

LIHNNK UP

by Health Libraries, For Health Libraries

ISSUE 20 WINTER 2006

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standards of excellence

Health libraries are never short of achievements to celebrate, as you'll see from this Winter issue. I'm sure you'll agree that the accreditation process has done a tremendous amount to ensure standards of excellence in health libraries.

Congratulations are therefore due to **Samantha West** and her team at Countess of Chester Hospital Library who have gained high level 2 status at accreditation. The Dialog elinks system is in the process of radically streamlining access to journal articles and **Colin Davies**, with Dialog and Health Care Libraries Unit colleagues have been recognised as Infostars, for their pioneering development work.

We also go in for solid foundations, and no more so than in starting off new graduates in their careers. Three recent participants in the graduate trainee scheme, **Joanne Taylor**, **Sarah Glover**, and **James Allen** describe their valuable experiences gained whilst working in health library settings. At the same time, they were either contemplating or actually working on MSc courses.

Our new starter profile this winter is **Rachel Gick** who is now at Hope Medical Library. She tells us about her background and career to date. The staff at Ellesmere Port have also had cause to celebrate, as **Gill Swash** reports, with the opening of their new library resource room.

User satisfaction surveys are a vital part of our work, and speaking from experience, I know just how much hard work goes into such projects. Therefore many of you will be interested to hear that **Hannah Gray** and **Linda Riley** have been working with other participants, on a current project, running this spring, to test the viability of the LIBQUAL survey instrument to measure customer satisfaction.

A regular feature of the library year is Health Libraries Week, held in November. **Norma Blackburn** comes up with the novel idea of chocolate champagne battles as a quiz prizes, won, I assume, by suitably addicted staff members!

Kathy Turtle

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Opening of the new resource room at Ellesmere Port Hospital

On Monday 7th November, the library team from the 1829 Building joined nursing colleagues at Ellesmere Port Hospital for the opening of the new Library Resource Room.

Michael Darby, Chairman of Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT and David Stewart each said a few words to inaugurate the new facility and hospital staff were invited to make their first visit to see for themselves what is on offer.

The new resource room is linked to the 1829 Building library but local training and other events can now be scheduled to take place at the hospital over the coming months.



Michael Darby, Chairman of Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT and David Stewart, HCLU

Gill Swash

Cheshire Informatics Service

Spotlight on New Starters

Hello everyone, and Happy New Year!

I'm Rachel Gick, the new Assistant Librarian at Hope Medical Library, Salford.

I came into health librarianship after spending more years than I care to remember in Higher Education, studying musicology (history of music). I completed the postgraduate Diploma in Library & Information Management at MMU 2003-05 whilst working for Lancashire County Library and latterly, spending nine or so very enjoyable months at the School of Nursing Library (Univ. of

Manchester) at Gateway House.

Inter-library-loans are a fairly major part of my role, but I will also be developing other areas of responsibility, principally in the following areas: electronic resources and user education, in addition to gaining that all-important supervisory experience. I can put my research skills to good use and I enjoy the diversity of work – one of things which make working in a library so enjoyable.

When I'm not working and doing battle with the trains and buses during

the commute from Chorley (Lancs.) I enjoy indulging my interest in digital photography, getting fresh air in the great outdoors (I live in a good part of the world for that!) and guess what – reading!

I enjoyed the Christmas Study Day and meeting people working across the region. I look forward to meeting you all at other events as time goes on!

Dr Rachel C. Gick

Assistant Librarian
Medical Library
Hope Hospital

Education & Training Centre, Countess of Chester Hospital Library gains accreditation status!



Samantha West, Countess of Chester Hospital Library

The Education & Training Centre Library based at the Postgraduate Medical Centre, gained accreditation status at a high level 2 (excellent), following a visit by Northwest Regional Librarians on 7th December.

Library staff were informed that this was an incredible achievement, as at the last accreditation visit two years ago, the Library Service did not achieve basic accreditation standard.

