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Are There Disparities in Health Information Access Among New Mexico Practitioners? Results of a Study

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Recommended Citation
Questions
• What information resources are available to New Mexico health care practitioners not currently affiliated with the University of New Mexico (UNM)?
• Are there disparities in access to information among health care practitioners in New Mexico?

Background
New Mexico
• Rural, all but one county Medically Underserved
• One academic health sciences library
• Practitioner must be affiliated with UNM to access library resources

Funding
• UNM Community Engagement Mini-Grant
• National Network of Libraries of Medicine, South Central Region Outreach Subcontract

Methods
• Exploratory research design
• Purposive sample
  Physicians, nurses, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, pharmacists
• Semi-structured interviews; with UNM IRB approval
  Conducted onsite, statewide
• Recorded on an iPad
• Data analysis using qualitative coding software (NVivo, version 9, QSR International)

Results
51 interviews: 21 MD/Dos, 13 Nurses, 9 NPs, 7 PAs, 1 Pharmacist from all quadrants of NM

Responses to Questions
• Practitioners seek information online about a broad spectrum of clinical topics
• Many report having access to UpToDate, a point-of-care information resource
• Most practitioners attempt to answer clinical questions during clinical encounters
• Basically satisfied with clinical resources
• Not satisfied with information for patients
• Would like access to additional resources

Emergent Themes
• Institutionalization of computer-based resources in clinics, often integrated into electronic health records systems
• Patient education and shared decision making part of clinical encounter
• Need for additional resources for clinical care and patient education
• Time constraints not cited as barrier to seeking additional information for decision making

Discussion
• Limitations
  Small sample, but early data saturation
  Self-reported information
• Prevalence of electronic health records systems
• UpToDate a popular point-of-care resource

Conclusions
• New Mexico health care providers routinely seek information from electronic resources during clinical interactions.
• They would like access to additional information resources and better patient education resources.