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LIBRARIES for NURSING

Bulletin

Volume 16 Number 3

Autumn 1996



STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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Professional awareness

User education

News

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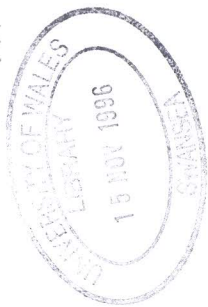
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LAN BULLETIN

Vol.16, No.3, Autumn 1996

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EDITORIAL

LN is at a crossroads. The move of nursing into higher education means that the LN Committee is considering the future role of the Group and of the Bulletin.

A discussion paper on the future of LN is included in this issue - see page 18.

But we need your views. We enclose a short questionnaire (see pages 21-22) asking for your opinions about the future of LN so that the Group's activities can better serve your needs. The Committee will act on the results and we intend to publish the findings in a future issue of the Bulletin. Do please reply. As an encouragement there will be a prize draw with £20 worth of book tokens to be won.

We have also been pleased to receive several contributions for this issue. One is an account by Antony Brewerton of how he liaised with lecturers and produced an educational package on how to use the library to encourage self-directed learning.

A second theme looks at professional development and Chartering. There is a contribution by Christine Pinder on supervising Route A and articles on the experience of undertaking Route A by Jane Shelley and of undertaking Route B by Nicola Herman and Jim Moore.

We hope you will find these items of interest. Your contributions are always welcome.

The Editors

'USING THE LIBRARY': A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Antony Brewerton

In many institutions, library skills are lacking amongst nursing students (Davies, 1994). Academic diffidence, a fear of IT and the fact that nursing studies are often afforded a low status in educational establishments have all contributed to the situation. It is little wonder that Wakeham (1990) concluded that between 'one half and two-thirds of students were commencing courses of study without knowledge and skills which will enable them to approach their studies in the most efficient and effective manner'.

It was the desire to impart this knowledge and these skills that lay behind the conception of the Academic Development Programme at the University of Reading.

Background

I am a rare and fortunate librarian in that I have very close links with my academic staff. I represent the Library on the Board for Community Studies. We have always worked very closely together in planning library skills instruction, a relationship that has been strengthened with the Library's move towards electronic reference services over the past few years. All students receive initial induction training with dissertation-level sessions provided at a later date. Weekly surgeries are also available for LINNET (the Library OPAC), ASSIAPlus and HealthPLAN (on CD-ROM), BIDS and FirstSearch.

When a distance learning course was planned for community (nursing) students it was decided that the intake should have the same opportunity to develop their library skills as their 'on site' colleagues. It was also decided (by the course co-ordinators) that the best person to write the library skills unit was their librarian.

The Academic Development Programme

The Academic Development Programme was created to overcome some of the problems outlined above. Practitioners, expert and well qualified in their own professional fields, would be given the opportunity to gain the academic skills required for graduate or post-graduate study. The market audience would be individuals who felt that they needed to improve or refresh their study skills, prospective students who need further accreditation in specific academic subjects for entry courses within higher education or practitioners unable to attend traditional courses. It could act as a foundation course or a unit of study in its own right. The distance learning format would allow students to study at their own pace and convenience and balance study demands with work, family and personal needs. Although four evening sessions would be timetabled (for tutorial work and registration to the library and other university services) the rest of the study time planning would be left to the individual student.

The Academic Development Programme was devised by the course co-ordinators, Althea Allison and Sandy Tinson, and first presented to a team meeting of community health tutors and related staff (including their librarian) in January 1995. The course would comprise a core module of six units

covering various aspects of study skills and a subject module. Unit 2 was on using the library.

By February the structure was more or less firmly established. The core module would consist of the following units:

- Unit One: Studying and you
- Unit Two: Using the library
- Unit Three: Introduction to study skills
- Unit Four: Making the most of your learning
- Unit Five: Learn through experience
- Unit Six: The interactive workbook

Three subject modules were commissioned (An introduction to sociology: An introduction to social policy; Research methods) with a further seven options planned for 1996 (funding permitting).

Everyday I write the book

The timetable for producing the course was very tight indeed, with the first intake planned for June 1995. An outline plan was required from the authors by the end of February and the first draft by the end of March.

Before starting to write I collected together examples of other written guides of library instruction to consider format and style. I have always been very impressed by the study/teaching help provided by nursing journals, so on top of library guides produced by other academic institutions I soon had a pile of articles from the *Nursing Times*, *Nursing Standard*, *Practice Nurse*, *Nurse Education Today* and *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing* to wade through as well. The information I wanted to convey was quite straightforward: a sort of 'user education greatest hits', based on my induction and dissertation-level lectures. I wanted the course to be progressive (starting with the basics of library use and working up to more advanced information skills) and I wanted to stress the importance of evaluating the tools available.

