

Alfred Health Library Service

Journals FAQ

How does the library make decisions on journal subscriptions?

Journal subscriptions usually extend over many years and can represent a major budget commitment. For this reason decisions on journal subscriptions are made very carefully. The Library has an Advisory Committee at both the Alfred and Caulfield Hospital campuses. The Advisory committees provide advice by reviewing usage of existing journal subscriptions each year, and examining the merits of any new suggested titles. Final decisions on journal subscriptions are made by the Library Management Committee as part of the budget process.

Is it possible to suggest a new journal subscription?

Yes, suggestions for new journal subscriptions can be made to the Library Manager. An assessment of demand is made by counting the prior number of inter-library loan requests, and other factors such as ISI Impact factor, accessibility of journals in other health libraries, etc.

Is it much cheaper to get a journal as an electronic subscription rather than a print subscription?

It is generally a little cheaper to purchase online-only journal subscriptions rather than print or print + online subscriptions. Increasingly libraries purchase “packages” of online journals, which can increase the discount of required titles. Packages however often include titles for which there is little or no demand.

Is there any information on how often a specific journal is used?

Yes the library has usage data provided by publishers which tell us how often full-text articles are downloaded from specific journals. This information can be used to compare one title against another, and to determine what are the most heavily used journals, and whether the average cost per article downloaded is high or low.

How can library users get articles from journals the library doesn't have?

The Library's Document Delivery Service obtains copies of articles, book loans and other material which cannot be found in the Library's collections. This service is available to staff and research students of Alfred Health, the Baker-IDI Institute and the Burnet Institute. Staff and students of Monash University, La Trobe University and Deakin University should deal directly with their respective university library for document delivery.

(Website : <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/amrep/docdel/>).

Sometimes journals disappear from the ejournal list, what's going on?

A journal can be cancelled due to low usage, or the removal of access can be out of the library's control such as when the journal is part of a large package, or consortium arrangement, and contents are linked to the holdings of another partner library.

Do all library users have access to the same range of journals?

No. At Alfred Health staff and students can often have affiliations to different institutions. Access to journals will differ due to library subscriptions provided by these respective institutions. PC's on different institutional networks also influence access to e-resources, as does whether staff or students are using passwords for authentication.