

HLA NEWS

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF HEALTH LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA, A GROUP OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION • ISSN 1448-0840

You're worth what?

Health library workers in NSW are pursuing a claim for the recognition of the parity of their work with that of other public sector library workers, now covered by the NSW Crown Employees (Librarians, Library Assistants, Library Technicians and Archivists) Award 2002 that was finalised in November 2002. This Award evolved from the work done by Justice Leonie Glynn in 1998 into the equity of pay in occupational groups dominated by women in comparison to those that are male dominated. Librarians were chosen as the professional group and were compared with Geologists. Justice Glynn found that the work value was equal but librarians were found to be receiving, on average 15% less than the geologists. The greatest discrepancy was at the Librarian Grade 2 level where the discrepancy was 20%.

The PSA, on behalf of the Crown employees, undertook a test case before the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) and in March 2002 the findings were in favour not only librarians but also all library workers covered by the Award being varied. Unfortunately for library workers in NSW Public Hospitals, a work demarcation dispute between the PSA and HREA resulted in the decision that Health workers covered by the PSA prior to 1997 were to be represented by HREA. Therefore when the test case was won by the PSA, the findings did not automatically apply to us. We may have been a little naïve to think that it was going to be relatively easy to demonstrate that the pay increases resulting from the findings should be passed on to the Health library workers because of our recent historical link to the Brown Employees Award. We have been told that this is not necessarily so and we are not Public Servants as we are not covered by the Public

Service Act but by the Health Services Act and we are employees of the Health Administration Corporation of NSW.

We have now started what appears to be another gruelling round of negotiation with the Department of Health to try and gain the benefits of the PSA test case. This is further complicated by HREA'S tabling of a new 'Omnibus Award' to the Department for all public health employees. The department will not consider any individual claims on this Award until all the elements are gathered. Therefore any individual determinations that have been before the IRC and the cases won will have to wait until the whole award is ratified by the IRC. We are trying to argue that the pay equity and work value findings relevant to Crown employees should not be considered as part of the new award but should be considered separately for the health library workers. Fortunately the structure of the new

Crown Employee's Award is very similar to the proposed structure of the Allied Health component of the proposed HREA Award. A group of us are working on developing the descriptors for each grading in this Award and we are mindful of the need to be comparable with the Crown employees as well as showing the unique feature of the health environment.

We will keep you informed of our progress and hopefully our successful outcome in the not to distant future and I hope that the effort will benefit all Health library workers across the country.

Sue Grimes

Wentworth Area Health Service Library, NSW

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Working Together

The National Library of Australia and Health Libraries



Flynn, John, 1880-1951. Missionaries and hospital staff with the Australian Inland Mission ambulance at Leigh Creek [transparency] : a lantern slide used in lectures on all Australian Inland Mission activities, 1940-/. Picture courtesy of the National Library of Australia (Australian Inland Mission collection).

Australian libraries have a wealth of resources and knowledge. Health libraries have outstanding collections, located around the nation, and have developed a high level of commitment to research sharing and collection development. The National Library has provided services which support resource sharing amongst Australian libraries. In recent years the Library has focused on online services to support resource discovery and sharing through the Internet. Health libraries can utilise a range of different services to support their activities including GRATISnet and the National Library's Kinetica services – both enable health libraries to work efficiently and utilise wide range of Australian collections.

KINETICA

To assist libraries with cataloguing, acquisition and access to collections around Australia the NLA provides the Kinetica service. So how can it help health libraries? Over 35 million holdings from hundreds of libraries are held for over 13.5 million bibliographic records. Our research shows that around 80% of catalogue records for material acquired by Australian libraries can be sourced from the NBD, with an additional 5% from other databases available through Kinetica, including RLG and OCLCs WorldCat. This helps health libraries use their resources efficiently and saves duplication of effort in cataloguing. Not only can libraries use the services to be efficient themselves, library suppliers can use

the NBD to provide records with books to assist you.