It was decided that the course should cover general principles rather than specific practices. Although the Academic Development Programme was developed by the community health team, examples of topics and sources would be such that the course could be usefully used by any social science student. Because some students would not be using Reading University's facilities to complete the course, references to search tools were kept very non-specific. Hence, instead of telling students to 'attend Antony's ASSIAPlus surgery at 3pm on a Monday' they were invited to 'see which CD-ROMs your library holds and arrange to attend a training session'. This approach would allow students to make use of any relevant special/academic library to complete the course (it is a distance learning package, after all) and should make the course more sellable to the outside world.

A learning experience

Although I wasn't told 'could do better', I was told by the course co-ordinators that I could do it differently. The first problem concerned length: my masterpiece had to be cut in half. The second problem involved interactivity: I told the students answers rather than told them to find answers. The third problem was level: my book covered too much over too wide a spectrum.

NEWS AND NOTES

The **EVINCE project** being carried out by Christine Urquhart and Rebecca Davies at the Department of Information and Library Studies at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, is nearing its end. The project report should be completed by the end of the year. Cathy Massiter will be completing the editing of the report. More details will be available in a future edition of the *Bulletin*. (EVINCE = Establishing the value of information to nursing continuing education)

The Scottish Section of the University College and Research Group is holding a one day meeting on the subject of **integrating nurse education** into higher education, at the Merchant's Hall, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, November 20th 1996. Information is available from Diane Devine, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (email: d.devine@rgu.ac.uk ; tel: 01224 262872).

L/N held a successful pre-dinner **reception** at the Health Libraries Group Conference in Exeter (7th September 1996). Thanks particularly to Jackie Lord and Sue David for organising the event.

The **Nursing and Midwifery Audit Information Service** has been set up to provide information on audit, quality, guidelines and evidence-based practice. Funded by the Department of Health, the RCN and the RCM, the service is based at 20 Cavendish Square, London W1M 0AB. Gabby Fennessy or Lis Morgan are the people to contact for further information (tel: 0171 629 7464).

Health Libraries Review, volume 12, number 4, features an article by Janice White entitled 'Libraries in Scottish Colleges of Nursing and Midwifery: significant achievements in the past, but the future ...?' A special nursing issue of the *Review* is currently being prepared by Jean Yeoh.

National Libraries Week Campaign is seeking health related stories with which to promote libraries. If you have one, or think you might have by 3rd November 1997, then contact them via the Library Association, 7 Ridgmount St, London WC1E 7AE (Tel: 0171 636 7543; email: nlw@la-hq.org.uk)

The lack of interactivity was overcome by the addition of activity boxes. Each section soon had an introductory paragraph (or line!) followed by a box telling the students to attend training sessions, obtain guides, mark up maps, list keywords or evaluate search tools.

To tackle the problem of level the course co-ordinators provided me with my favourite solution: 'make this book an introduction to the basics of library use and (if it is any good and if we can get funding) we'll commission you to write a higher level one later on!'

My revised text was received with far greater enthusiasm. Although some problems remained (usually in overlap with the other units that I had not seen) these were largely unavoidable and easily cleared up at the editorial stage.

A limited print run of the core and subject modules was produced and trailed with the first course in June 1995. Although course assessment forms showed that there were a few points that needed to be ironed out (like spelling out that the workbook could be used in any relevant specialist or academic library and stressing that students should book for training sessions in advance if they wanted in-depth instruction in the use of search tools) feedback was generally positive and a full print run of the first (revised) edition of 'Using the library' was ordered. In December 1995 I became the proud owner of my first ISBN (Brewerton, 1995).

The future

We are just about to embark on the third intake for the Academic Development Programme. The response to the programme has been very positive and it is being viewed increasingly as a valuable preliminary to the one year BA in Community Health Studies course, especially by those students lacking a 'traditional' academic background. The Academic Development Programme co-ordinators have managed to secure funding for seven more optional modules, including one on developing information skills ('Library skills for research students') to help tackle some of the problems faced by higher degree nursing students. Although this is still at the editorial stage I found this one much easier to write: it is shorter, more interactive and concentrates on a narrower area of information handling. It also follows the same format as its sister publications, with clearly marked aims and objectives, learning outcomes and skill development reviews. Indeed, my distance learning package has provided a valuable learning experience and I don't just mean for my students!

Antony Brewerton is Community Studies Librarian at the University of Reading

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BEING A ROUTE A SUPERVISOR OR HOW TO CREATE A CHALLENGE FOR YOURSELF!

