

## Beyond an Apple a Day: Providing Consumer Health Information at Your Library

Two-Part Webinar Series



National Network of Libraries of Medicine,  
South Central Region and TSLAC

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### Part 1- April 15

- Evolution of Consumer Health and e-patients
- Role of the Librarian in Consumer Health
- Consumer Health and the Reference Interview
- Consumer Health Resources: an Introduction to MedlinePlus.gov

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### Consumer Health – then and now...

- Before 1972, doctors told patients what they wanted patients to know, and what they wanted patients to do.
- 1972 – *AHA Patient Bill of Rights*
  - "The patient has the right and is encouraged to obtain from physicians and other direct caregivers relevant, current, and understandable information about his or her diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis."

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## Realities of Health Care today

- Patients are now asked to make decisions about their own disease process.
- Most patients do not have the tools to make these kinds of decisions




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## What's an e-patient?

- "...individuals who are equipped, enabled, empowered and engaged in their health and health care decisions." [Ferguson]
- "... new breed of informed health consumers, using the Internet to gather information about a medical condition of particular interest to them." [Wikipedia]

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## Consumer Health on the Web

- Pew Internet and American Life Project
  - 61% of American adults look online for health information
  - 80% of US Internet users have searched for information on at least one health topic
  - 52% of searches on the Internet are on behalf of someone else
  - 60% of e-patients say they (or someone they know) has been helped by following medical advice or health information from the Internet
  - 66% started at a search engine for their most recent inquiry

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## Consumer Health on the Web

□ Pew Internet and American Life Project

■ BUT ...

Only one quarter of online health seekers said they always or usually check the source and date of health information online!

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## Role of the Librarian

□ What is the role of the librarian in helping people find the information they need to make good decisions about their health?



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## Health Literacy

□ "The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions" [*Healthy People 2010*]



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### Why is Health Literacy Important?

- ▣ To fill out a patient information form
- ▣ To understand health-related instructions
- ▣ To follow discharge instructions
- ▣ To identify signs
- ▣ To keep appointments
- ▣ To understand insurance
- ▣ To sign consent forms



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### Issues in Reference



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### The Reference Interview in the context of health information

- ▣ What are these patrons really looking for?
  - Sick lick vomiting
    - ▣ Cyclic vomiting
  - Dropped Bladder
    - ▣ Cystocele
  - Fireballs in the Eucharist
    - ▣ Fibroids in the uterus
  - Smiling Mighty Jesus
    - ▣ Spinal Meningitis

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## The Reference Interview

...in the context of health information

- Be empathetic
- Be an active listener
- Use open ended questions
- Respect privacy / confidentiality
- Be prepared for emotions
- Be aware of body language




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## The Reference Interview

- Language and cultural barriers pose special problems
- Know the limits of your collection
- Do not offer personal experiences
- Know where you can refer your patrons
- Others?

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## Consumer Health Resources

- An Introduction to MedlinePlus.gov
  - <http://www.medlineplus.gov>
  - Designed for patients and their families and friends
  - 900+ Health Topics: including Diseases, Illnesses, Health Conditions and Wellness Issues
  - Drugs and Supplements
  - Videos and Cool Tools
  - English, Spanish, and more!




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## Until next time...

- Exercises
- Questions
- Contact me:
  - Cheryl Rowan, Consumer Health Coordinator
  - NN/LM SCR <http://www.nlm.gov/scr/>
  - [cheryl.rowan@exch.library.tmc.edu](mailto:cheryl.rowan@exch.library.tmc.edu)




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## Part 2 – April 22

- Recap from Part 1
- Ethical Guidelines for Consumer Health
- Consumer Health on the Internet
- Collection Development
- Beyond Your Library

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## Ethical & Legal Considerations



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## Have you ever been in her shoes?



"Whoa, that looks nasty.  
Prepare the Reference Desk for surgery!"

From: *American Libraries*, October 2009, p. 80.

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## Ethical Guidelines

- Respect Privacy/Confidentiality
- Know the limits of your collection
- Do not interpret medical information
- Do not offer personal experiences
- Use a disclaimer or caution statement



"The Consumer Health Reference Interview and Ethical Issues,"  
*NN/LM Consumer Health Manual*  
<http://nmlm.gov/outreach/consumer/ethics.html>

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### Disclaimers & caution statements

Short example:

- “Materials in the Resource Center represent the opinions of the authors and are intended as a complement, **not a substitute for the advice of your healthcare providers.**”




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### Disclaimers & Caution statements

Long example:

- “Please note: This information is provided for educational purposes only and is provided with the understanding that it **not be interpreted as medical or professional advice.** All medical information should be carefully reviewed with your physician or health care provider. This service is not intended to be used as a tool for the diagnosis or treatment of health problems; nor is it intended to be a substitute for the advice of a qualified medical professional.”




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### Consumer Health on the Internet

The ABC's of evaluation

- Accuracy
- Authority
- Bias
- Currency
- Coverage
- And, user friendliness




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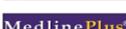




## Databases via TexShare

Health & Medicine

Not sure where to start? Try [MedlinePlus](#)

	In-depth coverage of complementary and alternative medicine dating to 1990	
	Articles on fitness, medicine, nutrition, diseases, public health, HMO's Coverage: 1994 to the present	
	Information on many health topics including medicine, child care Searchable full text for nearly 150 journals, updated daily	
	Nearly 550 scholarly full text journals on many medical disciplines Updated daily	
	Authoritative medical information on medicine, nursing, dentistry From the National Library of Medicine	
	Access to help topics, drug information, news, PUBMED From the National Library of Medicine	
	Alternative medicine database for consumer health researchers You will get a list of databases, scroll down and click Natural & Alternative Treatments	

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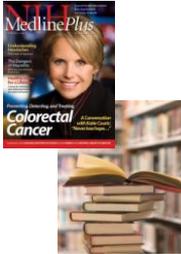
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## Collection Development – Beyond the Internet

- Book lists on CAPHIS
  - <http://caphis.mlanet.org/chis/collection.html>
- Journals, videos, and more
  - MedlinePlus videos
  - NIH MedlinePlus magazine
  - NIH News in Health Newsletter
    - Free and not copyrighted!
    - <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov>




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## Beyond Your Library

- National Network of Libraries of Medicine
  - <http://www.nlm.gov/>
  - <http://nlm.gov/outreach/consumer/>
- National Library of Medicine
  - <http://www.nlm.nih.gov>
- Medical Library Association
  - <http://www.mlanet.org/for-health-consumers/>





**MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

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## Questions?

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