EBM Solutions Evidence-Based Guidelines. EBM Solutions, 3401 West End Avenue, Suite 510, Nashville, TN 37203-6893; 615.250.1650; hutsell@ebmsolutions.com; www.ebmsolutions.com; Web or application service provider as part of EBM*desktop* or EBM*pact;* pricing based on number of users.

EBM Solutions provides access to evidence-based studies for both the patient and the health provider. Evidence-based guidelines for more than 100 medical illnesses or conditions (each guideline averages 1,700 citations and 70 evidence grades and references) have been developed by an academic consortium of six leading U.S. medical centers: Duke University Medical Center, Emory University's Woodruff Health Sciences Center, Oregon Health & Science University, Mount Sinai New York University Health, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, and Washington University School of Medicine. Clinical and consumer versions of each guideline are provided. Updates occur every six months or more frequently as the medical evidence requires.

The user may view both patient and provider screens side by side (dual view) or may select one screen. When signing on, the default guideline is congestive heart failure. Each guideline is organized in the same way: Key Points, EBM Highlights, Decision-Tree, Definition, Significance, Causes, Symptoms & Signs, Screening & Diagnosis, Prevention & Treatment, Complementary/Alternative Medicine, Prognosis, Research Frontiers, References, and About the Author. EBM Highlights includes the figures and tables. Algorithms (decision trees) provide graphical presentations of evaluation and decision management and directly link from the decision tree to the corresponding guideline section. In the References section, ''Links to Abstract'' takes the user to PubMed. Research Frontiers discusses ongoing research. The guidelines are brief and well written. Language used for the patient view is clear and at the appropriate level. Guideline updates are listed and included at the top of each guideline page. A brief (two screen) noninteractive New User Guided Tour is provided.

The Diets & Weight Loss Guideline (updated 7/11/03) is an excellent example of the value of this service. It critically reviews such popular diet supplements as Metabolife356 and Calorad 2000 as well as compares four popular diets, Dr. Atkins's Diet Revolution, The Zone, Sugar Busters, and The Carbohydrate Addict's Diet and several commercial weight loss services including Jenny Craig and Weight Watchers. Excerpts from the Diets & Weight Loss guideline follow:

> Fad diets also lack the physical activity and behavioral therapy components recommended in the *Evidence Report* for long-term weight control (see **Criteria for Healthy Weight-Loss Diets** and **Characteristics of Popular (Fad) Diets**) . . .
>
> The Atkins' diet, a low-carbohydrate, high-protein, high-fat, ketogenic diet, induces ketosis, a metabolic adaptation to starvation. However, because ketosis can produce mild-to-moderate side effects, ketogenic diets are not recommended for healthy weight loss **E (A2)**. In addition, while the Atkins's diet may promote weight loss and reduce total cholesterol in the short-term, it may promote coronary artery disease over the long-term **E (A1)**.

Most importantly, links to the evidence are indicated by a red capital E, followed by an alphanumeric modifier that indicates the level of evidence. EBM Solutions has adapted the evidence grading of the American College of Chest Physicians. Each treatment or prevention recommendation is followed by a letter grade and a number grade. The letter grade refers to the scientific strength of the study. A letter grage of A indicates the strongest evidence, followed by B and C. The number grade reflects the trade-off between benefits and risks for the recommendation. A grade of 1 suggests that for most patients the benefits clearly outweigh the risks, while a 2 suggests that the trade-off between benefit and harm is not clear for the average patient.

Overall, EBM Solutions is an excellent product that is supported by an academic medical community and strives to provide the best evidence to both patients and health providers.

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Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Library. National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, Georgetown University, Box 571272, Washington, DC 20057-1272; 202.784.9770; www.mchlibrary.org; free Website. Some materials also available for purchase in print format.

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Library is part of the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health (NCEMCH) at Georgetown University. NCEMCH provides leadership to the maternal and child health community in three areas—program development, education, and state-of-the-art knowledge—to improve the health and well being of children and families. The library serves the maternal and child health community with information and resources to assist federal, state, and local policymakers; public health professionals; and the public make informed decisions about maternal and child health services, programs, and policies.

