

QUESTIONNAIRE¹

KEEPING UP WITH DEVELOPMENTS: THE NEEDS OF ONCOLOGY HEALTH - CARE PROFESSIONALS

Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria

This questionnaire is part of a research project by the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, to investigate how oncology healthcare professionals keep up with developments that affect their work and the support they offer to cancer patients.

There are many opportunities to become aware of developments, especially if you use services that are available for free via the World Wide Web. If we want to recommend services or make suggestions on how you can make the most effective use of such services, we however, need to know as much as possible about your work situation, your need for information, how you feel about the importance of information to do your job and whether you think you have the skills and opportunities to find the information.

Although you have very busy schedules, we will highly appreciate it if you will help us with our research by completing this questionnaire. Since a questionnaire cannot offer all the information we need, we will also ask you to take part in a focus group interview. To really understand what you are going through in a typical work day, and how difficult it might be for you to keep up with what is happening in your field it will, however, also be an excellent opportunity for us if we can observe some of you at work (we promise not to get in the way) and then discuss in detail how this affects your ability to keep up with developments. (An extended lunch seems like a good opportunity for such a discussion.)

All information will be treated as confidential. Names of institutions taking part in the study will only be mentioned with their consent. Findings from the study will be shared with participating institutions.

Your time and support is much appreciated.

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Date

(1) PERSONAL DETAIL

Name (optional):

Age (years)

20 – 25	
26 – 30	

¹ The questionnaire was handed out to participants from the oncology medical centre to complete in their own time. This was followed with focus group interviews. For participants from the hospital wards it was realised that they would not be able to find time to complete the questionnaire or participate in a focus group interview. The questionnaire was thus used to guide individual interviews. The researchers completed it and tape recorded the interviews. Guided by the participants' answers some questions which seemed inappropriate to a particular participant were skipped. Responses were used for a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis.

31 – 35	
36 – 40	
41 – 45	
Older than 50	

Gender

Female	Male
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(2) ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Do you have any qualifications concerning **oncology**? (Please specify)

.....

Do you have any other post-school qualifications? (Please specify)

.....

How many years work experience do you have in the field of **oncology**?

.....

How many years work experience do you have other than in the field of oncology? (Please specify briefly):.....

.....

Which **training** opportunities do you have to learn more about how to be successful in your task? (Please select all options that apply to your situation.)

Courses/training sessions	
Workshops	
Seminars	
Other (please specify)	

Did you ever receive training on how to find, evaluate and use information appropriately, in other words, training in information skills?

No	
Yes	Please explain briefly:

Have you ever presented a paper at a conference?

No	
Yes	Please give approximate number:

Have you ever published something?

No	
Yes	Please give approximate number:

	Please specify the type of publication (e.g. letter to an editor, research paper, article in a popular magazine):
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(3) TASK AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Where do you work?

What is your job description or position (e.g. unit manager, sister)?.....

To help us understand what your task entails, please explain briefly what is **expected** from you:

If you prefer to let us observe your typical workday, and discuss this in detail, please provide your contact detail:

Name:
Phone:

(4) AVAILABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY TO ACCESS INFORMATION

Where do you have access to a computer? Please select all options that apply to your situation.

Personal computer at home	
Computer at home provided by employer (e.g. laptop)	
Computer at work (individual use)	
Computer at work (share with others)	
Elsewhere (please explain, e.g. Internet cafe)	

Where do you have access to email? Please select all options that apply to your situation.

Personal computer at home	
Computer at home provided by employer (e.g. laptop)	
Computer at work (individual use)	
Computer at work (share with others)	
Elsewhere (please explain, e.g. Internet cafe)	

Where do you have access to the Internet? Please select all options that apply to your situation.

Personal computer at home	
Computer at home provided by employer (e.g. laptop)	
Computer at work (individual use)	
Computer at work (share with others)	
Elsewhere (please explain, e.g. Internet cafe)	

(5) USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO ACCESS INFORMATION

How many email messages do you **receive** on average every day?

How many email messages do you **send** on average every day?

Indicate how often you use email on average:

Several times a day	
Once a day	
Several times a week, but not every day	
Once a week	
More infrequently than once a week	
Seldom (e.g. once a month)	
Never	

Please mark the appropriate options in the following matrix to indicate the types of email you **receive**, and the source of the email (e.g. from an individual/organization/society or Internet discussion list). Also indicate the % for the type of email in comparison to the total number of emails you receive.