This was for the following reasons:

- 1) The service did not cater for all staff groups on the hospital site.
- 2) There were no links between the Corporate and Library strategy.

3) The Library did not have adequate staff to cover core opening times.

4) There was not enough recurrent investment going into the Library service.

In January this year, the Library service opened its doors to all staff groups on the Countess site and a day-time Library Assistant, Virginia Jordan, was appointed to work during core opening hours of 9am-5pm.

A new Library strategy for 2004-7 has been put together which links in with the Corporate strategy. This Strategy will include an annual action plan with follow-up evaluations. Multidisciplinary resources have been financed for 2005/6 from CPD funding and a business case has been presented to the Trust to secure recurrent funding for future years.

The accreditators were pleased that the issues they had been concerned about, had been addressed since the last accreditation visit and were looking forwards to the next visit in 2008!

Samantha West
COCH PGC



The Graduate Trainee

By **Joanne Taylor** (*Graduate Trainee Librarian - Blackpool, Fylde and Salford Primary care Trust*) and **James Allen** (*Assistant*

The Graduate Trainee in health libraries has become increasingly common over the past few years. This article considers the significance of these positions – from the perspective of three recent/current Graduate Trainees!

There are many ways that Graduate Trainee posts can work, and we have all had different experiences. James was employed full-time for the twelve month period preceding a full-time MA course, Sarah on a part-time basis for a two year period to coincide with a two-year part-time MA course, and Joanne for twelve months, of which half was during and half after finishing a full-time MA course. We have all found the Graduate Trainee position a valuable and worthwhile experience that will hopefully stand us in good stead for our future careers.

For the trainee involved, there are numerous benefits of such a system. It is common for university library and information courses to involve some form of placement, but these are usually of only a short duration: as soon as the individual is settled into the post, it's time to finish. And for student placements in the NHS it's even worse: 'a good deal of time was give over to explaining the context the library operated within...' commented one of Sen et al.'s (2004) respondents.

Even a short placement, however, will have extensive payback – hands-on experience, contextualisation of skills, new ideas and vibrancy in the library – and all of these will be multiplied for a longer Graduate Trainee position...

James:

I gained experience of all aspects of working in NHS libraries, and met other librarians and library staff from around the North West. For me, the most obvious benefit has been that, when I finished the MA course, I was in an excellent position to find that elusive first job. But now that I am in work in the NHS I am finding that

the knowledge and practical experience that I gained during my year in Salford and Trafford has proved very useful.

Joanne:

I have been lucky enough to have a good variety of experience within library services on the Fylde coast. I currently divide my time between a medical library serving staff members in an acute Trust and a Public Health and Health Promotion library serving the Fylde and Wyre PCTs.

Sarah:

Like James I have experienced working in a wide range of NHS libraries in the Salford and Trafford area. I currently spend between two and three months in each service and as the post is for two years I get to visit everywhere twice. In total I visit five information services all of which are very different.

The host Libraries themselves also benefit from having a Graduate Trainee. A brand-new Graduate Trainee might not have the skills and experience of other potential employees, but they will develop these over time and bring much more besides...

Sarah:

I had some previous library experience working in the public sector however this has been a completely different experience and I have learnt so much about the NHS and the role libraries play within this environment. At each library I have visited I have undertaken projects, which have included (among others); creating a health promotion catalogue, completing a stocktake, and creating training guides for the electronic databases. As well as carrying out these projects I have been involved in the day-to-day running of the service. As an extra member of staff I can get work done that would normally put to one side because of a lack of time or resources.

Joanne:

Although I entered the role as a Graduate Trainee with limited hands-on library experience, the breadth and diversity of the post has allowed me to develop quickly and make lasting contributions to the library service. Over the last seven months, some of my time has been spent re-cataloguing the Public Health and Health Promotion Library and this will benefit staff and users alike. My time at Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust has also allowed me to develop the areas of Knowledge Management and Department of Health Reports.

