

## **LITERATURE SEARCH FROM JOURNALS AND ENCYLOPAEDIA (ON CD-ROM) AND INTERNET**

In the conduct of research, literature search is very important. It is the link between the previous work done on the subject and the future outlook or potentials of such research interest.

There are many ways of accessing literature; it can be through the textbook or through journals. Journals are publications of referred articles (peer-reviewed articles), which are usually in the print form and electronic form. The articles in the electronic forms are those articles stored on the computer and can be accessed directly or with access code, which are usually in the form of passwords. The articles can either be stored on the CD-ROM or Internet-based.

### *CD-ROM*

This is known as Compact-disc Read Only Memory, they are discs on which data are stored and read by disc drive using laser at high speed. The disc is very durable and information stored on it cannot be easily overwritten, corrupted or damaged. Quite a number of these information-based software are available e.g. TEAL (The Electronic Agriculture Library), which has thousands of articles along the subject area of Agriculture and allied disciplines. CD-ROM is a means of storing large amounts of information. Several of this device have been produced on various aspects of Veterinary practice such CD Canis, Canid and Phyttox.

### *Internet*

Articles can also be accessed through the Internet. The Internet is also known as the World-Wide-Web (www). It refers to the pathway through which information is displayed and or retrieved via global satellite link through access to a variety of computers all over the world. The Internet starts from a single personal computer (or laptop computer) at home or work, a telephone (for the dial-up system), modem connected to computer and browser software; internet dialler, e.g. internet explorer. To be fully connected, there is the need to purchase connection time from an internet service provider (ISP) who has a server connected to the net. When a user sends a request for information, it goes through the ISP server, which in turn

passes the request to the server where the information is stored. The target server then passes the requested information to the original requesting computer through the ISP.

Information can also be accessed through the wire-less system which utilizes the broadband, whereby all that is needed is the computer with the modem and the card.

To view pages on the www, a software package called a browser e.g. internet explorer is needed. To access articles or journals, there is a need for a search machine the most common ones are Yahoo and Google. Google is the most frequently used search machine, it is versatile and user-friendly.

While the Google search machine or indeed Yahoo, have huge data banks, there are some specific search machines dedicated to the field of Medicine and allied Disciplines.

Some Veterinary journals such as the Journal of Small Animal Practice and the Journal of American Animal Hospital Association publish their contents and or abstracts for access over the web. The contents and abstract of these journals is usually available to the browser whenever the site is accessed. Full articles are however often reserved only to online subscribers. The Vet web currently indexes about a thousand, seven hundred Veterinary sites, which are readily available to the user at the touch of the relevant computer keyboard button.

The Internet can also be valuable indirectly the area of the usage of the electronic mail (E-mail). This allows people to communicate with each other through computer links via the internet. The advantage of using this medium for Veterinarians is that it is instantaneous and has the capacity to have the contents of the mail, such as laboratory results or large amounts of written materials available directly the user.

This medium is also a valuable tool in establishing a consultation system with referral centres and other specialist worldwide.

## **EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES**

These are programmes designed for use in the fields of Medicine and the Social Sciences.

Epidemiological programmes are useful for the presentation, analysis and interpretation of epidemiological parameters especially for disease monitoring, prediction and forecast, basically to assist in policy formulation.

Statistical programmes are useful in processing results and making meaningful inferences from the result.

There are many epidemiological and statistical packages in use in Veterinary Medicine, while some of them are relatively easy to operate i.e. user-friendly, others are not.

Some of the packages useful in Veterinary Medicine are as follows:

**Epi-Info:** this is epidemiological programme, it is a software package designed for the Epidemiologists, Public Health practitioners and Researchers. This package provides for easy form of Data-base construction; data entry, sorting, analysis and interpretation. With the **Epi-Info** as the software and the computer as the hardware, the Epidemiologist and other Public Health professionals can rapidly develop questionnaires, form and customize data entry process and analyse data. The primary applications within the **Epi-Info** are:

- (a) Make-view: A programme for creating forms or questionnaire which automatically create a database
- (b) Enter: A programme for using the forms and questionnaire created in make view to enter data into the database.
- (c) Analysis: A programme for producing statistical analysis of data, report, output or graphs
- (d) Epi-Map: A programme for creating Geographical Information Map (GIS maps).
- (e) Epi-Report: A tool that allows the users to combine analysis, data entry, output and any data contained in accessed data for presentation in a professional form.

**SAS :** This is a large general purpose package, produced from an original programme that was designed to run on mainframe computer in a batch mode i.e. getting a pile or results in a separate output file.

**SPSS:** This is known as Statistical Packages for Social Sciences. It is a well-known package particularly popular within the Social Science and the Psychology group of researchers. It is a very robust package capable of performing all the standard analysis.

**S-Plus:** This is a programme for specialist Statistician basically it is an interactive object-oriented system with both a wide range of built-in function and complete programming capabilities for extending these.