Kinetica Document Delivery (KDD) is another service which supports Australian libraries. Material from Australian libraries and shortly CISTI and New Zealand libraries with holdings listed in Te Puna can be requested through KDD. The Interlibrary Lending Benchmarking study undertaken by the National Resource Working Group found that using an automated ILL system and union catalogue were two of the five factors which characterised the most efficient libraries. The KDD payments system (KDDPS) helps libraries by saving you juggling vouchers, credit card statements and following up on unpaid bills. With KDD you receive regular statements listing materials you have

supplied to and received from other libraries, with cheques where appropriate. You can use KDDPS for Gratis interlending and tap into a broad network. Using CISTI through KDD will give you a discounted charge to help your interlending budget stretch further.

RECENT AUSTRALIAN PUBLICATIONS

If you are interested in identifying newly published Australian resources *Recent Australian Publications* can help you. Published monthly, the file is available in two forms – a Dewey list that enables quick navigation to new health material and an alphabetic listing. Have a browse at <http://www.nla.gov.au/pub/auspub.html>

OPINIONS MATTER

To create an efficient health library network in the 21st century the National Library seeks your views and also encourages health libraries to participation in Kinetica. Over the last year we have sought the views of Australian libraries in enhancements for Kinetica and the National Bibliographic Database. Through 2003/04 our priorities are to undertake a strategic review of future options of Kinetica and to improve the efficiency of Australian libraries through increasing the coverage of the NBD and libraries using KDD. I encourage health libraries to contact me on 02 6262 1143 or by email (rmissingham@nla.gov.au) with feedback or suggestions on developments in National Library services for better support.

AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL INDEX

The National Library is now in its 20th year of producing the *Australian Medical Index*, which has expanded in more recent years to include Australian data from MEDLINE. The Meditext service provides full text for many of the cited articles in AMI. AMI and Meditext are made available online through the Informit service. You can find more information about AMI at <http://www.nla.gov.au/ami/index.html>, or contact Informit (tina.argyros@mit.edu.au) for subscription information. In addition,

continues on next page ...

Informit offers access to APAIS-Health, a database derived from APAIS which covers non-clinical medicine, including the social, economic, political and legal aspects of health and medicine in Australia.

OTHER NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES THAT CAN HELP HEALTH LIBRARIES

Our Document Supply service can provide copies of articles and conference papers and loan of books from the collection. We supply where possible using Ariel to give quick electronic delivery. Our latest survey this year found that 99% of material was supplied within 4 working days. We constantly review our processes to provide material promptly to libraries and individuals. Individuals and libraries can also request material through

the Copies direct service (<http://www.nla.gov.au/copiesdirect/>) to order copies from our printed collections as well as maps, pictures and manuscripts.

Have you an image collection that you would like to promote with a broader community? Participation in PictureAustralia (PA) can highlight your images and increase access to the world. For more information email pictaust@nla.gov.au, phone 02 6262 1641 or check the PictureAustralia website at <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/>. If you are looking for images to use in a display or presentation, or for some other purpose, you may find what you are looking for in PA. Among the more than 600,000 images there are many of Australian hospitals, health personnel, military medical teams and facilities, and even an interesting series on the cleanup in Sydney following the plague epidemic at the start of last century.

Don't forget the Australian Libraries Gateway (<http://www.nla.gov.au/apps/libraries>) with over 465 health libraries and their details, and the Australian Interlending Resources Sharing Directory (<http://www.nla.gov.au/ilrs/>), supporting ILL throughout Australia.

On a final note I hope that you can attend the Kinetica Annual Users' Meeting, to be held in Adelaide on 21 and 22 August, just before the Specials, Health and Law Librarians Conference. And do consider nominating for the Kinetica Innovation Awards (see <http://www.nla.gov.au/kinetica/aum/aum03/award.html>). If you are attending the conference do come to the National Library stand and discuss your needs.

