Internet Sites of Interest

March 2010

Disaster resources

The dreadful earthquake in Haiti on 12 January this year demonstrates something of the terrible power of nature, but has also shown something of how people can work together for each other.

A few days after the earthquake, I began to see messages on the US based MEDLIB-L discussion list about information resources that might be of use to health professionals working in Haiti or preparing to travel there. One posting drew my attention to the existence of the separate DISASTR-OUTREACH-LIB list, maintained at the NLM. I started to gather a list of resources together, and blogged about this, in the hope that my blog post would be picked up by interested parties. Very quickly the NLM drew together a page of resources which is much more comprehensive than anything I could do.

Some of these resources are from libraries, and others from health professionals or publishers. This column is devoted to those resources, for several reasons. Firstly, you may know someone who is in Haiti or planning to go there, and the things listed here may be useful to them. Secondly, this is an example of the how librarians can be involved in useful things in aid of humanity. And last of all, it is at least a partial record of what has been done in this particular situation.

All links were checked on 11th February 2010.

Health Resources for Haiti – from the Disasters Information Management Research Center at the NLM

You can put this widget:

![Health Resources for Haiti](http://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/dimrc/widgetdimrc.html)
on your webpage, to link to the NLM page. The widget is available from http://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/dimrc/widgetdimrc.html
This comprehensive page lists resources covering earthquakes and health, US federal agency pages, free resources from publishers, including passwords for trial access (courtesy of Ebsco) to GIDEON and DynaMed, a long list of resources in Haitian Creole and French, and details of some organisations that are using Twitter.

**Cochrane Evidence Aid**
http://www.cochrane.org/evidenceaid/haiti/index.html
Cochrane systematic reviews of relevance, with some material in French. Updated daily.

**Emergency Access Initiative - NLM**
http://eai.nlm.nih.gov/
This scheme involves the NLM, the NNLM and publishers, and was new to me, I have to confess. It provides free access to full text to health professionals, libraries and the public in the USA in the event of a disaster, and has been activated for people working in Haiti. There is more detail of how the scheme works at http://eai.nlm.nih.gov/public/faqs.htm and the EAI site explains how to get access to the materials.

**Joint Languages University**
http://jlu.wbtrain.com/
An initiative of US federal government agencies and academic institutions, which includes learning objects to help you learn Haitian Creole.

**Mobile MedlinePlus**
http://m.medlineplus.gov/
I plan to cover mobile applications of interest to health librarians in a future column, but Mobile MedlinePlus is one that has useful resources in this context.

It does seem trivial in the wider scheme of things, but among the buildings destroyed have been some library buildings, and collections have of course been affected. Bibliotheques sans Frontieres, http://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/index.php, has more information, in (as you might suspect) French. It does make the point that helping those affected is the priority, but that the long term future of the country must include rebuilding cultural institutions.


Any suggestions for things to include in this column, or indeed columns themselves, are welcome:

Keith Nockels