

Health Libraries in Developed Countries: Many Options, Complicated Issues

M.J. Tooley, MLS, AHIP

President, Medical Library Association

Executive Director, Health Sciences and Human Services Library,
University of Maryland

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Mission of all health libraries:

**Quality Information for Improved
Health**

Major Issues

- Recruitment and retention
- Scholarly publishing and open access
- Repositories
- Internet
- Electronic Health Record
- Consumer Health/Health Information Literacy

Recruitment and Retention

- Almost 50% of MLA members are between the ages of 50 and 59 (2005 MLA/Hay Group study)
- Where will our replacements come from?
- Millennials – how do we attract them?
- Once we get them, how do we retain them?

Scholarly Publishing/Open Access

- Health libraries are at the forefront of the debate
- Open Access – resources free of charge, free of most copyright and licensing restrictions – but still peer-reviewed
- Budapest Open Access Initiative, Bethesda Principles, Berlin Declaration, DC Principles
- NIH policy, UK Research Councils

Digital or Institutional Repositories

- Store and archive not only journal articles but digital objects, learning tools, models, presentations, notes/drafts – any intellectual output
- Opportunity for librarians to apply skills
- Requires institutional committment

Internet

- Everything in on the Internet and it is free!
- Ubiquitous
- Librarians need to educate about quality information
- Marketing, branding, and promoting

Electronic Health Record

- National Health Information Infrastructure – David Brailer
 - Improve effectiveness, efficiency, quality
 - Knowledge-based network of interoperable systems – clinical, public health, personal health information
 - Set of technologies, standards, applications, systems, values, and laws

Electronic Health Record, cont.

- Excellent opportunity for hospital librarian
- Link information resources to the health record
- Apply services and resources to issues of patient safety and quality of care
- Root cause of 20% of patient deaths – unavailability of information (JCAHO)
- Evidence that librarian is important to the bottom line of the health care institution

Consumer Health/Health Information Literacy

- Internet has expedited access to health information
- Pew Internet and American Life Project estimates 95 million adults over 18 use Internet to find health information
- 80% of Internet users have searched for health information, 66% look for specific disease/medical problem, 51% looking for ways to stay healthy.
- Is the information any good – do users understand what they are finding?
- Education and outreach

But what about...

- New roles for health information professionals (informationist)?
- Evidence-based practice?
- Political environment?
- Professional development?
- Medical Education/Accreditation standards?

What is the Future of Health Libraries in Developed Countries?

- Answer is as varied as the libraries
- Are libraries a physical or philosophical concept?
- Alignment of vision with institution.
- Innovators, leaders, followers, adapters
- Decisive, agile, flexible, open to new ideas/able to translate these ideas to the local level
- Value



Equity Between Health Libraries in Developed and Developing Countries

***Sometimes the only difference is
electricity!***



Thank you!

mjtooney@hshsl.umaryland.edu

or

president@mlahq.org