Roxanne Missingham
Assistant Director General
Resource Sharing Division
National Library of Australia

Anne Harrison Award

Applications for the biennial Anne Harrison Award are now open to all Australian Health Library and Information Professionals.

Australian Health Librarians established the Anne Harrison Award in 1987 to commemorate the work of Anne Harrison (1923-1992). Anne was Librarian-in-Charge at the Brownless Medical Library, University of Melbourne (1949-1983). She was the founder of the Central Medical Library Organisation in 1953 and helped pioneer the introduction of *Medline* into Australia. Anne was a founding member of the Australian Medical Librarian's Group and later the LAA Medical Librarian's Section. These professional associations, together with the more recent ALIA Health Libraries Section comprise the organisational history of HLA.

The Trustees of the Anne Harrison Award provide \$3000 for:

- 1) a research project that will:
 - a. increase the understanding of health librarianship in Australia, or
 - b. explore the potential for the further development of health librarianship in Australia
- 2) assistance towards enrichment of knowledge and skills of Australian health sciences librarians, including funding to:
 - a. help meet expenses of an approved course of study or study tour, or
 - b. help meet expenses arising from a publication in the field of Australian health librarianship.

2003

Applications are assessed by the Administrators and close On 30 June 2003. The announcement of the Award will be made at the HLA Annual General Meeting during the Specials, Health and Law Libraries conference held in Adelaide, South Australia.

Administrators

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Current Administrators, Trustees and HLA Executive members are ineligible to apply for the Anne Harrison Award.

**Enquiries and applications can be made with Greg Fowler
by email g.fowler@library.uq.edu.au.**

Imagine

DOUGLAS PIPER LIBRARY – 2010 AND BEYOND

It is a challenge to envision specifically what our library will look like in seven years time and beyond but if we were to do some crystal ball gazing and imagined ...

The entrance to the library has a common public space and is conveniently located within the main hospital foyer precinct. It is adjacent to the post office, bank and other commercial services and its position ensures that it attracts plenty of flow through traffic. [Consider the increase in the number of public libraries now located in shopping centres. Charles Landry, citing several examples of this in his paper *Public Library Futures* reported on a library in Dorset, England which moved to a shopping centre, after which the shopping centre showed an 8-10% increase in turnover.]



... the library is a dynamic, vibrant service and space. It is sensibly located in a central location and provides a vehicle for enriching both the local public and hospital staff alike as a community meeting place and through its function as an information centre



Importantly, the foyer location is convenient for clinicians and the public to find and get to. The library is located next to a cafe or, better still, has its own cafe [Johns Hopkins University installed a coffee bar and increased visitors from 500,000 to 1.2 million with the library receiving part of the profits from the concession.] Clinicians as well as the local community use the library as both a meeting place and a place for collaboration – a vibrant intellectual social space.

The library's foyer is arranged such that hospital staff and members of the community alike can enjoy a cup of coffee or a bite to eat. Patients, family and community browse and purchase books from

the library's bookshop [another revenue raiser] or pick up the latest consumer health information leaflets. Hospital staff leaf through the newspapers or popular science magazines.

The library design is such that when moving beyond the foyer and into the library, the library splits in two. One side opens onto a community health information service [which could possibly be provided in partnership with the State Library's Health Information Service] while the other is a secure staff and members only library. A common library staff work area

divides both spaces and is occupied by a reference desk and offices. The design ensures clinicians are able to use their professional library service without ever being compromised by those using the consumer health information service.

The consumer space provides access to written material (brochures, leaflets, books) but also provides pay-as-you go Internet points, where the starting site is a quality assured consumer health web site developed by the library. Patients and family net conference with family and friends from private booths to provide updates on their care. Suitably qualified librarians provide more detailed reference

services as well as promote health information literacy. Some services and information are free. Others are available on a fee-for-service basis. At various times of the day consumer health groups hold education and information sessions in private meeting rooms in conjunction with clinicians. The community demonstrates its appreciation and support through generous donations.

