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THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE: AN INVESTMENT IN GOOD HEALTH

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) is the world's largest biomedical library and producer of trusted health information used by medical professionals, students, researchers, innovators, and the public to advance medicine and improve public health. Every day, NLM delivers more than a trillion bytes of data to millions of users to help researchers speed scientific discovery and develop new therapies, assist health practitioners to improve medical care and lower its cost, and give the public access to resources and tools that promote wellness and disease prevention.

Working in partnership with the other parts of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies, NLM is the key link in the chain that translates biomedical research into practice, making the results of research readily available worldwide. Through continued research, innovation, and technology, including mobile devices and apps, NLM makes a growing range of health information more readily accessible to a variety of users. Its resources are used every day by medical librarians across the country as they support the information needs of their users.

Because NLM is an investment in good health; because its resources serve the public, care providers, and researchers; and because NLM is a leader in global disaster preparedness and response support, *MLA and AAHSL urge Congress to continue its commitment to NLM and NIH by increasing funding levels to at least \$394 million for NLM and \$31 billion for NIH.*

NLM Resources Serve the Public, Care Providers, and Researchers

NLM has created and continues to enhance more than **200 databases and online services** that are freely available through libraries and to anyone with Internet access. These resources support health care, public health, disease prevention and wellness, biomedical research, and innovation. **NLM's most heavily used resources are:**

- **MedlinePlus, NLM's consumer health website, averages 1.6 million visits each day and**
 - contains trusted information in English and Spanish on more than **950 health topics** including symptoms, causes, treatment, and prevention;
 - includes information on prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, dietary supplements and herbal remedies, including dosages, special precautions, side effects, drug interactions, and more; and
 - delivers the same high-quality information to users of various device types and to patient health records through MedlinePlus Connect.
- **PubMed/MEDLINE, one of the most frequently consulted online scientific medical resources in the world, processes more than 3.6 million web searches each day from more than 2.3 million users, more than 5.2 million automated searches** via its Application Program Interface (API), and
 - provides a convenient and comprehensive way to search high quality journal literature; and
 - contains more than **25 million citations** to articles published from the 1800s to the present day, with more than **982,000 citations added last year alone.**
- **PubMed Central, NLM's web-based repository of full-text biomedical literature, provides free access to more than 3.4 million journal articles and**
 - serves over **1 million different users each weekday** who download more than **2 million articles**; and
 - supports the Congressionally mandated NIH Public Access Policy, which results in the addition of **90,000 articles per year** summarizing results of NIH-funded research.
- **ClinicalTrials.gov, the world's largest clinical trial registry and results database, receives almost 180 million page views per month and is used by 61,000 different users per day and**
 - provides information on more than **190,000 clinical studies** of drugs, biological products, medical devices, and other interventions for a wide range of diseases, and adds about **500 studies per week**; and
 - contains summary results information describing outcomes and adverse events for more than **17,000 studies, with 90 results summaries added each week.**

- **GenBank[®], dbGaP, ClinVar, and a collection of other related databases and tools** that
 - organize the volumes of data that are needed to detect associations between genes and disease and translate that knowledge into better diagnosis and treatments; and
 - are used by about **200,000 people every day**.
- **Genetics Home Reference** receives more than **62,000 visitors per day**, and provides users with consumer-friendly information about the effects of genetic variations on human health. The **Genetic Testing Registry** offers information on direct-to-consumer genetic tests.
- **ToxNet** provides information about chemicals and drugs, diseases and the environment, environmental health, occupational safety and health, poisoning, risk assessment and regulations, and toxicology. Last year, ToxNet attracted more than **7.5 million visitors** who viewed more than **56 million pages** of information.

NLM Is an Investment in Good Health

MLA and AAHSL believe that authoritative, high-quality health information underpins all aspects of improved health and health care. NLM's continually evolving set of databases, networks, and information systems are critical infrastructure for clinical excellence, advancement of biomedical science, development of new diagnostics and treatments, and education of the nation's health care consumers. Access to authoritative, timely, relevant health information supports evidence-based decision making, lowers costs, reduces waste, improves health care quality, reduces medical errors, and improves health literacy, empowering patients to play a key role in managing their health care. Some additional NLM initiatives that are helping improve the nation's health and well-being include:

- **NIH MedlinePlus magazine**—Launched in 2006, this quarterly magazine provides trusted health information from NIH in print and online formats in both **English** and **Spanish**;
 - is distributed freely through doctors' offices, community health centers, libraries and other locations; and
 - reaches more than **5 million** readers nationwide, with more than **50,000** individual subscribers and **70,000** online subscribers.
- **Electronic Health Records (EHRs)**
 - NLM supported much of the seminal research that laid the foundation for today's electronic health records, clinical decision support, and health information exchange;
 - As the Department of Health and Human Services' coordinating body for clinical terminologies, NLM supports the development, maintenance, and dissemination of key standards for interoperable EHRs;
 - NLM's **MedlinePlus Connect** is used by several certified EHR systems to link patients directly to relevant educational materials related to their diagnoses, medications, or lab tests.

NLM Is a Leader in Global Disaster Preparedness and Response Support

Easy and quick access to authoritative information is critical in disasters. NLM has a long history of programs and resources that support disaster preparedness and response. MLA and AAHSL see a clear role for NLM and the nation's health sciences libraries in disaster preparedness and response activities. NLM's Disaster Information Management Research Center (DIMRC) contributes to disaster management research, collects and organizes disaster-related health information, and ensures effective use of libraries and librarians in disaster planning and response. Its Disaster Information Specialist Program is a collaborative effort with MLA to promote the role of information specialists in the provision of disaster-related information resources to the workforce and communities. When the Ebola outbreak struck West Africa in 2014 and Ebola was seen for the first time in the United States, a wealth of information was generated by various government agencies and nongovernmental organizations nationally and internationally. NLM organized and provided access to this information through various resources such as PubMed, Disaster Lit, Clinical Trials.gov, and MedlinePlus. To aid responders, NLM and publishers made numerous journals, books, and databases freely available through the Emergency Access Initiative.

Organizational Bios

The Medical Library Association (MLA) is a nonprofit, educational organization with 3,500 health sciences information professional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

The Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) supports academic health sciences libraries and directors in advancing the patient care, research, education and community service missions of academic health centers through visionary executive leadership and expertise in health information, scholarly communication, and knowledge management.