

## Health Information Seeking Behaviour on the Web

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Eight out of every ten physicians report experience of patients presenting printed internet-sourced health information at visits, which suggests a new dynamic in the traditional doctor–patient relationship. This is one of the findings of the literature review on health informationseeking behaviour on the web that ECDC published recently.

The purpose of the review is to provide an overview of online health information- seeking behaviour by adults from the perspective of both the health consumer and the health professional. Research shows that, although they have difficulty of identifying and filtering the most useful, accurate and credible sources, the health professionals' use of the internet to obtain health and medical information has increased.

As for the online health consumer, they tend to be more educated, earn more, and have high-speed internet access at home and at work. The literature review also shows that women are more likely than men to search for health information. The report concludes by outlining the implications for health communication research in Europe and the identification of gaps and the focus for further research.

The literature review, one in a series of 'Insights into health communication' on the prevention and control of communicable disease in the European context, focuses on research published from 2006 to 2010 in English language.

For more information, please visit: [http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC\\_DisForm.aspx?ID=753](http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DisForm.aspx?ID=753)

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