

## Request for Information (RFI): Request for Information (RFI): Soliciting Input into the Deliberations of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director (ACD) Working Group on the National Library of Medicine (NLM)



Thank You - Your Comments Have Been Received. You may want to print this page with your comments for your records.

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**Name of Organization:**

Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group

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**City and State:**

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**Comment 1:**

Current NLM elements that are of the most, or least, value to the research community (including biomedical, clinical, behavioral, health services, public health, and historical researchers) and future capabilities that will be needed to support evolving scientific and technological activities and needs.

*No Response*

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**Comment 2:**

Current NLM elements that are of the most, or least, value to health professionals (e.g., those working in health care, emergency response, toxicology, environmental health, and public health) and future capabilities that will be needed to enable health professionals to integrate data and knowledge from biomedical research into effective practice.

The Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group (MDMLG), is a local professional society for medical, health sciences, and other librarians in the southeast Detroit area. Composed of over 60 individual members and nearly 20 institutional members, MDMLG includes librarians at universities, hospitals, public libraries, and other institutions as well as students pursuing degrees in library and information science. MDMLG and its membership fully supports and utilizes many of the programs, resources, and services provided by the NLM and Greater Midwest Region of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. Hospital members of our organization highly value the continued development of PubMed, Docline, and the integration capabilities of MedlinePlus with electronic medical record systems. We would like to see greater integration of PubMed Health into PubMed in order to enhance navigation.

**Comment 5:**

How NLM could be better positioned to help address the broader and growing challenges associated with:

- Biomedical informatics, “big data”, and data science;
- Electronic health records;
- Digital publications; or
- Other emerging challenges/elements warranting special consideration.

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**Comment 3:**

Current NLM elements that are of most, or least, value to patients and the public (including students, teachers, and the media) and future capabilities that will be needed to ensure a trusted source for rapid dissemination of health knowledge into the public domain.

The Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group (MDMLG), is a local professional society for medical, health sciences, and other librarians in the southeast Detroit area. Composed of over 60 individual members and nearly 20 institutional members, MDMLG includes librarians at universities, hospitals, public libraries, and other institutions as well as students pursuing degrees in library and information science. MDMLG and its membership fully supports and utilizes many of the programs, resources, and services provided by the NLM and Greater Midwest Region of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. For patients and the public, MedlinePlus.gov is one of the most valued consumer health resources available. Many libraries within our organization actively promote MedlinePlus as the best source of up-to-date, easy-to-read health information without the advertisements found in competitor websites. The ability to translate the interface between English and Spanish along with materials in over 40 languages is especially important for consumers as our nation is truly diverse in terms of language and culture. Understanding health care provider instructions regarding overall health, diagnosis, and treatment is of utmost importance in order to maintain and improve patient health. MedlinePlus is an excellent, free source of this information in one's native language and is helping to eliminate language barriers in health care. Of particular interest to the Detroit area are those materials translated into Arabic as our area supports the largest Middle Eastern population outside of the Middle East. In addition to the general public, members in our organization have taught MedlinePlus to students at various levels including high school, undergraduate college students, medical students, nursing students, other allied health students and professionals as a recommended information resource for their own health and curiosity as well as a recommended online resource for current or future patients for trustworthy information. In addition to MedlinePlus, other key NLM resources of value to the public and that are actively promoted by members of our organization are: the Household Products Database, LactMed, ToxNet, and DailyMed through the classroom and community health fairs. Despite its great value, MedlinePlus is not adequately publicized as very few members of the community are familiar with or have even heard of the website. A more commonly recognized online resource for health information by consumers is WebMD, which unfortunately is supported by pharmaceutical companies and contains many advertisements. Therefore, greater promotion and advertisement on the advantages of MedlinePlus and other NLM resources would raise awareness and promote health through unbiased information. One strategy that has proved successful in promoting NLM resources is providing free brochures, bookmarks, and in the past, ink pens, for libraries to use in promoting the resources to the community. We realize that cost constraints were behind the elimination of promotional materials, such as the free MedlinePlus ink pens. However, our experience has shown that consumers appreciate these practical forms of promotional materials, seek them out and use them. They are effective as referral materials and our organization suggests reinstating them as free promotional offerings to the public. Based on feedback from our membership, future capabilities of MedlinePlus, in particular, could be to develop a personal account feature where consumers are able to bookmark or save pages within the MedlinePlus interface with a personal account.

**Comment 4:**

Current NLM elements that are of most, or least, value to other libraries, publishers, organizations, companies, and individuals who use NLM data, software tools, and systems in developing and providing value-added or complementary services and products and future capabilities that would facilitate the development of products and services that make use of NLM resources.

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