Type of email you RECEIVE	Individual/ organization/ society	Internet discussion list to which you subscribe	Approximate % in relation to the emails you receive (e.g. 50% of all emails is personal)
Personal communication (e.g. friend, family member)			
Personal administration (e.g. confirming booking for family holiday)			
Junk mail (e.g. advertisements)			
Chain letters			
Official administration (e.g. confirming official bookings or arrangements)			
Sharing work-related information (e.g. new techniques in patient care)			
Communication on work-related events such as conferences			
Other (please specify)			

Are there any restrictions on your use of email?

No	
Yes	Please explain briefly:

Please mark the appropriate options in the following matrix to indicate the types of email you **send**, and the source to which you send the email (e.g. to an individual/organization/society or Internet discussion list). Also indicate the % for the type of email in comparison to the total number of emails you send.

Type of email you SEND	Individual/ organization/ society	Internet discussion list to which you subscribe	Approximate % in relation to the emails you send (e.g. 50% of all emails is personal)
Personal communication (e.g. friend, family member)			
Personal administration (e.g. confirming booking for family holiday)			
Junk mail			
Chain letters			
Official administration (e.g. confirming official bookings or arrangements)			
Sharing work-related information (e.g. new techniques in patient care)			
Communication on work-related events such as conferences			
Other (please specify)			

Indicate how often you use the Internet/World Wide Web

Several times a day	
Once a day	
Several times a week, but not every day	
Once a week	
More infrequently than once a week	
Seldom (e.g. once a month)	
Never	

For which reasons are you using the Internet? Please select all options that apply to your situation.

Reasons for using the Internet	Approximate % in relation to your overall use of the Internet
Personal financial matters (e.g. Internet banking)	
Personal recreational reasons (e.g. sports news, movies)	
Online shopping	
Personal planning (e.g. holiday accommodation)	
Work related planning (e.g. accommodation)	
Conference registration and searching for conferences	
Searching for information (e.g. treatment, drugs, patient care)	
Checking websites relevant to your task (e.g. professional organizations)	
Browsing/reading online journals/newsletters	
Browsing/reading online newspapers	
Other (please specify)	

Are there any restrictions on your use of the Internet/World Wide Web? If yes, briefly explain.

No	
Yes	Please explain briefly:

(6) YOUR OPINION ABOUT SKILLS THAT WILL HELP YOU KEEP UP WITH INFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT CONCERNS YOUR TASK

Please rate your skills for the following:

0 indicates no skills

1 indicates extremely low

10 indicates that you have excellent skills.

SKILLS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Computer skills											
Email skills											
Internet skills (e.g. accessing websites)											
Web search skills (e.g. searching Google, Yahoo)											
Skills in finding, evaluating and using information											
Skills in using libraries or information services											
Skills in using databases and full-text electronic journals											
Research (e.g. presenting conference papers, writing articles)											

(7) NEED FOR INFORMATION AND INFORMATION SKILLS

Please rate how important you consider information and information skills to complete your task.

0 indicates not important at all

1 indicates rather unimportant

10 indicates absolutely essential.

NEED FOR INFORMATION AND INFORMATION SKILLS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Access to information resources that will enable you to search for published information (e.g. articles and research reports published over the past few years)											
Being aware of the <i>latest</i> information as soon as it is disseminated, for example at conferences, in newsletters or on the websites of professional organizations (this can be any information, for example descriptions of new equipment or new drugs)											
Being aware of <i>research findings</i> as soon as it is disseminated, for example at conferences or as journal articles											
Being aware of work done at other institutions (e.g. other hospitals or oncology practices). This can be reported as research findings or in informal ways (e.g. personal discussions at professional meetings.)											
Skills in finding, evaluating and using information											
Skills in using special services (e.g. current awareness services such as tables of contents for journals) to keep up with the latest information											
Knowledge about the information needs of cancer patients											
Knowledge about new national or international regulations that may affect your work											

(8) YOUR AWARENESS OF NEW INFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENTS

Please rate your awareness of new information and developments relevant to your task.

