



Sara Clarke

is the Knowledge Resources Librarian at the Royal Free Hospital Medical Library, UCL Library Services. She is responsible for project management for the Neurological Conditions Specialist Collection and the Gastroenterology and Liver Diseases Specialist Collection.



David Chadwick

is former Professor of Neurology and Head of the School of Clinical Science of the University of Liverpool. His clinical expertise and research are in clinical aspects of epilepsy. He has developed a comprehensive epilepsy service at the Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Liverpool.

Correspondence to:

E. s.clarke@medsch.ucl.ac.uk

NHS Evidence – Neurological Conditions

NHS Evidence – neurological conditions is a freely accessible website which provides access for NHS healthcare professionals to the best available evidence on neurological conditions. There is a vast and growing number of sources of evidence-based information available on the internet and it can sometimes be confusing and time-consuming going through them all. The collection brings them together into one place for you to access.

The service first arose in 1999, with a programme for the National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) being described by Sir Muir Gray and Simon de Lusignan in the *BMJ*.¹ By 2002, this had developed into a collection of 'Virtual Branch Libraries' available on the internet. The NeLH programme morphed into the National Library for Health in 2006; and the then Neurological Conditions Specialist Library was launched in November 2007 at the ABN conference in London. It now comes under the umbrella of NHS Evidence as one of 34 specialist collections in key clinical areas, such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular and commissioning. The collections filter the vast quantity of published research and provide regular updates on relevant sources of information as well as reviewing new publications.

NHS Evidence emerged from Lord Darzi's strategy for the future of the NHS, High Quality Care for All (June 2008).² Launched in April 2009, it ensures that everyone working in health and social care has worldwide access to the best available information via a single portal by allowing users to search a wide range of databases simultaneously, including internationally respected evidence-based sources such as, the Cochrane Library, British National Formulary and National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

NHS Evidence – Neurological Conditions is led by Professor David Chadwick, emeritus consultant at the Walton Centre in Liverpool. He is supported by a project team based at the Royal Free Hospital Medical Library. An editorial board, made up of clinicians and stakeholders from across the country, is regularly consulted about the development of the collection, and a group of topic advisers provide advice and support. A full list of contributors to the collection can be seen at www.library.nhs.uk/neurological/AboutUs.aspx.

What does the collection include?

NHS Evidence – Neurological Conditions includes: Guidelines (NICE, SIGN, ABN and other relevant national and international guidelines); Systematic Reviews (especially Cochrane reviews and those published in a selection of the leading neurology journals); Health Technology Assessments and Economic Evaluations; policy and other relevant documents (e.g. documentation on the NSF for Long Term Conditions); online learning materials and links to high quality patient information. The records

include an abstract, describing what's included in the resource. The majority of resources listed are freely available online. Resources are arranged by condition so it's easy to see quickly what new evidence has been published in your area of special interest. There is information on investigation and diagnostics, including a section on clinical neurophysiology. Sections on neurosurgery and neurorehabilitation are currently being developed.

Annual Evidence Updates

In addition to the regular content that is added to the website, the collection publishes Annual Evidence Updates on key topic areas within neurological conditions. Annual Evidence Updates (AEUs) highlight the best evidence published in the last year in the diagnosis, treatment and management of specific conditions. A comprehensive search is carried out to find relevant papers, which are then reviewed by topic advisers and assessed for inclusion. Only the best quality papers are included in the AEU. Commentaries are written by the topic advisers, who are specialists in the field, and attention is drawn to papers which point to a potential change in practice. Carrying out an AEU in this way provides the busy clinician with an easy overview of the best evidence from the past year. The AEU is available online and can be downloaded.

AEUs are currently carried out on epilepsy, headache, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. The recent AEU in headache highlighted four new guidelines and 22 new systematic reviews.

DUETs

The UK Database of Uncertainties about the Effects of Treatments (UK DUETs) publishes uncertainties about the effects of treatment which cannot currently be answered by referring to reliable up-to-date systematic reviews of existing research evidence.³ NHS Evidence – neurological conditions contributes to UK DUETs by identifying and compiling uncertainties that have been identified in systematic reviews.

Keeping up to date with the latest news in your area

In addition to the Annual Evidence Updates, NHS Evidence – neurological conditions provides a number of services to help clinicians stay up to date with the latest evidence. It publishes a monthly email bulletin summarising the latest additions to the collection, together with an overview of upcoming events of interest.⁴ It also provides a number of subject specific RSS feeds,⁵ as well as regular updates via Twitter (@nhs_ev_neuro). Feedback on the resource is welcomed from clinicians, for example, at events such as the Association for British Neurologists annual meeting. You can also leave comments via the website.

www.library.nhs.uk/neurological

1. <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/319/7223/1476>
2. http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_085825
3. <http://www.library.nhs.uk/duets/> [accessed 19/09/09].
4. To subscribe to this free bulletin please visit <http://www.library.nhs.uk/neurological/Page.aspx?pagename=NEWSLETTER>
5. For more information on RSS feeds and how to subscribe to them, visit <http://www.library.nhs.uk/neurological/Page.aspx?pagename=RSS>