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**HEALTH SERVICES:
SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH**

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FOREWORD

In December 1989, Title IX of the Public Health Service Act established the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) and required the AHCPR Administrator and the Director of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to enter into an agreement to improve the organization and dissemination of health services research information. The legislation also called upon AHCPR to fund a study by the Institute of Medicine (IOM), National Academy of Sciences.

Since 1989, NLM has increased its already substantial coverage of health services research, administration, and planning information and initiated a number of new services in response to the report of the IOM study¹ which was completed in September 1991. *Health Services: Sources of Information for Research* is one result of NLM's expanded Health Services Research Information Program.

The guide was developed to aid users and producers of health services research in accessing relevant literature and sources of information. Overall responsibility for planning and researching the content of this volume rested with staff of NLM's Reference Section and Office of Health Services Research Information. Content and format were reviewed by staff of several AHCPR offices and centers and benefitted from their comments. This guide is especially geared toward the health services researcher who does not have ready access to an experienced librarian or other expert assistance in seeking and acquiring information. It should be particularly valuable for researchers new to the field.

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¹Harris-Wehling, Jo; Morris, Lawrence C. (Institute of Medicine, Washington, DC). Improving information services for health services researchers. A report to the National Library of Medicine. Washington: National Academy Press; 1991 Sep. Contract No.: 282-90-0052, Task 2. 62 p.

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INTRODUCTION

Health services research is "a field of research in which its intellectual strengths and its methodologies are drawn from an array of different disciplines including medicine, public health, economics, sociology, psychology, and many more."² The National Library of Medicine defines health services research as the study of the scientific basis and management of health services and their effect on access, quality, and cost of health care. It is research concerned with the organization, planning, financing, administration, and outcomes of health services.

A health services researcher outside of academia or a researcher in one of the associated disciplines of health services research may find locating information difficult. Learning about the literature of all the disciplines involved in health services research and identifying available sources of information can be very time consuming. *Health Services: Sources of Information for Research* was developed to help people to understand and to gain access to the health services research literature. It covers current areas of inquiry in health services research as well as methodologies used to conduct health services research.

The guide is not meant to be exhaustive. It lists selected references from the wide range of disciplines involved in health services research. The emphasis is on English language publications of the past five years, though significant older works have been included. Most of the publications deal with health services in the United States and Canada. The guide, for the most part, is organized alphabetically by publication types, subdivided by broad subject categories. Author/title indices are provided at the end.

A bibliographic publication, by its very nature, is dated before it can be distributed. It is our hope to update this document on a periodic basis. Comments on this version or suggestions on ways to improve future versions are welcome and should be directed to the Head, Office of Health Services Research Information, National Library of Medicine.

²Ginzberg, Eli, editor. *Health services research: key to health policy*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press; 1991. Chapter 11, The challenge ahead; p. 32.