MCH Library offers maternal and child health information compiled by library staff and pathways to the best maternal and child health information available on other Websites, from organizations, and in libraries. The MCH Library is intended for health professionals,

policymakers, family advocates, community service professionals, maternal and child health or public health faculty and students, families, and the public.

The library offers the MCH Alert weekly electronic newsletter with up-to-date information; resource guides and knowledge paths; bibliographies; searchable databases of full-text publications, organizations, and major projects; links to significant Websites such as Bright Futures; and an A-to-Z list of 100 key health topics.

The major features include the MCHLine database, which lists materials held in the Mary C. Egan Maternal and Child Health Library. The library focuses on publications from federal and state agencies and does not collect materials on clinical medicine. The MCH Organizations Database lists governmental, professional, and other organizations that provide information on maternal and child health topics. The MCH Projects Database tracks projects funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. The Healthy Start Collection Database contains more than 2,000 full-text publications from Healthy Start sites. Librarians compile knowledge paths on maternal and child health-related topics with recent and high-quality resources. Knowledge paths include links to Websites, electronic publications, databases, discussion groups, and citations for journal articles and other print resources. This information is regularly updated.

Usability can be demonstrated by a search on ''obesity'': The A-to-Z topics have a knowledge path on obesity that lists related topics, Websites, journal articles, books, reports, databases, discussion groups, and electronic newsletters. The general Website is searchable for obesity and lists articles from the MCH Alert electronic newsletter. The MCH Library databases can be searched individually or as a group. The full-text databases contain a lot of current, useful, and timely information about obesity.

The MCH Library has received two awards: the World Wide Web Health Award from the Health Information Resource Center and the APEX Award for publication excellence. The home page uses prime space to announce these two awards. This announcement gives users of this Website confidence about the quality of the information, but it uses space that would be better used for resources that are most used by the intended audience. The main navigation bar on the left is much too small and should be larger. The MCH Library aggregates a great deal of information on one Website. It is an excellent Website for professionals and patients needing specific maternal and child health information.

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MD Consult Core Collection. MD Consult, 11830 Westline Industrial Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146; 800.401.9962; mdc.customerservice@elsevier.com; www.mdconsult.com; Website; Price for individuals: $219.95 for an annual subscription; $24.95 for one month; contact MD Consult for group and institutional pricing (considerably higher).

MD Consult is an online resource geared toward physicians and other health care professionals. It offers clinicians the means to quickly answer clinical questions and keep current with medical literature by integrating ''the most renowned collection of medical content online.'' The core collection offers full-text access to forty medical textbooks, simultaneous searching of citation databases including MEDLINE, full-text access to more than sixty medical journals and clinics, information on over 30,000 medications, more than 1,000 clinical practice guidelines, over 3,500 patient-education handouts, and clinical updates including synopses of current medical publications and events. Currently, users can request a ten-day free trial to access MD Consult.

Once logged into MD Consult, the main page is straightforward and easy to navigate. At the top of the page is a simple search box that will yield results in all sections of MD Consult. To bypass this, an ''advanced search'' link is readily available. Underneath the search box is a series of content tabs that link to various sections of the site: Home, Books, Journals, Drugs, News, Current Practice, Patient Handouts, Learning Center, and MDC Mobile, a new feature which allows users to download news, drug updates, and journal abstracts and initiate searches from their personal digital assistants (PDAs).

The main body of the page contains links to the main highlights of the day and week. Users can quickly scan this for recent happenings and tables of contents (TOCs). One unique feature is the What Patients Are Reading section. MD Consult editors scan the popular press (including the television series *ER*) each week to learn what patients hear and read about medicine, report on it here, and add links to full-text material (journal articles and patient handouts) on each topic. These daily news reports are handy for librarians who provide customized current awareness alerts to patron user groups.

The journal search feature allows basic Boolean searching, and the advanced search provides additional options to limit a search by author, journal, publication date, publication type or focus, study group, and subject age. The default sorting is by full-text/relevancy. This means that MD Consult full-text articles are listed first in all search results, even if other citations are more relevant to the search query. While the search interface is adequate for citation verification or performing ''quick and dirty'' searches, it is not recommended for comprehensive literature reviews.

