

:Pediatricians in Israel
Information Needs and Patterns of use of Resources
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Abstract

Information behavior of pediatricians in Israel is the subject of this study. Doctors are an important population for this kind of research, due to the potentially critical ramifications of patient treatment and the unique clinical environment. The understanding of what we call 'information behavior and needs' of pediatricians is crucial for design and building future information systems for this audience.

We aimed in this research at understanding the practical information needs of pediatricians, the way they meet these needs, their preferred sources of information and the obstacles confronting them. Furthermore, the study relates to various aspects of information retrieval (such as the frequency of seeking information and the success in finding answers) and examines the preferred formats for receiving information.

In order to attain a wide perspective on the subject and in light of its practical significance, the study included both qualitative (semi-structured interviews) and quantitative (online questionnaire) methodologies. We found significant variation among the pediatricians taking part in the study, according to age, experience as pediatricians, character of clinical work (primary versus secondary care) and their participation in academic-research activities. Differences were found between these sub-populations regarding various aspects of information behavior, such as their information needs, the way they meet these needs and their preferred sources of information.

Pediatricians need information from various domains: medical information, especially on drugs, treatment and diagnosis, but also patient data, social information and logistical information. Secondary care practitioners require information on equipment and technology, statistics and



basic science as well.

Pediatricians use both written and oral information sources. Pediatricians rely on research articles, review articles, systematic reviews (EBM), visual information and numerical information. Second medical opinion is a well-known source of information.

Differences were found between pediatricians who practice primary and secondary care: the types of information, objectives and information sources of primary care practitioners are different than those of the secondary practitioners.

Pediatricians prefer to receive information for different objectives in different formats: research articles in full text, review articles, presentations, graphs and tables. We found that the preferred formats for all the objectives were the review article and the 500-word abstract.

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