



A cornucopia of health information



Lenus is a useful free education and research resource for GPs and other healthcare workers, write Aoife Lawton and Trish Patton

LENUS, THE IRISH HEALTH REPOSITORY, is a freely available, open-access database of Irish health publications and clinical research and is an invaluable resource for anyone working in the Irish health services. If you're looking for the latest primary care strategy and its predecessor, while your colleague is looking for research into mental health in general practice specifically in Ireland, then the odds are you'll both find what you're looking for in Lenus (www.lenus.ie).

Lenus is a free Irish website, with most of its content fully accessible online. It contains Irish 'grey' literature including some reports that are difficult to obtain, but also current Irish research material. It also has online guides available.

What information can you find on Lenus?

GPs, like most professionals working in the Irish health services, need to identify, locate and retrieve the best evidence for decision-making. Lenus brings together a unique and unparalleled collection of Irish health-related material, from Department of Health policy documents and HSE public health reports, to academic and clinical research with an Irish dimension which provides background and context for Irish healthcare.

This type of 'grey' literature can often be hard to find, but Lenus gathers historical documents and the latest health-related publications, thus making it an invaluable resource for researchers and those who wish to deliver evidence-based clinical care.

Key reports in the Irish health service

On the Lenus homepage, there is a handy link to 'key reports in the Irish health service', an alphabetical list of core policy documents and reports which have driven development in the Irish health services over the past 50 years. Some of the reports, like the '*Commission of inquiry on mental illness*' or the '*Devlin report*' (both 1966) are difficult to obtain, and some are not available anywhere else.

ICGP publications

The ICGP has been submitting some content to Lenus since 2012. You can find us located under 'communities' in the 'other Irish health organisations' collection in the 'professional and regulatory' publications or you can use this quick link: www.lenus.ie/hse/handle/10147/135420 This ensures that our publications have greater exposure and form part of an Irish health repository.

Historic research in the Irish health service

When undertaking historic research in Ireland, Lenus is a good place to search. It contains an archive of previously unavailable digitised content including Department of Health reports and former health board minutes. You will find material that is no longer available anywhere else, especially from organisations that no longer exist, such as

the Postgraduate Medical and Dental Board, which was transferred to the HSE METR unit, and is now known as the NDTP (National Doctor Training and Planning) unit.

Current research in the Irish health service


As well as historical research, Lenus is great for up-to-date research from an Irish perspective and full-text articles can be downloaded directly from Lenus. This is another one of the key benefits of Lenus, as the majority of the content is accessible online.

It is also interesting to see that a 2015 article¹ investigating '*Primary Care Teams in Ireland*' used Lenus as one of its key sources of information in a qualitative mapping review of Irish grey and published literature.

How is Lenus promoting research?

Lenus provides the opportunity for researchers to submit their own research. GPs are encouraged to make their published research including journal articles, conference papers and presentations available in Lenus by using the 'submit' button on the homepage. Authors should check copyright agreements before making papers openly available on Lenus. If there is any doubt, contact a librarian.

As well as increasing access and visibility for Irish researchers, Lenus also provides an overview of healthcare research taking place in Ireland. A handy feature is the facility to view statistics on your own research and see what countries are viewing your research and how many times it was viewed and downloaded. In 2014, Lenus further celebrated research by launching a new HSE Open Access Research Award to recognise the efforts of healthcare professionals and people working in the Irish health system that are engaged in research.

One of the strategic objectives of the Mant Report² (2006) is to increase the likelihood that research findings are effectively disseminated. Lenus does so by ensuring that everything is indexed and searchable via Google scholar. With its exclusively Irish focus and its unmatched collection of Irish health service documents (both historical and cutting-edge) Lenus offers the user a simple, straightforward one-stop shop representing real value for money and a key resource for all. 

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References

1. O'Sullivan M, Cullen W, MacFarlane A. Primary care teams in Ireland: a qualitative mapping review of Irish grey and published literature. *Ir J Med Sci.* 2015; 184(1): 69-73
2. Primary Care: Research and Development in Ireland: The Mant Report. Health Research Board, Dublin 2006