

**Knowledge, Library & Information Services**



**Reflection on the CILIP Health Libraries Group ~~national~~ conference at Scarborough**

**15-16th September 2016**

This was my first HLG conference, so I wasn’t really sure what to expect. The programme of workshops showed a bewildering range of interesting topics – it was hard to choose a small number to attend for fear of missing something really useful in another session!

It was also the first time I’d seen so many Librarians & Knowledge Professionals in the same place. It’s great to feel a part of this friendly, helpful, national community who work in various different sectors in the UK, but all have one thing in common – an interest in health and a desire to help our service users maximise the library resources they have available to them in order to improve the outcomes for patients.

A secondary effect of being among so many fellow library staff was the chance to put faces to names that I see frequently in emails and articles published – and get to know them in person rather than just electronically by email. With all of the changes on afoot within the agenda of Knowledge for Healthcare, having good contacts around the country will be very useful for collaborative working in the future to help transform the services we provide.

Some of the sessions were very informative and immediately useful, such as the one I attended on resource discovery within NICE Evidence, packed with information I can use when showing staff how to use this great resource in daily training sessions. This will directly help with the aim of Knowledge for Healthcare to “have the right knowledge & evidence when & where they need it”.

Others were useful at a more over-arching, strategic level, helping inform decisions & planning library services, such as the session “Workforce planning, development & beginning the transformation (also related to the objectives of Knowledge for Healthcare)”. Among other things, we were informed that 42% of the UK population have low health literacy, which has a very direct effect on the type & quality of information they need as part of their healthcare. This in turn will impact on what services libraries need to provide clinicians and other healthcare staff, and possibly patients themselves. It’s an exciting time for health libraries to be changing the way we’re used by both staff & patients in the future.

Other sessions may be very helpful in the future – for example the session “Producing an introductory video for a multi-site library”. After the 30 minute presentation, I now know a lot more about how this can be produced, the potential pitfalls (especially finding somewhere quiet to record the narration in a busy hospital library) & potential software resources that could be used, not to mention a very valuable contact whose experience would help make such a project immeasurably easier if we were to get a chance to produce a similar video here at DRI.

I made as many notes as I could, but there was so much good information to take in that it will be extremely useful when the presentations etc. are posted onto the CILIP HLG webpage to assist in sharing ideas with colleagues later.

Between the two very full days of high quality sessions, there was a chance to let our hair down for a few hours at the conference dinner, attended by the Mayor of Scarborough. Sticks of HLG conference rock for everyone & Yorkshire seaside themed food followed by a disco for those with enough stamina to bop away to ABBA & other Librarian favourites.

All in all, a great experience – useful, informative, and great for networking with the Health Information Professionals attending from around the country. I have a wealth of information and advice to employ & I’m really very grateful to have had the chance to go to the CILIP HLG conference 2016 and to YOHHLNET for sponsoring me and covering the cost of my conference fees.

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