When we want to obtain medical health information, it is important to obtain not only books, but also the latest articles and conference presentations. For the general public, including the older people, who are not affiliated with universities or medical institutions, it would be nice if such information could be accessible through public libraries. Thus, each public library are expected to provide access to database of medical literature. But it seems that not much is provided. Ichushi-Web is a database that covers Japanese medical articles for medical professionals in Japan. It can be called the PubMed of Japan though it is not free of charge. We surveyed the availability of access to Ichushi-Web at prefectural libraries in Japan.

Objective

- When we want to obtain medical health information, it is important to obtain not only books, but also the latest articles and conference presentations.
- For the general public, including the older people, who are not affiliated with universities or medical institutions, it would be nice if such information could be accessible through public libraries.
- Thus, each public library are expected to provide access to database of medical literature. But it seems that not much is provided.
- Ichushi-Web is a database that covers Japanese medical articles for medical professionals in Japan. It can be called the PubMed of Japan though it is not free of charge.
- We surveyed the availability of access to Ichushi-Web at prefectural libraries in Japan.

Method

Questionnaire survey was sent to 15 prefectural libraries (13 prefectures) that provide access to Ichushi-Web by email or surface mail in July 2019. Responses were received from all 15 libraries (100% response rate).

Results

(1) Number of accesses to Ichushi-Web in 2018

- 53% No Answer
- 15% More than 301
- 15% 251-300
- 9% 201-250
- 5% 151-200
- 5% 101-150
- 5% 51-100
- 5% 0

(2) Providing Printed copies of Ichushi-Web search results to patrons

- 93%

(3) Providing patrons access to browsing e-journal text linked from the search results

- 53%

(4) Providing patrons printout copies of the full text of e-journals linked from the search results

- 40%

Discussion

- Libraries do not often provide links from Ichushi-Web to medical journal Websites with articles and databases. The useful functions of Ichushi-Web are not being utilized.
- Education and in-house training of librarians is necessary for a better use of Ichushi-Web. A pathfinder for patrons should also be created.
- Public libraries are responsible to guarantee access to online data and to provide an environment where patrons can print out the data, but this has not yet been achieved.