



A wealth of information is just a click away

The ICGP Library and Information Service is playing a major role in assisting Irish GPs with their information needs, writes Gillian Doran

BENJAMIN DISRAELI once said: "As a general rule, the most successful man in life is the man who has the best information". This statement could be even more apt in this time of information overload.

The ICGP Library and Information Service was established in 1999 in response to this overload. Its main purpose is to assist GP members both in Ireland and abroad in their clinical information needs.

Since 1999, emphasis has been placed on developing an online presence through the ICGP website as well as supporting the information needs of the ICGP project directors, members and other health-related organisations throughout the country. While not strictly a lending library, the main focus is on the sourcing and provision of information to the relevant users in an efficient manner.

The library aims to support GPs in various aspects of their work. These services include: training, online resources, literature sources and an online library catalogue.

Training

Training can be provided by the librarians on how to best use PubMed (Medline), the Cochrane Library, TRIP, Google and any other sites. Tips for several databases are provided on the library section of the ICGP website.

Online resources

Updated lists of new online resources are available on the College website: www.icgp.ie/library

Literature searches

Literature searches can be carried out on topics that members request. Members need to give full details of the information they require, eg. whether they need review articles only, or guidelines only, in Ireland, or only females, etc. Full-text articles need to be ordered from the ICGP Library.

The library can access journal articles from the other Irish Health Care Libraries (€3-€5); material from the British Library (€15) and a German online service (€9). However, articles need to be requested well in advance as they can take several weeks.

A listing of the journals held in the ICGP Library is provided in the ICGP Yearbook and Diary and also on the Library homepage of the ICGP website: www.icgp.ie/library Over 30 general practice-related journals for reading are available.

Online library catalogue

The online library catalogue continues to be developed. The library catalogue enables members throughout the country to check if the ICGP library holds specific informa-

tion. Books, reports, web links, *Forum* articles (since 2000) and ICGP publications are all searchable on the library catalogue. Where available, links to outside sources of reports and information, etc. are also provided.

Material

What material can I access through the library webpages?

- ICGP Publications including clinical guidelines
- *Forum*
- Literature Searches (PubMed, Cochrane Library, TRIP, OMNI, etc.)
- Full-text articles from various sources including hardcopy journals from Irish Healthcare Libraries, the British Library, online, etc.
- Web addresses of online resources.

In these times of 'virtual libraries' the library staff are aware of the need to go beyond the physical structure of the library to the members' geographically spread around the country.

The Library presents at various events throughout the year, most of which are outside of Dublin. These include the Annual General Meeting, the Winter Meeting, Distance Learning Unit workshops, CME tutor workshops, the National Trainers Workshop and GP registrar training sessions when requested.

An 'about the library' section is an FAQ area, and the 'noticeboard' area provides a web link to the Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin Index Facility.

In co-operation with Dr Claire Collins, ICGP Director of Research, a research listing facility has also been developed. The aim of the research listing is to enable researchers around the country to submit basic information regarding their current work so that others may know what is in progress or has been recently produced.

The ICGP librarians are involved in further developing links with other related organisations through their representation on committees and attendance at relevant training sessions, eg. supporting systematic reviews.

We are always interested in knowing about your information needs, so please contact the library staff with any suggestions, feedback or queries you have.

Samuel Johnson said: "Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it".

The ICGP Library aims to help you with your search! 

Gillian Doran, ICGP Librarian