While the search interface is lim-

ited, MD Consult does provide access to full-text articles from more than sixty journals and clinics. Of particular note is the full-text access to titles in the Clinics of North America series. Unfortunately, full-text articles are not available in portable document format (PDF) and browsing by TOC or volume is not available. However, MD Consult is a LinkOut provider, and libraries can increase the value and visibility of MDConsult full-text articles by linking to them from PubMed.

Residents and students particularly appreciate the reference book section, which features more than forty titles (several new editions have recently been added) covering a spectrum of disciplines, ranging from allergies to urology. This broad subject coverage, combined with the ability to search all the books at once, can be a considerable time saver over consulting print versions. Users can perform a simple Boolean search that will search the indices of the textbooks and yield results sorted by relevancy. They can select one of the texts by clicking its link and then navigate through it using the search hits results links in the left frame. Alternatively, users can bypass the search function by choosing a title and browsing its table of contents or index.

Certainly other electronic textbook providers are on the market, including Stat!Ref and Books@Ovid. Stat!Ref is not as comprehensive in its subject coverage as MD Consult, and the two products have little overlap in titles. Books@Ovid features a larger collection of titles, available individually, in book packages, or in subject packages with other content.

MD Consult also provides drug information, featuring a drug update section and Mosby's Drug Consult with drug package insert information, indications, approval dates, comparative tables, and cost of therapy information. While this information may not be unique, it is certainly a plus.

While the practice guidelines can be useful, similar content can be found elsewhere. The National Guidelines Clearinghouse is recommended over MD Consult.

MD Consult allows users to customize patient-education materials with specific instructions or marketing information. While this feature is nice, quality patient and consumer information can be found elsewhere. MEDLINEplus is recommended in preference to MD Consult.

Users like MD Consult because of its diverse features, considering it ''one-stop-shopping'' for authoritative health information, from research to textbooks to patient handouts. Indeed, the value of MD Consult is that it brings a wealth of information from various sources into one interface. While it remains an effective tool that is very popular with physicians and residents, it comes with a hefty price tag. Many institutions can only afford a few concurrent user seats, which leads to frustration when users cannot access the system. Institutional pricing is quite expensive and beyond the means of many libraries.

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RefWorks. 2235 Encinitas Boulevard, Suite 216, Encinitas, CA 92024; 760.753.3885; Info@refworks.com; www.refworks.com; $70.00 a year individual subscription, $1,500 a year institutional subscription (up to 2,000 full-time equivalent students, $0.70 per additional student); compatible with Internet Explorer 5.0+, Netscape 4.7+, Word for Windows 97+ or later, and Word for Mac 98+.

A frequent question that students ask instructors and librarians is ''How do I put my paper in APA (or another) style?'' Faculty and support staff are always looking for ways to make manuscript preparation easier. To address these issues and others related to reference organization, software developers have designed the personal file management program.

RefWorks is a relative newcomer to the ranks of this type of software. Most people are probably familiar with the big triad of Endnote, Reference Manager, and ProCite—all owned by Thomson ISI ResearchSoft. RefWorks' uniqueness lies in the fact that it is Web-based and is simple and easy to use. Because it is Web-based, users can access the program from any computer that has an Internet connection, and there is no local information technology support required, because there is no software to install or upgrade. Upgrades happen automatically over the Web. Of course, one disadvantage to an Internet-based program is that if users have slow connections or if their networks go down, they cannot access their accounts.

Interestingly, the cofounders of RefWorks are the former chief executive officer, general manager, and director of software for Research Information Systems, the company that created Reference Manager, so they are well versed in personal file management programs. RefWorks is distributed through Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA), and, as a result, many of the CSA databases work seamlessly with the program.

Another appeal of RefWorks is its affordability. Subscription to the program for one year is $70.00 for individuals. For institutions, the $1,500 price is based on a full-time equivalent (FTE) of less than 2,000 full-time students. If full-time enrollment is more than 2,000, the subscription price is $0.70 per head. This allows unlimited access to RefWorks for one year to any authorized user of the library (students, faculty, staff, or administration). Because it can be purchased as a subscription and can be offered freely to faculty, staff, and students, this makes it more accessible for institutions than other stand-alone products. Libraries

concerned about purchasing or supporting another personal file management program for their institution do not need to view it as an either/or selection. Users of other personal file management programs can use RefWorks in conjunction with their software. The flexibility of working remotely and exporting records into a standalone program makes RefWorks highly compatible with existing programs.