Interestingly the notion that the role of the physical library would diminish with the increase in the availability of books, journals, and other resources online, has been turned on its head. New demands are increasingly placed on the library's physical space by hospital staff and students, who increasingly view the library as a social centre for intellectual work. Technology-based workstations in reading areas and the ability to get a good cup of coffee have resulted in significantly heavier use by hospital staff. Students who have increasingly comprehensive library resources available online in their rooms still find it useful to work in the physical library, especially to meet and learn with other students in private tutorial rooms.

The library is an important venue for instruction as clinicians and students increasingly seek the expertise of library staff to help them locate what they need amidst larger and more complicated content collections. Movable walls allow all or part of a bank of workstations to be cordoned off to create temporary training facilities and net conferencing enables those attending training sessions to be situated both locally and remotely.

Parts of the library are screened off. Clinicians use these areas as quiet places to learn, review and reflect away from busy offices and patient care areas. Wireless technology allows them to connect to the network, from an array of locations within the library, with their handheld PCs, tablets and electronic paper, or to pick up a paper based book or journal.

Scientists and researchers from a number of nearby commercial companies, which don't have their own libraries, are fee-for-service members. They are attracted to the library's close proximity, as it is a convenient drop-in point when

visiting to conduct business with hospital staff, and it provides efficient service and excellent resources.

The library provides facilities for the delivery of multimedia information to its users, too expensive to be anywhere but in a well-monitored area. At the low end this includes headphones and larger computer screens. At the high end, enclosed booths prevent sound escaping and provide multiple screens and channels for sound and video.

Most checking out of material is done by the borrower using self-service systems that link in with security systems.

Less frequently used material is held off-site in a warehouse. The service is run by a consortium of health libraries servicing all of NSW and operates 24/7. This cheaper storage facility houses the non-digitised and rare collections of all of NSW's health libraries.

Throughout, the library space is adaptable, inviting and accessible, varied, interactive and well organised and conducive. It has suitable environmental conditions, is safe and secure, efficient, environmentally appropriate and suitable for information technology.

The mix of library staff has changed to reflect the changes in technology and the new roles information specialists have grown into and adopted. Clinical Librarians spend as much time in patient care areas as in the library. These librarians are an active part of the patient care team and provide same hour/same day evidence-based information in response to specific patient care questions. Digital Information Services Librarians mix their in-depth knowledge of information design and management with their high level IT skills to develop, design, plan, implement and manage many of the hospital's digital collections and services. These include Intra/internets, web-based information and communication services, knowledge management systems, digital publishing, integrated knowledge-based clinical support systems, and licenced electronic resources, software and support systems.

Importantly, librarians continue to demonstrate high levels of competence and

- have expert knowledge of the content of information resources, including the ability to critically evaluate and filter them
- have specialised subject knowledge appropriate to the business of the hospital
- develop and manage convenient, accessible and cost-effective information services that are aligned with the strategic directions of the hospital
- provide excellent instruction and support for library and information service users
- use appropriate information technology to acquire, organise and disseminate information
- develop specialised information products for use inside or outside the hospital or by individual clients
- evaluate the outcomes of information use and conduct research related to the solution of information management problems, and
- continually improve information services in response to the changing needs of its clients

Overall, the library is a dynamic, vibrant service and space. It is sensibly located in a central location and provides a vehicle for enriching both the local public and hospital staff alike as a community meeting place and through its function as an information centre.

Melanie Kammermann,
Chief Librarian
Douglas Piper Library, RNSH, NSW.

REFERENCES

- Public libraries and shopping centres
<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/pub/shopping.htm>
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<http://www.tcrecord.org/MilbankRising/Content.asp?ID=2>
- The Virtual impossibility of planning libraries for the information age
<http://www.hcu.ox.ac.uk/beyond/library/vision.html>
- Library automation 2012: the shape of things to come in academic libraries
<http://drott.cis.drexel.edu/1664/future/future6.html>
- Competencies for Special Librarians of the 21st Century
<http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/professional/meaning/competency.cfm>

MERGER OF ALIA QUEENSLAND HEALTH LIBRARIES GROUP WITH ALIA HEALTH LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA

At the February 27th 2003 meeting of the ALIA Queensland Health Libraries Group (QHLG), members confirmed their Resolution¹ to dissolve their group and merge with the national ALIA group, Health Libraries Australia effective immediately. This confirmation followed a unanimous email vote by members to support the merger.