Christine Pinder

Humberside College of Health was created in 1990, from an amalgamation of Schools of Nursing, Midwifery and Radiography located in the Humberside region. The College has three Centres, at Hull, Grimsby and Scunthorpe, and provides education and training in the fields of health and social care.

The Learning Resources Department has a library at each College Centre, and until October 1994, there were no junior professionals on the staff. However, during that month, the librarians in charge at Grimsby and Scunthorpe retired and were replaced by two newly qualified professionals who wished to undertake a Route A training programme. As their manager, it was my role to create a training programme and be their supervisor, so I obtained the relevant information from the Library Association, including the 'Routes to Associateship' booklet. The size of this and the time it took to digest were the first of many revelations to come! I decided from the start that in writing the training programme, I was not going to re-invent the wheel, so contacted a former colleague at the University of Humberside who is in charge of staff training. She gave me general advice, and supplied a copy of their standard training programme. This was invaluable as a model on which loosely based my own programme. The main difference between the two stemmed from the fact that the College libraries are relatively small, and therefore limited in the experiences they can offer. Provision therefore had to be made to broaden these via a programme of visits to other local libraries. To my great surprise, the training programme was approved by the Library Association's Registration Board on first submission.

The hard work then began! Translating the standard training programme into individual programmes for two people with different work experiences and therefore varying levels of expertise was time consuming. For each individual, a checklist was produced with the following headings, taking into account their work experience, and the duties of their current post, whilst making sure all requirements of the training programme were met:

Meetings to be attended, e.g. user groups, course management teams, the Staff Consultative Committee, College-wide staff meetings and conferences, and other ad hoc meetings as opportunities arose. Briefings were given by myself before each meeting and the necessary papers supplied. Permission was also obtained from chairpersons for the candidates to attend non-library based meetings.

Visits to be arranged, e.g. to other College libraries, local university libraries, the British Library at Boston Spa, local special and industrial libraries, other NHS libraries, and the local public library. All visits were arranged by myself, using a network of informal contacts built up over the years. Guidance as to what to look for and what to find out about was also given.

Issues to be discussed with myself (as supervisor), including College policies (the Business Plan, Academic Strategy, financial procedures, human resources etc), and departmental policies and procedures (mission statement, aims and objectives, budgeting, stock maintenance and development, statistics, special collections, marketing, staffing and accommodation constraints, administrative procedures etc). The necessary documentation was provided by myself in advance of discussions.

Opportunities to look out for - the 'catch all' heading, to ensure that no requirement of the programme was omitted. It therefore included items which did not fit in anywhere else, such as study days, conferences, and possible projects the candidates could manage. The latter included the implementation of the computer circulation module, a library move and the introduction of a current awareness programme.

Progress was monitored by monthly meetings with each individual, in a pre-booked room where there would be no interruptions. An informal agenda was produced for each meeting by myself, and would normally include reports on meetings attended and visits made, as well as one or two items from the 'To be discussed' list. The candidates were expected to be critical and analytical in their thinking and observations, both for self-development and to give them 'fodder' for their professional development reports.

This had immediate repercussions, in that both candidates responded well, and either longer or more frequent meetings had to be scheduled, or shorter agendas! In addition, I found the meetings invaluable, as the candidates often offered different perspectives on issues, both from each other's and my own. In this way, my policies were sometimes brought into question, and revised as a result. The learning process was two-way, and the exchange of ideas is now automatically built in to our working practices.

Being a Route A supervisor is as time consuming and challenging as being a candidate, and a form of self-development on both sides. If you have any doubts as to whether you can do it, my advice is to go for it - you might just enjoy it!

Since this article was written, Humberside College of Health has merged with the University of Hull. Chris is currently on secondment from her post as Health Library Team Leader at the University of Hull

A PERSONAL VIEW OF ROUTE A TRAINING FOR ASSOCIATESHIP OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Jane Shelley

The viewpoint taken is from the experience of undertaking 'Route A' training to associateship while working in a small subject specific site library with only one other member of staff which is part of a large university library.

Undertaking a Route A training programme allowed training and professional experience to be gained quickly. The training, by being structured and supervised, ensures that a wide range of professional work and skills are covered. The first hand experience on the job and with the employing organisation, along with the training programme, provides a good grounding in practical work and the relationship between theory and practice. This route, though, does not give experience of a variety of different jobs and organisations which would allow greater depth of knowledge and professional development and enable skills of comparison and evaluation to be gained. Over a year, the amount of professional development that could be gained, immediately post qualification, on your own would be limited but the official structured training counteracts the shortage of experience before completion of the Professional Development Report and aids learning and professional development. The shortage of experience is also overcome as all aspects of library and information work are covered and further guidance and training is given for those aspects which are not directly covered in the job description. There is an emphasis both on the specific core skills of librarianship as well as wider service, organisational and library and information issues, not necessarily within the scope of the job. This ensures that the work undertaken is put into a wider context. Professional development is also gained through external visits and training events, guidance and wider reading. This helps to broaden knowledge and overcome lack of first hand experience.

