

Correspondence

## Importance, relevance of local studies and national, regional databases

I was delighted to receive the most recent issue of volume 24 number 5, of the *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences* and heartened to see a large number of high quality submissions covering a comprehensive range of health and healthcare science topics from a diversity of geographical regions.

The editorial in this issue "Importance, relevance of local studies and national, regional databases" poignantly highlighted some of the significant and well acknowledged challenges faced by researchers in this and similarly under resourced regions of the world. Undoubtedly inadequate searching of the literature prior to undertaking any form of scientific study, whether it is in health or any other discipline, can result in duplication of effort, may be considered unethical if it involves experimental research & in essence is a waste of precious research funding.

The importance of looking beyond MEDLINE and the major databases was clearly emphasized in this editorial but regrettably there was one significant and important database that was conspicuous by its absence.

The Cochrane Collaboration is an international organization dedicated to improving health care for the world's population by preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of Cochrane systematic reviews of the evidence of the effects of health care interventions. Its principal output is The Cochrane Library which includes CENTRAL, the largest and most comprehensive database of randomized controlled trials which, as a result of the Cochrane Collaboration's global handsearching programme, includes over 30% more reports of randomized controlled trials than MEDLINE.

The current issue of this journal included several reports of randomized controlled trials and clearly there are an increasing number of researchers in our region conducting experimental research using this study design. It would be pertinent to point out to investigators that prior to conducting randomized controlled trials a comprehensive search of the literature should include this important database, so that future

research constructively enhances previous research, conserves precious research funding and limits further unethical research. Access to CENTRAL is available on line at <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/>

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With interest and pleasure I read your recent editorial which highlighted the importance of searching local databases, which in turn will nudge all green or budding researchers to be careful when performing literature review. I would like to add some useful web sites.

1. <http://en.scientificcommons.org/>
2. <http://www.find-health-articles.com/>
3. <http://www.library.nhs.uk/Default.aspx>
4. <http://nsdl.org/>

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## Life is three letters

He was born on 14<sup>th</sup> of June  
Karl, was a pioneer physician  
Preposterous, was a human blood transfusion  
Till the Landsteiner's clear vision  
In 1901, disclosed his results which were hidden  
Three letters A and B and C give life to human  
Letters, allow human to human blood transfusion  
A and B, then known as antigens  
C renamed to O, cause no antigens  
Antigens, Antigens!! Yeah, Antigens  
Carbohydrates, found on red blood corpuscles  
Widely distributed and even on tissues  
Also available in secretions  
After one century  
Three letters still needed even in surgery  
Your life is hidden in which letter  
You should detect as said by Landsteiner  
We should be indebted to Karl Landsteiner

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