QHLG members are enthusiastic about the opportunities now available to them for participating in professional activities at both the local and national levels. Queensland based HLA members will continue their local meetings, social and CPD events.

At the request of our members Janice Michel from Bond University and former QHLG President has agreed to continue in her leadership role as Local Presence Coordinator. Health library staff interested in HLA activities in Queensland can contact Janice at jmichel@staff.bond.edu.au

RESOLUTION¹

The members of the ALIA Queensland Health Libraries group resolve to dissolve their group and merge with the national group, ALIA Health Libraries Australia effective immediately.

Have you considered making a
donation
or bequest
to the
Anne
Harrison
Trust
Fund?

Contact Anne Batt for details –
email: annebatt@git.com.au

HLA Research Grants

~ CATs in Health Libraries ~

A key objective of Health Libraries Australia is to foster research in and about Health Libraries. Within Australia, and internationally there is a growing commitment in library and information services to evaluation, to researching the effectiveness of innovations, and reflecting on the evidence that underpins our own professional practice.

HLA's Research and Innovation Portfolio have made four research grants of \$500 each available for the preparation of Critically Appraised Topics (CATs) in Health Libraries.

CATs are a convenient format of creating and updating structured summaries of the best available research literature on clearly defined topics. They can also identify priorities and gaps to be addressed by future research. While the methodology for preparing CATs in different health care settings is evolving, their underlying principles are transparent processes to find, appraise and summarise research evidence that is both relevant to the topic and methodologically valid. Research that is descriptive or experimental, qualitative and or quantitative all contributes to our understanding. The evidentiary value of different research methods may however vary in measuring the outcomes, and effectiveness, of our actions.

Examples of different CAT formats for clinical settings can be found for Emergency Departments - *Best Bets* [<http://www.bestbets.org/background/betscats.html>], Primary Care - *POEMs (Patient Orientated Evidence that Matters - The Journal of Family Practice)* [<http://www.ebponline.net/>], and General Medicine in the UK Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine's *CATbank* [<http://www.cebm.net/cats.asp>]. For Health Libraries a wide range of research topics have been collated by Jon Elderidge (2001) in *The most relevant and answerable research questions facing the practice of health librarianship*. Hypothesis 15:1 p9 – 14, 17 [<http://gain.mercer.edu/mla/>

research/
Hypo2001v.15%20no.1.pdf].

HLA is particularly interested in the preparation of research summaries for the topics described in the panel on the right.

Applicants are encouraged to suggest further topics and refinements to the topic identified by HLA above. Joint applications by research partners will be welcomed. Application will be assessed by the HLA Executive members, who are themselves ineligible to apply.

Following a peer review process by members of the HLA Research and Innovation Portfolio (RIP) members, *CATs in Health Libraries* will be published on the ALIA website, where they will be regularly updated. Authors will also be encouraged to present their work at relevant conferences and to contribute to the health industry knowledge base through publication in the journal literature. RIP members will support successful applicants in their activities and the timeframe for publication is negotiable. Some conditions apply.

Enquiries and applications can be made with Greg Fowler, Research and Innovation Portfolio Leader by email g.fowler@library.uq.edu.au.

HLA's Research and Innovation Portfolio have made four research grants of \$500 each available for the preparation of Critically Appraised Topics (CATs) in Health Libraries.