In working in a small library, isolation from other professionally qualified librarians and gaining experience of teamwork caused some problems personally during the training year. Lack of direct on site access to many information tools, such as directories and guides, was also frustrating. The major drawback was being unable to gain first hand experience and knowledge from experienced and qualified librarians. Meetings and special training had to be carefully planned. This was probably good experience though, as it encouraged self reliance and learning, especially in dealing with enquiries.

On a more positive note, the nature of the post was an advantage. A wide ranging job description covering many aspects of library and information work, from cataloguing, classification and book ordering to enquiry work and user education, ensured a wide range of experience linked directly to the Route A training programme.

Reflection is an important part of training and writing the professional development report. Reflecting on the what, how, why, and where things are done, both on a service and personal level, help in the acquisition of skills of

evaluation and critical appraisal. The completion of a log book allows experiences, mistakes, successes and thoughts to be noted down over the year and reflected on so that learning takes place. Self criticism of work and personal performance can lead to changes and improvements in the future.

Motivation is aided by the official and structured nature of the programme as part of the job. Overall I feel that undertaking this training route and writing the professional development report allows learning to occur and improvement in professional practice. There is also the realisation that this process is only the start of professional development and that there is still a long way to go and much to learn. The successful completion of the training and the Professional Development Report are the foundation for continued professional development and the skills needed to improve in knowledge, competence and practice.

Jane Shelley works as Subject Librarian: Nurse Education at Anglia Polytechnic University's Broomfield Hospital site in Chelmsford, Essex.

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SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT (PDR) - A PERSONAL VIEW

Nicola Herman

Having recently heard that my PDR has been accepted by the Library Association to become Chartered, I feel qualified to comment on the pros and cons of the Route I took and the methods I used. Remember that this is purely a personal view and those embarking on their own PDR, or the new formats (Portfolio or Proforma), should consult as many different candidates and/or Chartered librarians as possible for alternative comments, help and advice.

Getting started

Once I had completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Information Studies, I secured a position as a library assistant in a Post Graduate Medical Centre in London. At this point in my career I was not sure how long it would take to obtain a professional posting, so I promptly decided to register on Route B of the Library Association's Routes to Chartership. For those of you who don't know, this means that my PDR had to cover a period of two years' work experience; I did not have to be in a supervised or professional post. This did not present a problem for me as I am fairly self motivated and do not have to be forced to work independently. For those of you who are not this way inclined, I advise that you choose to have a mentor who can act as your supervisor. Making the wrong decision at this point could mean the difference between success and failure.

Keeping going

Having registered on the LA Route B, I attended one of the Chartership Study Evenings/workshops at the LA headquarters in London. This session was most informative; amongst other things I gleaned that one ought to maintain a diary of events over the period in question (in my case two years). In hindsight I can now say that, yes, keeping a diary, of sorts, is essential. However, I would advise anyone embarking on this activity to avoid writing one in the same way I did. From July 1993-July 1995 I documented every activity in which I was involved. If I went on a workshop, whether in-house or external, I wrote up the experience; if I had an awkward situation concerning staff I recorded my pragmatism, and so on. Each day I entered some event, situation or achievement in my records. What I didn't do is analyse, or even decide how, I would use these events in the end PDR!! I discovered at the end of my two years' experience that I had so many pages of material, I did not know where to start. It was a very daunting experience to be faced with over fifteen thousand words of wisdom, discussing details of different events and having to whittle it all down to a coherent analysis of activities in report form, to result in no more than five thousand words. The lesson I learnt is that merely keeping a detailed record of events is NOT enough. One should not only be selective but should start to place each item under a manageable heading or area which can be edited at a later date.

