

Comment on “Sci-Hub and evidence-based dentistry: an ethical dilemma in Cuba”.

Javier Gonzalez-Argote¹ & Ileana Alfonso-Sanchez.²

Affiliations: ¹Instituto de Ciencias Básicas y Preclínicas Victoria de Girón, Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de La Habana, La Habana, Cuba. ²Centro Nacional de Información de las Ciencias Médicas (INFOMED), La Habana, Cuba.

Corresponding author: Javier Gonzalez-Argote. Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de La Habana, La Habana, Cuba. Apartado Postal 4560, La Habana, Cuba. Phone: (53) 53890298. E-mail: jargote@infomed.sld.cu

When “Sci-Hub and evidence-based dentistry: an ethical dilemma in Cuba”¹ was published and after a reflective analysis we felt the need to write this comment. The article, very similar to that published by Bendezú-Quispe *et al.*² addresses an issue considered an ethical dilemma worldwide.

Throughout history clinical practice has been based on knowledge. In this sense, the aim of Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) methodology is to make health professionals reflect systematically on all the decisions to be made with respect to a patient or a group of patients. This in order to find solutions based on experience and supported by scientific evidence.³

While it is true that Cuba is not a candidate for the HINARI program, and unlike many Latin American countries, it does not have access to Scopus or Web of Science, to say that “*access to the best scientific evidence is limited because textbooks are obsolete and there is no institutional access to articles of high scientific quality*” is to deny and belittle the great investment (about one million dollars) made by the Cuban Ministry of Public Health in the purchase of the most updated literature and paid subscriptions to numerous databases of international prestige.

INFOMED (Available at www.sld.cu), the Telematic Health Network in Cuba, to which all the health institutions of the country are connected, allows free access and in full text mode to more than 23 databases, including Cochrane, Springer, ScienceDirect, Wiley, Wolters Kluwer, ClinicalKey and EBSCO (Available at <http://bvscuba.sld.cu/blog/vhl/fuentes-de-informacion/acceso-a-textos-completos/revistas-cientificas/>). Likewise, *Centro Editorial de Ciencias Médicas* (Editorial Center of Medical Sciences) has an extensive collection of books by Cuban authors that can be accessed in printed and digital format (Available at <http://bvscuba.sld.cu/libros-de-autores-cubanos/>).

Lacking knowledge of the free access to the abovementioned databases does not justify the assertion that Sci-Hub is the only source of “science-based information” in Cuba. Access to Sci-Hub is free, and ultimately, such responsibility lies in the hands of those who decide to use its resources.

Therefore, in Cuba, accessing Sci-Hub is not an ethical dilemma for those in search of the best available evidence.

REFERENCES.

1. Corrales-Reyes IE. Sci-Hub and evidence-based dentistry: an ethical dilemma in Cuba. *J Oral Res.* 2017;6(7):175.
2. Bendezú-Quispe G, Nieto-Gutiérrez W, Pacheco-Mendoza J, Taype-Rondan A. Sci-Hub and medical practice: an ethical dilemma in Peru. *Lancet Glob Health.* 2016;4(9):e608.
3. Arceo Diaz JL. Manual de medicina basada en evidencias. 1st Ed. México: Ed. El Manual Moderno; 2010.

Conflict of interests: None.

Acknowledgements: None.

Cite as: Gonzalez-Argote J & Alfonso-Sanchez I. Comment on “Sci-Hub and evidence-based dentistry: an ethical dilemma in Cuba”. *J Oral Res* 2017; 6(9):232. doi:10.17126/joralres.2017.070