdsu/hints_search.htm)

- ◆ Information retrieval skills for medicine (Leicester)

<http://www.le.ac.uk/library/teach/irsm/irsm1.html>

- ◆ Resource Discovery Network online tutorials:  
psychology, social work, medicine, social policy,  
social research methods

<http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk>

# Further training: 2

## NHS and academic libraries

- ◆ Reay House library  
provides training in database searching or assistance with literature searches; group sessions can be organised
- ◆ HealthFirst  
provides training in database searching or assistance with literature searches, basic and advanced internet searching
- ◆ King's College London health sciences libraries  
provides hands-on workshops on searching bibliographic databases and electronic journals

# Further training: 3

## External training providers 1

- ◆ Library Association

runs a variety of courses on information searching in health care  
(formerly these were provided by the British Library)

<http://www.la-hq.org.uk>

- ◆ BMA Library

runs workshops on MEDLINE

<http://library.bma.org.uk/>

# Further training: 4

## External training providers 2

### Systematic Reviews Training Unit (UCL)

Offers training and short courses in systematic review methodology for health professionals

<http://www.ich.ucl.ac.uk/srtu/>

### NHS CRD

Provide training in the use of the Cochrane Library for research coordinators, clinical audit and clinical governance staff, and librarians

<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/cochlib.htm>