0 indicates not at all aware

1 indicates very poorly informed

10 indicates very highly informed.

AWARENESS OF INFORMATION	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Trends concerning your task (e.g. new techniques in drug administration)											
Conference announcements and calls for papers											
New books or research reports											
Articles relevant to your task published in professional journals											
Articles relevant to your task published in popular magazines											
Research findings (e.g. reported in professional journals or at conferences)											
Work done at other institutions (e.g. other hospitals or oncology practices).											
What is happening with professional organizations & societies											
Opportunities to improve your skills (e.g. workshops, seminars)											
New websites concerning your task											
New regulations (national as well as international) affecting your work											
New reports (e.g. through newspapers, TV, radio) relevant to your task											
What is happening in your own organization/institution											
Other (please explain briefly)											

(9) METHODS TO KEEP UP WITH DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING YOUR TASK

How do you keep up with developments and new information in your field? (Most of the options mentioned are examples of current awareness services.) (Please select all options that apply.)

Do not make any effort to note new developments	
Informal discussions with colleagues	
Information sessions by superiors or management	
Organisational newsletter	
Local newspapers and other mass media	
Conference attendance	
Reading professional journals	
Reading popular magazines (e.g. You, Huisgenoot, Times)	
Checking tables of contents pages of professional journals	
Reading and browsing new books	
Commercial alerting services (e.g. for databases such as Medline)	
Membership of national professional organisations/societies	
Membership of international professional organisations/societies	
Electronic newsletters (e.g. newsletters from professional organizations)	
WWW discussion groups and electronic mailing lists	
Regularly checking websites with useful content (e.g. Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer)	
Weblogs	
Other (please explain briefly)	

Please rate how you feel about the importance of using special services (called current awareness services) that will help you to note new articles, books, conferences, training opportunities, etc. (Please note that this question is not about the importance of attending conferences, seminars, etc., but about the importance of using special services to learn about these.)

- 0 indicates no interest
- 1 indicates very low interest
- 10 indicates very keen and interested.

IMPORTANCE OF USING CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICES	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Importance of using current awareness services to keep track of developments and new information (please do not think at this stage about the practical realities of not having time, etc.)											
Your enthusiasm to use current awareness services											
Your willingness to use your personal time to keep up with developments (please note that it is not expected of you to use your personal time)											
Your willingness to share information with colleagues											

Please rate your knowledge and ability to successfully use current awareness services to note new articles, books, conferences, training opportunities, etc that are relevant to your task in oncology health care.

- 0 indicates no ability
- 1 indicates very low ability
- 10 indicates excellent ability.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Knowledge <i>about</i> the current awareness services that are available for oncology healthcare											
Knowledge of <i>how</i> to use current awareness services											
Ability to identify the information that you need to keep up with developments relevant to your task											
Time you have to use current awareness services											
Facilities that is available to use current awareness services (e.g. Internet access)											

Please rate your perception on management's support for the use of current awareness services to note new articles, books, conferences, training opportunities, etc that are relevant to your task in oncology health care.

- 0 indicates non-existent
- 1 indicates very low
- 10 indicates extremely high.

SUPPORT	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Management's expectations for you to use current awareness services											
Encouragement by management to use current awareness services (e.g. bringing such services to your attention, advising you to use such services)											
Support offered by management to use current awareness services (e.g. Internet access, subscriptions to professional journals, paying for membership of professional societies)											
Allowing for opportunities for you to share information noted through current awareness services											
Management's use of current awareness services											
Management's ability to share new information/developments with you											

Please rate your interest to learn about the use of current awareness services.

0 indicates no interest

1 indicates very low

10 indicates extremely high

INTEREST	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Scope of current awareness services available for oncology health care											
Identifying your information needs											
Using specific current awareness services (e.g. email alerting of tables of contents, search profiles for databases)											
Dealing with problems resulting from the use of current awareness services (e.g. information overload)											
Methods to share information with colleagues/management											
Exploring ways of putting information to use											

How would you prefer to learn more about the use of current awareness services? You may indicate more than one option.

Not interested in learning more about current awareness services	
Booklet on ways to keep track of developments	
Website	
Workshop/training course	
Other (please explain briefly)	

Thank you for your time and participation. It is much appreciated!