

Delaware Health and Medical Information Web Survey Summary Report

A web survey was made available to a number of medical groups within the state in order to gather information from medical professionals for the strategic plan for medical and health library services in Delaware. The Nurses Association and some within the Psychological Association and the Academy of Family Physicians chose to participate in the survey. Responses were received from 471 nurses, 13 psychologists, and 7 family physicians. A compilation of the survey responses follows this brief summary. The compilation includes 8 pages in chart form and 7 pages of text responses. While the responses of the psychologists and family physicians are included in the Total Responses column and in the Percentage of Total Responses column, separate percentage columns for these two groups were not included. Percents based on 13 and 7 respondents might be misleading.

Who participated?

- Participants were overwhelmingly located in New Castle County although there were participants from all three Delaware counties.
- Ninety-six percent of the respondents overall were on the staff of a hospital that provides library services. This represented 98 percent of the nurses and 100 percent of the family physicians who responded.
- Eleven of the 13 psychologists were not on the staff of a hospital with library services.
- While the respondents lived in a total of 77 different zip codes, the highest numbers came from 19701, 19808, 19709, 19702, 19711, 19720, 19713, and 21921. Each of these zip codes was home to twenty or more respondents.

Which services does your hospital library provide?

Of the nurses responding yes/no to this question, over 99 percent said their hospital library had online books, journals and expanded texts such as MICROMEDEX, and UpToDate; books and journals; and access to key literature databases, ie., CINAHL. What was striking in the responses to the question was the high number of nurses who were unaware of some of the services available; fifty-two percent (52.18%) did not know about access to evidence-based health care resources such as the Cochrane Databases of Systematic Reviews; 34 percent (34.00%) were unaware of the library provided journal articles from other libraries.

Most of the family physicians who responded said their hospital library had the resources listed.

Fifty-eight percent (68.42%) overall said the frequency of their use of the library services listed varied a great deal. Eighteen percent (17.77%) said they used one or more of the library services weekly.

How do you receive journal articles?

Seventy-one percent (70.88%) said they found articles online themselves; thirty-six percent (36.05%) said they went to the library to read articles.

How do you prefer to obtain journal articles?

Respondents were given a list of six methods for obtaining journal articles and asked to rank the methods according to how they preferred to receive articles. The methods are listed below with the most preferred method listed first. (Note: the methods are listed by mean score; the “no opinion” scores were not used in calculating the mean or the median scores.)

| Method | Mean Score |
|---|-------------------|
| Full text (PDF) emailed from library | 2.18 |
| Find articles online myself | 2.29 |
| Pick up or receive mailed photocopies from library | 3.07 |
| Go to library to read articles | 3.80 |
| Receive faxed copies faxed from library | 3.90 |
| Order articles myself online from journal web sites | 4.13 |

If you do not have access to a hospital library, how do you get the health information you need? (Question 7)

(Note: this question was intended for those 21 respondents who did not have access to a hospital library; however, many who said they had access to a hospital library also answered this question. Their responses appear to be when they do not have access to the hospital library, this is what they do...)

Twenty-nine percent (28.72%) overall said they used the Internet to get health information. Ten of the 13 psychologists and all seven of the family physicians said they used personal/office library books and/or journals. (The reader is directed to the last section of the compilation of the survey responses, which includes all the keyed in responses.)

What resource or resources that you are currently unable to access would most help you in your work? (Question 8)

While many of the responses indicated the nurses were happy or satisfied with what they had access to or were unaware of what else might be possible, some identified specific journals. Several indicated they wanted more access to full text articles, free access, and access from home. The psychologists’ responses were similar. Remember that 11 of the 13 psychologists were not on the staff of a hospital that provides library services. (The reader is directed to the last section of the compilation of the survey responses, which includes all the keyed in responses.)

What could be done to make health science information resources more readily available to clinicians and medical staff in Delaware? (Question 9)

Nurses cited easier access, access from home, and more information from the library on the services available. Psychologists gave similar suggestions, but also noted feeling isolated in private practice. One said “I need something close, convenient, inexpensive, and up-to-date.” Another said, “the more online, the better.” The family physicians who provided an answer to this question said, “ability to email librarians to request search,” “just keep publishing websites,” and “make available to public libraries.” (The reader is directed to the last section of the compilation of the survey responses, which includes all the keyed in responses.)