James:

The Graduate Trainee post at Salford PCT was organised to work for two or three month blocks in a number of different libraries. The patch group is still alive and well in Salford and Trafford, and the Graduate Trainee acts as a way to improve communication between the sites. Working in this way gave me the chance to see where developments at one library could also benefit another – resources, materials and ideas could be shared with very little effort. And in libraries with fewer staff, just having an extra person gave the team more flexibility in the way they worked.

There are benefits, too, for the health librarian profession as a whole, and in the North West in particular.

Joanne:

I started my Masters Degree in Information and Library Management four months before taking the position of Graduate Trainee Librarian and in this time, little emphasis was placed on careers in health libraries. Ten months on and I am still the only student from the course who has done any form of work in a health library setting. Saying this, the Graduate Trainee position can be utilised in the future to encourage work experience in the sector and to recruit more enthusiastic graduates into the NHS.

Scheme in the North West

*Vyre Hospitals NHS Trust), Sarah Glover (Graduate Library Trainee -
clinical Librarian - Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)*

James:

Of the numerous library students I know, very few have considered working in the NHS, and it was not an option given much attention during the library course itself. The Graduate Trainee position is an excellent way of getting someone interested and involved in health libraries at the start of their career. And I've found that I've been able to offer advice and knowledge to my student peers who have applied for NHS Library posts. So not only is the Graduate Trainee well-prepared for working in health libraries, but can act as an advocate for the NHS as a career option.

Sarah:

Although I had experience of working in libraries previously I had very little knowledge about the health sector. Undertaking the Masters Degree in Library and Information Management while in the post of graduate library trainee has been advantageous, I have been able to tailor the coursework to my workplace and in the summer will carry out research, which will go towards my dissertation. As Joanne says, there is little emphasis on health libraries as a career option at university, and I am currently the only student on the course at Manchester Metropolitan who has any experience working in the sector.

In any case, teaching about health libraries at university would not be sufficient to prepare a new librarian for work in the NHS, so the experience gained as a Graduate Trainee is invaluable to everyone involved. Teaching tends to be theoretical, and Dyer and Rolinson (1995) note that this 'can be irritating to employers who do not wish to take responsibility for the training of new recruits.' While 'irritating' might not be the way you would describe a new member of your team, it is clear that learning through experience is the most effective way for someone to become immersed in a new environment.

From all of our perspectives, the Graduate Trainee positions in the North West have been extremely successful (and hopefully our employers agree with us!) We've all learnt a range of new skills, and contributed to the libraries where we have worked in a number of constructive ways. Whether the time as a Graduate Trainee is before, after or during the time studying for a Library and Information course does not affect its usefulness, but it is clear that making the most of a Graduate Trainee does take some organisation and planning, both on the part of the trainee and of a fanatical line manager.

Joanne:

It is difficult starting work in any new role, but as a Graduate Trainee you are faced with additional challenges. It is essential that planning is undertaken to ensure that the year spent in the role is used to the best advantage and the trainee can gain as much experience in different areas as possible. Luckily for me, my line manager provided me with a good variety of duties and this allowed me to gain the necessary library experience, yet was challenging in equal measure.

James:

Working for a few months in a number of different libraries gave me the opportunity to gain experience of a range of different environments within the NHS. I had an enthusiastic line manager who booked me onto numerous training courses throughout the year. And in each of the libraries I worked I was able to plan and work through projects of different types and over different time-scales: a guide to using the internet, updating library intranet pages, developing training materials, moving stock and so on. This meant that I was always facing a steep learning-curve, and that the libraries made productive use of my time.

Sarah:

The trainee post at Trafford and Salford involves a fair bit of travelling on my part and a diary is essential! However, my line manager has been fantastic at organising my timetable and encouraging me to go on further training and to additional meetings. All of the people I have worked for have been good at organising my time and at the end of the first year it was good to have a meeting with everyone to assess the past year and to plan the year ahead. In the beginning the job was a bit daunting because every couple of months I was starting somewhere different and being the new person again but the experience has been invaluable and I am lucky this year as I get to meet everyone again and see how the libraries have changed since last year.

