

Access alone does not guarantee use

The need for training to use evidence based resources

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Background

A study in 1992 by Schwartz [1] showed that

- In India there is lack of access and training in the use of information resoures.
- Librarians as well as users needed to be trained if such resources had to be optimally utilized.

Tracing the availability of E-Resources after the study, the scenario has been:

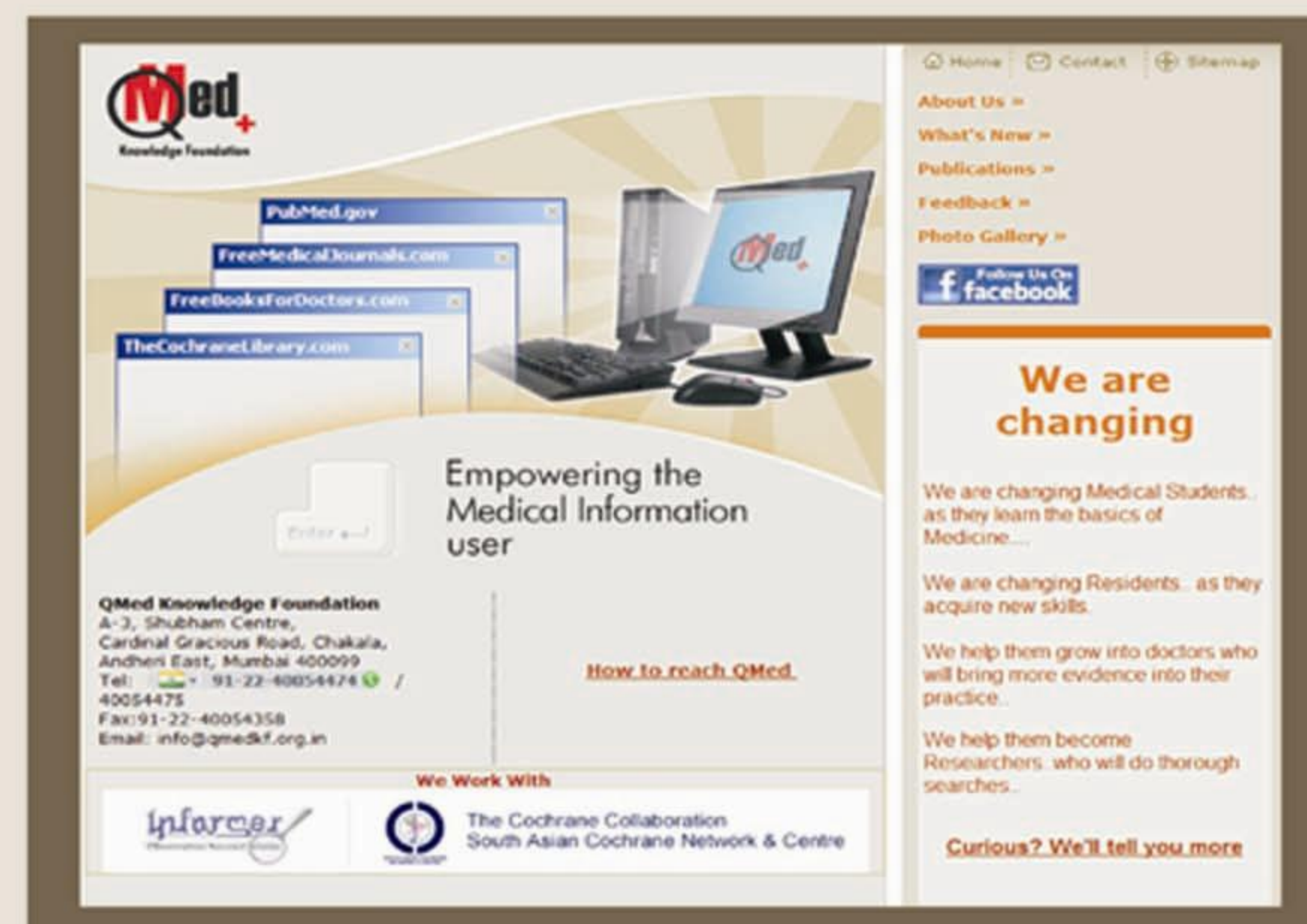
Year	Access to E-Resources
Till 1994	Only through the National Informatics Centre or few reputed institutions
1994	CD ROM Medline entered the market
1995	Internet access opened to public
1997	PubMed available free
2007	The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) enabled a country wide access to the Cochrane Library

Author’s Observations on the Usage of E-Resources Since 1994:

When helping / training in literature search activities
<p>Almost all lacked knowledge of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall idea of resources & structured searching. • Simple utilities like single Citation Matcher / Field searching • Boolean Operators • MeSH <p><i>In our questionnaires around 80% participants indicated no knowledge of the above</i></p>
<p>Additional confused perception about resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " I searched the Cochrane Library for Review articles, but got only meta-analyses" • " Is PubMed something you (Qmed) created for Punjab"? (Punjab = State in India; PubMed was thought of as an abbreviation - "Punjab Medicine")
<p><i>Access does not mean good utilization</i></p>

Even today students feel that the medical curriculum needs to include these skills and if they are taught well, the quality of medical education and writing will escalate [2]

QMed Knowledge Foundation : Tackling the Issues



QMed - www.qmedkf.org.in - was set up in 2007 as a Not for Profit Trust to tackle the issues of "Access & availability Versus Utilization". The Foundation works with professionals and librarians from Health Sciences Institutions and enables them to optimally use Information Resources for Education, Research and Patient Care.

Training Programs		
Lectures	Literature searching - Introduction to PubMed, Cochrane & Other resources; Search tips	>80 programs for about 5000 participants
Training Programs	PubMed & Cochrane	>80 programs for about 3000 participants
Online tutorial - free	Literature searching	Available from our website qmedkf.org.in
Participant manual	PubMed	Available from our website qmedkf.org.in
75-80 % participants said they learned most features or theory in our programs		

What Our Participants Said

"I realized that I have been using PubMed much like a caveman used a hammer back in the paleolithic era !"

"Such workshops need to be held repeatedly to benefit all faculty engaged in teaching, research & treatment"

"The Medical Council of India should make this training compulsory for all faculty"

Steps Ahead

- ICMR and Wiley have initated Cochrane Awareness workshops. These are conducted by QMed.
- QMed’s other plans:
 - Lots more awareness seminars & assisting the SACN in all their efforts
 - "Train the Trainer" programs in medical schools and measuring impact of the programs.
 - Create more E-learning modules suitable for our audience.

Conclusions

We believe that if students learned to use evidence based resources correctly, it would become routine for them to use it when they became residents, medical teachers or practitioners. It is very important that if country wide access to resources like Cochrane is provided, it must be supplemented with awareness and proper training to translate to evidence based healthcare!



"Cochrane Library" at the Train the Trainer Program



Workshop Organized by Students.



Train the Trainer Program

References

1. Schwartz DG. How physicians and biomedical scientists in India learn information-seeking skills. Bull Med Libr Assoc. 1995;83:360-2
2. Verghese BG. Medical research: an Indian perspective. Int J Stud Res 2011;1:97