HLA is particularly interested in the preparation of research summaries for the following topics:

1. Do PDAs improve clinician use of health information?
2. Are Clinical Librarian services effective in promoting evidence based practice in integrated health care teams?
3. What is the impact of libraries on the quality of health care?
4. Do state-wide Internet gateways to health information meet the needs of health workers?
5. How can Libraries best support rural and remote health workers ?
6. Do hospital libraries have a role in providing health consumers with information?

HEALTH LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA

Snapshot

In an effort to discover the number and range of health libraries in Australia, the ALIA group, Health Libraries Australia commissioned a census of all health related libraries. The aim of this census was to identify the range and number of health libraries in Australia so as to assist in the planning of future activities and promote the interests of health libraries in general.

In collating the list of libraries to be involved in this census we put together a database of information drawn from the Gratis Network, the Inter Library Loans resource sharing directory and the list of Special Libraries in Australia. A census was then sent out the libraries to find out more information about them. Below are the results of the census.

Information was compiled in February 2003 from the Australian Health Libraries Database as an indication of the position of health libraries within Australia. This report was written by Karen Kiesau, from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Library in Adelaide.

LIBRARY CLOSURES

At the beginning of the census in 2002 some 399 libraries throughout Australia were initially identified as being in the health, allied health and related fields. Once the census was completed in early 2003 this figure had fallen to 334,

representing a 17% decline since the last *Directory of Special Libraries in Australia* was compiled in 1999. Interestingly, although the trend has been for library decrease, the Northern Territory has been the only area to show an increase in the number of libraries. Much of the

decline in numbers is attributable to the closure of small country hospital libraries, particularly in Queensland and Victoria, and the decision of several libraries for the sight and hearing impaired to now consider themselves to be 'public' rather than 'health' libraries.

Number of libraries in the original database and number now listed in the database ↓

State	No.before	No.now	Percentage change	
South Australia	30	28	93%	7% ↓
New South Wales	126	109	86%	14% ↓
Victoria	118	96	81%	19% ↓
Queensland	70	53	75%	25% ↓
Northern Territory	4	5	125%	25% ↑
ACT	14	12	85%	15% ↓
Western Australia	25	24	96%	4% ↓
Tasmania	12	7	58%	42% ↓
Total	399	334	83%	17% ↓

Libraries by Category ↓

	Hospital		Uni / Health Research		Public Health Agencies		Colleges/ Societies		Non Govt Community Health Orgs		Others	
ACT	2	1%	1	2.5%	6	11%	-		2	4%	-	
NSW	55	38%	11	27.5%	11	20%	5	31%	9	17%	18	64%
NT	3	2%	-		1	2%	-		1	2%	-	
QLD	22	15%	6	15%	8	14.5%	2	12%	12	23%	3	11%
SA	9	6%	4	10%	8	14.5%	1	6%	4	7%	2	7%
TAS	2	1%	1	2.5%	3	5%	1	6%	1	2%	-	
VIC	40	28%	14	35%	11	20%	7	44%	19	36%	5	18%
WA	10	6%	3	7.5%	6	11%	-		5	9%	-	
Total	143	43%	40	12%	55	16%	16	5%	52	15%	28	9%

Which Libraries have what staff ↓

This refers to what kinds of staff libraries have, not the actual numbers of staff members

LIBRARIANS		
South Australia	28	100%
New South Wales	95	87%
Victoria	85	88%
Queensland	43	81%
Northern Territory	3	60%
ACT	9	75%
Western Australia	21	87.5%
Tasmania	6	85%
TOTAL	290	86.8%

TECHNICIANS		
South Australia	15	53.5%
New South Wales	34	31%
Victoria	23	23.9%
Queensland	23	43%
Northern Territory	2	40%
ACT	7	58%
Western Australia	9	37.5%
Tasmania	4	57%
TOTAL	117	35%

CLERICAL		
South Australia	18	64.2%
New South Wales	34	31.1%
Victoria	29	30.2%
Queensland	18	33%
Northern Territory	3	40%
ACT	5	58%
Western Australia	8	33%
Tasmania	3	42%
Total	118	35%

These figures are a rough guide as some libraries gave staffing in Full Time Equivalent (fte) with no indication of the numbers of bodies accounted for, whilst others listed a headcount of people employed and fte and a third category just listed the number of staff regardless of fte.