After registering, an email message is sent from RefWorks with an institution-specific remote access code. This code is required, in addition to a login and password, every time the system is accessed from a location away from the institution's Internet protocol (IP) range. Thus researchers can access their RefWorks account from anywhere with an Internet connection.

RefWorks is very easy to learn and easy to teach. It is designed for anyone—students, faculty, clinicians, and researchers. The simplicity of the interface makes it an especially useful program for students and busy clinicians. It is a somewhat more simplified version of the big three programs, but, for the vast majority of users, that is perfectly fine. The benefits of an easier learning curve outweigh the need for all the bells and whistles. Also, its simplified interface has not resulted in a loss of functionality or inability to tailor the program to the individual user's needs. RefWorks has all the same basic features as the other big three: the ability to create references manually using a variety of templates; a master list of authors, keywords, and journals; a built-in search engine for searching databases like PubMed and online catalogs; the ability to import from remote databases; and the ability to format in-text citations and references for a manuscript. New output formats and database filters cannot be created by end users but must be requested from RefWorks. A common question is whether there is a limit on the number of references contained in a database; with RefWorks, there is no limit. The notes, abstracts, and user-defined fields in the references are limited to one gigabyte, more than enough for most people.

For institutions using the Ovid suite of databases, Ovid can activate an option with Direct Export that automatically launches either RefWorks or Endnote and allows searchers to drop references directly into their databases, or folders, as RefWorks defines it. More and more online databases are including an option to import into RefWorks; previously they listed just Endnote and Reference Manager. The OCLC First Search databases list RefWorks as an option besides Endnote for importing references and automatically launch a separate browser for RefWorks.

Of interest and benefit to researchers and staff working on grants is the ability to share accounts. One person can set up a database and share the password among fellow researchers, so that any number of people can contribute to the database and use those combined resources for writing grants or manuscripts. Faculty will also be interested in the feature that allows them to create a read-only database, which can be used as a reading list for their students.

One of the favorite features of any of the personal file management programs is the ability to format in-text citations and create a reference list. RefWorks has a utility called Write-N-Cite that subscribers can download onto their computers. This utility is then embedded into the word processing program as an icon that launches the user's database, providing an easy means of inserting citations into the text. Once the document is ready for formatting, the style of choice is selected from the Write-N-Cite utility. Another document is created, leaving the original manuscript unchanged. In this way, the style of the paper can be changed numerous times, leaving the original paper intact.

For users who want to work on their manuscripts at a computer that does not have the Write-N-Cite utility loaded, for example, at publicly used computers, Cite View is available in the full RefWorks program. This view does require an extra step of cutting and pasting references from a pop-up menu, so most users will probably prefer loading the utility program.

Some modifications could be made to RefWorks. For institutions that have a nursing school and active nursing researchers, the lack of an option in the registration process to choose nursing as an area of interest is an oversight that needs to be addressed. When a new folder (or library or database) is created, the program does not automatically open that new folder. Either launching that folder automatically or adding an ''open folder'' button next to the folders would save some confusion. When creating a new reference manually, the user can select a folder to put that reference into. But once the folder has been chosen, the selection menu reverts back to its original Choose a Folder command and appears to have ignored the command. It actually does put the reference in the chosen folder, but this has confused some users who think they need to make the selection again.

RefWorks tech support has been very responsive to emails and does an excellent job of writing clear responses. Their tech support is also quick to create filters or Z39.50 search capabilities for institutional online catalogs. The online help is good and provides clear step-by-step instructions.

The program has an administrative component, which allows the institutional contact person to generate statistics on the use of the program. The ability to compile usage statistics is vital for budget discussions. A summary report of usage and new registrants by month, listings of who is using the system and average number of logins, are just some of the options available for statistical reports.

The affordability, ease of use and training, and convenience of access make RefWorks a viable option for institutions looking to provide research support to their faculty,

staff, and students. RefWorks has a thirty-day trial available from their Website at www.refworks.com, and readers are encouraged to try the program and compare it to other personal file management programs.

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