References

DYER, H. and ROLINSON, J., 1995.

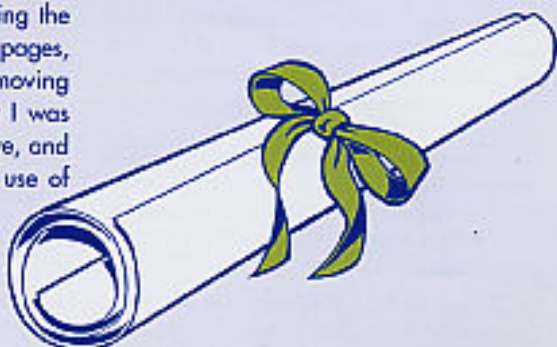
In the right vein? How adequately are departments of information and library studies educating for health care information management and library services in a changing health service?

Health libraries review, 12 pp.29-37

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2004. Library student placements in the health sector: a positive experience at Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom.

Health Information and Libraries Journal, 21 pp.125-128



Infostar recognition 2005 announced

The InfoStar recognition is designed to recognise people who achieve great services for users, often with a limited budget and often by thinking laterally—the emphasis being on innovation.

<http://quantum.dialog.com/people/infostars/>

Since 1st April 2003, Dialog has provided the core medical databases to the NHS across England through the core-content project (hosted at nhs.dialog.com). This is a large project covering a potential user population of 1.1m staff, approximately 2/3 of which are clinical staff who require this information to develop effective healthcare and ensure the best possible patient care. The core databases are Medline, Embase, PsycINFO, Cinahl, AMED, DH-Data, Kings Fund and British Nursing Index. Alongside the core databases, the NHS also purchased collections of electronic full text journals, primarily from ProQuest, with many other supplementary collections from EBSCO, Swets, OVID and other vendors. Finally the NHS also has considerable holdings in paper format in many local libraries across the country.

Critical NHS strategies such as the NHS Plan, Delivering a Patient-Led NHS and the National Programme for IT (Npfi) aim to define the future of the NHS, particularly in the areas of information delivery. Quite simply the aim is delivering to the desktop and ensuring access to high quality information when and where needed leading to better care and improved health. These strategies have already brought about significant changes in the delivery of NHS information services with a great many projects across the country, both at a national and local level. Unfortunately, it is not possible to recognise them all, but this example is a good example of effective use of available resources in an innovative way relating to Dialog services.

Colin Davies, in his current capacity of Project Manager for the National Library for Health saw an opportunity to improve information provision to professionals across England by exploiting the established technology already available to the NHS from Dialog. The Dialog eLinks system already provides a comprehensive linking solution from bibliographic databases to electronic journals. This has been further extended to encompass local print content in the form of traditional paper journals.

In a successful collaborative working partnership, Colin and Gavin Coney from



from left to right: Gavin Coney (Dialog), Colin Davies (HCU currently on secondment to NHT), Ingrid Evans (HCU), Sergio Loberer (Dialog) and Claire Honeybourne (National Core Content Manager)

Dialog have developed a comprehensive system to bring together these elements of the huge NHS information holdings. Using Colin's specification, the eLinks system has been extended to integrate with existing NHS working practices in the area of Inter-Library Loans. All the paper holdings within the NHS North West Region are now contained within the Dialog eLinks system and are providing valuable services to users.

Whenever a user views a bibliographic record, the Dialog DataStar system automatically notifies the user of its availability in local libraries and contains instructions on how the user can obtain the article in question. The integration with existing ILL practices will quickly deliver a valuable service for both end users and librarians, as it does not require new systems or changes to existing workflows. Benefits to users are significant as it provides a single point of entry to all of the major clinical resources provided through the core-content and local libraries. In addition, efficiency savings in processing ILL requests will be felt across the community allowing support staff in libraries to spend less time on clerical routines and more time in direct user support. This system is expected to be rolled out nationally on completion of a successful pilot in the north west.