Top 6 subject areas ↓

In no specific order: General Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Nursing, Allied Health, Psychiatry; Management.

Libraries with special collections ↓

South Australia	11	39%
New South Wales	39	35%
Victoria	43	44%
Queensland	20	37%
Northern Territory	4	80%
ACT	7	58%
Western Australia	9	37.5%
Tasmania	3	42%
Total	136	40%

Libraries with/ without Internet ↓

	With	Without
South Australia	15	13
New South Wales	36	73
Victoria	52	44
Queensland	16	37
Northern Territory	-	5
ACT	7	5
Western Australia	15	9
Tasmania	2	5
Total	143	191

Note: In this category there were a number of libraries that elected to be put down as not having Internet because they only have an Intranet.

Libraries with/without e-mail ↓

	With	Without
South Australia	25	3
New South Wales	106	3
Victoria	93	3
Queensland	53	-
Northern Territory	-	5
ACT	12	-
Western Australia	24	-
Tasmania	7	-
Total	320	14

Libraries with electronic journals ↓

South Australia	17	60%
New South Wales	53	48.6%
Victoria	46	47.9%
Queensland	29	54.7%
Northern Territory	-	0%
ACT	9	75%
Western Australia	18	75%
Tasmania	5	71.4%
Total	177	52%

Libraries with electronic books ↓

South Australia	8	28.5%
New South Wales	33	30.2%
Victoria	26	27%
Queensland	22	41.5%
Northern Territory	-	0%
ACT	3	25%
Western Australia	8	33.3%
Tasmania	1	14.2%
Total	101	30.2%

Project update



Ruth Sladek can be contacted by
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or phone – 08 8275 1702

**A report on the
'Increasing Access to
Evidence in an Acute
Hospital Setting through a
Clinical Evidence
Researcher Service'
study by R Sladek, C
Pinnock, PA Phillips,
funded by the
National Institute of
Clinical Studies
(NICS).**

When the NICS' innovative funding program was launched late in 2001, collaboration between myself, a senior research scientist and the Professor of Medicine at the Daw Park Repatriation General Hospital, led to an application for \$71,745 for this study, which was submitted and ultimately approved by NICS. The study spanned March 2002 to May 2003, and a final report has now been submitted to NICS.

Most health librarians would be familiar with the concept of Clinical Medical Librarianship (CML), which emanated from the USA, with a recent resurgence in the UK. CMLs undertake a range of duties, but essentially integrate more closely with clinical care teams, providing information to support clinical and teaching activities. In 2000, Davidoff & Florence¹ called for a new healthcare professional, an 'informationist', who would integrate with clinical care teams, and have the explicit role of searching, filtering and providing the best evidence to support clinical care. An informationist would have a background in either information management or a clinical discipline, but regardless, would master a core curriculum, including biostatistics and epidemiology. This idea builds on the work of CML, and subsequently there has been considerable professional debate in the USA regarding informationists and CMLs².

The current study explored these concepts in Australia, which notably has limited experiences even with CML, with only four isolated instances identified by the author. As a medical librarian with ten years' experience in a hospital environment, I began attending ward rounds and clinical meetings in Respiratory Medicine, Sleep

Disorders and Rheumatology. By definition, this role was that of a CML. However, I also have formal qualifications in Public Health, inclusive of biostatistics and epidemiology, and the service provided a written evidence based summary of the best available evidence in response to doctors' clinical questions, using a formal search and response protocol. By definition, this role was also that of an informationist.

Results are currently actively being disseminated. I recently presented the results at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Annual Scientific Meeting in Hobart, and a poster paper will be presented at the Safety and Quality in Action Conference in Perth in July. HLA groups in Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide will have the opportunity to hear about the study at respective CPD functions. Findings will also be presented at the 10th Asia Pacific Special Health and Law Librarians' Conference in Adelaide in August. Findings are in process of submission for publication, and eventually a report will be available at the NICS website.

