retrieved through the use of electronic technology, and made available as individual products. Examples of the range of items discussed are full-text files, numeric data files (e.g., census files), indexes to journals, software, videotapes and videodiscs, and CD-ROMs (not music). The formats are treated in adequate detail to aid the reader in understanding what the formats are and include definitions of the formats, descriptions of their basic creation, the machinery and software necessary to employ them, purchase options, recommendations for cost savings, and a snapshot of the "it's the software—no, it's the hardware" battle. Copyright, licensing, standards, and pricing are also examined.

The authors provide many helpful financial hints to bear in mind when purchasing databases. "Costs should include the increased system capacity required to store, process, and retrieve the data. The costs could include actual sale price of the data from the publisher, and the costs of the retrieval software, processing this data to conform to local system requirements, storage in the local system, maintenance and future updates" (p. 6). There are some pronouncements with which some might take issue. For example, "Generally speaking, it is rarely cheaper to mount a major bibliographic database in a local system, unless the information had been purchased in multiple copies and formats before switching . . . "; the authors do go on to say, "Despite the possibility of increased costs for locally mounted databases, the improved access and patron service may well be worth it" (p. 6).

The supportive selection criteria is a combination of the commonsense and the remarkable. "It is very important to have written procedures for selecting electronic resources" (p. 9) is one of the gold standards of collecting. Among the valuable topics that should be included in a section of a library's collection development plan and may be missed by the manual writer are timeliness of updates or cumulations, compliance with national standards, and the need for follow-up releases due to bugs and glitches.

The process of obtaining electronic resources lacks the familiar simplicity of book and journal acquisitions. The Guide directs the reader in dealing with leasing, quality of documentation, warranties, licensing, copyright, and order forms that call for essential information we are unaccustomed to providing (e.g., RAM capacity!).

The Dickinson book provides very basic definitions of databases and electronic resources. There are descriptions of everything from slots or a bird's-eye view of a mother board to types of databases. One nice feature is little gray boxes that offer some bullets and checklists. What separates this book from the Bosch book is the level of detail that Dickinson provides. Amidst instructions on how to search various electronic databases are instructions on how to lease or purchase software. Perhaps what can be said is that this book is more than its title implies. It can also serve as a primer for the uninhibited on such issues as the fundamentals of displaying and printing, a wee introduction to the Internet, and instruction on how to speak to vendors at conferences. The selection and evaluation information is here but harder to find.

This review should serve as a hearty recommendation for the American Library Association's Acquisition Guidelines No. 9 for those who are writing (or rewriting) their collection development manuals to include electronic formats.

Linda A. Hulbert
Health Sciences Center Library
St. Louis University
St. Louis, Missouri


Managed care—a rose by any other name . . . Today, most articles about health care reform or delivery use this phrase or related lexicon. Almost all health care today is managed, and the devil is in the details of that management. Thus, an updated guide to the devil—I mean, the language of managed care—is essential for any health sciences library. A comprehensive book for the reference desk and the collection itself is an essential purchase for a health sciences library and other libraries serving patrons with requests in this subject field.

This is such a book, one that is both timely and comprehensive at a reasonable price and, therefore, highly recommended. At $65.00 for 1,200 terms, it comes to $.054 per term. However, because this title purports to be more than a mere glossary and is publicized as a desk reference, what else does it include? The book has ten pages of acronyms and abbreviations, which proved very helpful. Additionally, it lists fifty-nine organizations, with abstract, name, address, and telephone and fax numbers in four separate sections for trade associations, policy and research organizations, accrediting bodies, and federal government agencies. Are these sections useful? Redundant? Easy to use? Yes, but read on.

If you are like me, you can never remember what "HEDIS" stands for. Sure enough, it was not alphabetically listed in the defined terms. However, a quick check in the acronyms section found the term health plan employer data and information set. In the terminology section, the full term appeared with a superb definition, the acronym
HEDIS, and “see also” references to two organizations. The organizations are not only listed in the separate sections in the back of the book but are also fully listed in the terminology section. Better yet, the organization section also has see-also references to the terminology. So, looking up “The HMO Group” refers you to “HEDIS.” These see-also references are abundant, very useful, and well placed on the page. The book also has thumbnail guides to assist in locating the various sections.

There are approximately fifty cross-references included in this book, and a more thorough treatment of this feature would make an already valuable book invaluable. A typical cross-reference in the book reads as follows: “nursing care institution, see nursing home.” Examples of terms needing cross-reference are “loading, see risk load”; “multiple choice, see dual option”; “office enrollment, see dual option”; “closed access, see closed panel”; and “medical group, see group practice.” Another example is the lack of a cross-reference for “individual practice association, see independent practice association (IPA).” IPA is a common acronym in managed care and is frequently known by either phrase in the literature.

Most of the health maintenance organization (HMO) and physician-hospital organization (PHO) model types are extensively explained, such as staff HMO, group HMO, network HMO, IPA, mixed, and PHO. What would be useful is a definition of the term, models, and a separate section compiling and comparing the different kinds of models and types. There are useful definitions and lists in Giffin’s models of PHOs [1], Miller and Luft’s five HMO plan types [2], and the Healthcare Advisory Board’s structural models [3]. This type of presentation was missing from this book, and it would be very useful for comparison and research. If you do not know the types, you need to search through the entire book. Regardless of this concern, the book remains very valuable.

The 1,200 terms in this book are well defined, with clear, easy-to-understand language, most with extensive paragraphs, creating a thorough and well-written book. It covers the full lexicon of managed care, with definitions for terms such as capitation, subacutecare, and health insurance purchasing cooperative. Also, it includes good definitions of all those more elusive terms, such as no balance billing clause, hold-harmless clause, any willing provider, Jackson Hole Group, clinical without walls, point-of-service plan, deep pocket, and lives, to name a few. The comprehensiveness of the book and the extensive definitions are further revealed when compared to recently published glossaries, such as Kelly’s “Glossary of Managed Care Terms” [4] or United HealthCare’s Glossary of Terms [5], containing between 150 and 300 terms respectively.

Sure, a few terms are missing, such as prepayment or token payment. However, as Katz states, when evaluating, do not expect any dictionary to be perfect [6]. The omissions are minor. A handbook, according to the ALA Glossary, is “arranged for the quick location of facts and capable of being conveniently carried” [7]. Without a doubt, this book is a handbook: well arranged, with a superb page layout that is easy for the eye to scan; with content that is both qualitative and comprehensive; and amazingly portable, at 22 by 15 centimeters. It is also durable, even though it is softbound with a glue binding. Mine is intact after daily use and treks in a knapsack.

You will learn a lot about managed care if you use this book. It is a devilish read!

Michele M. Volesko
Health Research and Educational Trust of New Jersey
Princeton

References