The system automatically allows users to request paper copies of documents available in both their own library and third party supply libraries to be delivered as per routine ILL

requests. The system also ensures that all citations are automatically checked by Dialog before being submitted eliminating a lot of time and delays invoked by the need to correct requests delivered by other methods. It also exposes users to the large amount of material held in NHS libraries across the Region increasing the quality of information provision and patient care. Supply libraries involved also include non-NHS libraries where agreements exist to provide services to NHS users providing a complete solution.

Claire Honeybourne, incoming National Core Content Manager said: "Merging electronic developments with traditional library services to improve access to knowledge reflects the need for joint working as well as the technological advancements that are occurring in the NHS."

Colin Davies has worked within the North West region of the NHS with his colleagues across the network and the regional team including David Stewart the Director of Health Care Libraries Unit (NW) lead and Ingrid Evans, Virtual Services Manager. David Stewart said "Colin is excellent at thinking strategically and spotting ways of making strategy real through the use of IT solutions. Colin saw an opportunity to bring a focused user solution delivering value whilst only relying on the minimal resources available to him through the use of innovative thinking. The benefits to users in bringing together the electronic databases, electronic journals and paper journals will ensure that NHS staff are able to access a much wider and deeper range of information resources and this will contribute to the improvements in patient care outlined in NHS strategic thinking."

Ingrid Evans

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Piloting the LibQUAL+ instrument in NHS libraries

Purpose:

- To test the applicability of the LibQUAL+ instrument in an NHS environment, as a method of measuring customer satisfactions
- To test the applicability of a single, centrally co-ordinated instrument for measuring customer satisfaction



Setting/Participants:

- acute trust
- primary care trust
- mental health
- foundation trust
- teaching hospital
- care trust
- professional body.

Including from the Northwest –
Linda Riley,
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust
Hannah Gray,
Mersey Care NHS Trust

Methodology:

A pilot of the LibQUAL+ survey instrument will be conducted from February to May 2006. The survey is web-based, consisting of 22 questions and a comments box. The project group have so far focussed on adapting the survey instrument for NHS library use and on methods of disseminating and promoting the survey in a range of different settings.

Results:

Representatives of the pilot sites will report on the collated results analysed by type of organisation, staff group and other factors. LibQUAL+ has been used successfully in UK academic libraries since a pilot led by SCONUL in 2003. Their results show similarities between UK and US academic libraries reflecting the common problems faced by libraries in both countries. This pilot will consider comparisons with US health libraries.

Discussion/Conclusion:

The project group will present conclusions on the viability and applicability of the LibQUAL+ instrument as a measure of customer satisfaction and as a benchmarking tool for health libraries in the UK. Lessons learnt will also be identified and shared.

Further Information:

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Visit LibQUAL's website -
<http://www.libqual.org/>

Hannah Gray

Knowledge Management Lead,
Mersey Care NHS Trust



Norma Blackburn and Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Health Library colleagues created this display for Health Libraries Week last November. A chocoholic's dream...



“editor's column”

notes for contributors

1. Articles and news items are welcome from all members of Lihnn, including support staff and staff in higher education institutions.

Lihnn members are actively encouraged to write up accounts of events and courses attended. Articles on new developments and projects successfully managed are also welcome.

2. News items and short pieces, which can range from factual to amusing, are also welcome.
3. All items can be submitted in print or electronic format.

please abide by the following points:

Don't forget your name, location, title of article and date of article.

All acronyms should be written out in full for the first occasion they are used in the text. Please give full details of events, courses and conferences attended. This should include:

- The name of event and location
- Date of event
- Name of organizing or sponsoring body
- Details of how support materials can be obtained (where necessary)
- Full references to any published reports, articles, etc.

Items not submitted in time for the publication deadline will be published in the following edition.

Guidelines for contributors are also available on the Lihnn website.

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LIBRARY AND INFORMATION HEALTH NETWORK NORTHWEST NEWSLETTER

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