Importantly, a satellite event at the Adelaide Conference³ will give interested colleagues the opportunity to learn more about the study, and will provide us, as a professional group, with a focal point to consider these new roles in an Australian environment. I hope you take the opportunity to attend, and look forward to sharing the results.

Ruth M Sladek

1 Davidoff, F. & Florence, V. (2000) The informationist: a new health profession? *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 132(12) June 20, pp433-5.

2 <http://mlanet.org/research/informationist/>

3 <http://conferences.alia.org.au/shllc2003/satellite.html>



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Vale

Ethel Horner

18 November 1927 - 19 March 2003

Ethel Horner was the inaugural Medical Librarian at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. She was affectionately known as Eff and joined PMH in 1973 to establish a Medical Library.

The Library, as such, at that stage consisted of a very small collection of books, journals and magazines, which were housed in the Medical Director's office. Thus Eff virtually started from 'scratch', to set up the Hospital's Medical Library.

The Library was small, but



Eff was highly respected by her peers within the library profession and her contribution to librarianship was demonstrated in her willingness to embrace new technology and tools



vibrant, and the hub of the Hospital's provision of information to medical staff and others. It was also very warm and welcoming - so much so that Eff often had to surreptitiously nudge a very tired and snoring Doctor, nodding over a journal, so that he didn't disturb the avid medical students trying to study nearby!

As the building in which the Medical Library was housed was to be demolished to make way for a new Hospital building, the Library was moved to slightly larger temporary accommodation. Once again Eff set about providing a welcoming and up-to-date Library. It was during this time that Eff commenced agitating for a permanent home for the ever-expanding Medical Library. In 1984 the Medical Library was moved to its current premises and the existing Nurses' Library was amalgamated with the Medical Library.

In those days before automation, electronic access and the Internet, the Medical Library was managed by Eff with her outstanding professional skills, giving meticulous care to detail, and the provision of the most

current information to medical and other Hospital staff. Her services were highly valued by all staff members and she would go to endless lengths to provide them with any information they required to solve their problems, and to assist them in the provision of health care

within the Hospital, and to other establishments within the State and Australia.

Eff was highly respected by her peers within the library profession and her contribution to librarianship was demonstrated in her willingness to embrace new technology and tools to enhance the Library's role in the Hospital's health-care, and in the profession generally. She was instrumental in establishing the Health Libraries Section of the Library Association of Australia in Western Australia, and was very actively involved in all aspects of her profession.

In 1990 Eff retired to spend more time with her husband Jack. She was looking forward to the arrival of her grandchildren. She was diagnosed to have cancer of the pancreas at the beginning of 2002, but was determined to see the birth of her latest grandchild. Eff passed away on the 19th of March, just three months after the death of her husband.

Brigitte Glockner
Women's and Children's Health
Service. WA

ABOUT your new HLA newsletter

**After lots of false starts
HLA News is finally launched
and off to a flying start.**

The primary purpose of HLA News is to link information, news and knowledge with the members of HLA. In the coming months we will include news from all states and all portfolios in HLA.

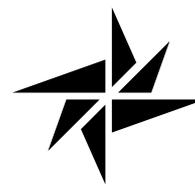
This issue includes a snapshot on the very important census of health libraries in Australia, details of the Anne Harrison Award and HLA Research Grants, timely information on National Library of Australia services for health libraries, and a profile on Ruth Sladek's groundbreaking research into a clinical evidence research service.

Many thanks to the HLA executive, our sponsor EBSCO Information Services, the ALIA team in Canberra and Jojo at the Photographis Studio for their help to getting this issue up and away - it is bigger and better because of them.

From now on we shall enjoy smooth air after the turbulence of take off.

Welcome aboard!

Patrick O'Connor
Editor



DETAILS

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