Planning ahead

Bearing the above in mind, my advice to those about to embark on a career in the Information/library world of work and submit a PDR for LA assessment is

to plan the chapters. Instead of meticulously typing/writing your thoughts in diary format, try to imagine the end report and add your experiences under the relevant section. For example, one of my Chapter headings was Management Skills, so I used examples of managing my staff, the budget, the students and so on, but when I actually started to type the report I had to wade through pages and pages of what, to the untrained eye, would appear as waffle. After a period of searching, I found various activities in which I had been involved over the previous two years, proving my ability to manage effectively. If only I had used the method I describe above, I would have saved a great deal of time and energy. One may feel that in following this revised method, one will end up with a report so long it becomes unwieldy and unmanageable. I beg to differ: it is far easier to edit material on the screen, which has already been sorted into distinctive headings than it is to sort through two years of scribble, as I had to do. I did not have the sense to put my thoughts on a PC/Mac as I did not have access to one at home and could not fit the time in at work. My diary was recorded on paper and ended at 78 pages long. If you start to compile information and examples of competence in the early stages of your work experience, by the end of that period, the task of completing your PDR, Portfolio or Proforma, will not seem so daunting.

Professional Awareness

I am aware, through discussing this topic with various candidates, that it is the one area where many individuals panic. How does one know how to demonstrate Professional Awareness and what does the term actually mean.

Well, one doesn't have to read every issue of every journal concerned with librarianship or their job related field; equally one should not merely read the LA Record each month once it has fallen through your letter box. The first would be ridiculous and the second just lazy. Instead, one should be on the lookout for material which is of interest to them and their specialist field. I concentrated on health and welfare information paying special attention to Libraries for Nurse Education, in addition areas of concern to all librarians and information workers. I found this area of preparation for writing my PDR fairly straight forward, BUT I did have help.

After working for an initial five months as a library assistant at the Tavistock and Portman Clinics Post-Graduate Library in London, I secured a position as a Subject Librarian for Nurse Education at the Southend Site of Anglia Polytechnic University. In this new and challenging professional post I discovered the benefits of working for such a large organisation. The University has many sites, with many other professional librarians working within them. It is in all our interests to keep abreast of the current issues in our given fields, therefore, professional journals are circulated regularly via our internal courier service. If a journal interests you, your name can be added to the circulation list. Using this method it has been relatively easy to keep abreast of the current literature, so if you work in an area where this would be possible and it does not already happen, I suggest you set up a similar procedure. However if this is not possible, then making several trips to the LA library, to browse relevant journals, would not go amiss. One should not rely on others to point out interesting or relevant material as everyone has different areas of concern. Use your own judgement, and above all, remember that this part of your professional development should be ongoing not merely an activity in which you demonstrate knowledge of a given

period of time. Being a professional means being aware of the issues which the profession faces, for example, new developments, new services, new publications and new theories. It also means knowing how the world outside affects the world inside your working environment not to mention the others working around you. An overall appreciation of the wider social context helps to gain an appreciation of what being a professional is all about.

Getting Involved

I am the sort of person who likes to get involved in as many groups and committees as possible, both in and outside of work. Joining special interest groups, either through the LA or outside, provides ample opportunity to develop your professionalism. There are so many to choose from, so look out for groups which interest you. By being a member of the LA Essex and Home Counties Group, I managed to get involved in organising a Medical Health and Information Day aimed to inform and support library assistants/paraprofessional library staff. This activity proved a huge challenge to myself and my colleague and provided prime examples of the need for interpersonal skills, pragmatism and an overall ability to manage difficult situations. One must acknowledge that not everyone wants to get involved in such events and not everyone wants to speak at public meetings but every candidate, which ever route one takes, can improve their involvement in professional activity. Writing letters, articles, reports and newsletters demonstrates the ability to communicate with a wider audience. No one should remain isolated and no one should ignore their responsibilities to the profession as a whole. There is nothing to stop you getting involved with other people in your area, joining discussion groups, using E-mail on the Internet, visiting other institutions or getting out there and getting known. The possibilities are endless.

Conclusion

Once you have decided your Route and format for submission, start to plan and use a word processor in the early stages of development. Although I felt that I was well prepared for writing my PDR I found that once I actually started to put the whole thing together, I had gone about it in a stupid way. It is never too early to put finger to keyboard (try not to put pen to paper as it only prolongs the procedure). Remember that your professional efforts should not end on completion of your PDR. Being a professional does not end at Chartership. Once one has collated evidence spanning one or two years of experience in the profession, to prove one's professionalism, it should become a part of one's everyday working life to seek opportunities for CPD (Continual Professional Development).

Nic Herman is a Subject Librarian: Nurse Education. She works at Anglia Polytechnic University's Southend Hospital site, Essex.

YOU TAKE THE A ROAD, AND I'LL TAKE THE B ROAD, AND YOU'LL BECOME CHARTERED BEFORE ME!

(Personal reflections on Route B to Chartership)

Jim Moore

I qualified as a Librarian in 1993, and was keen to become chartered as soon as possible. However, my first job was in a hospital-based library, which was not large enough to offer Route A training, and so I registered under Route B (of the old Routes to Associateship scheme). Two years on, and in a different job, I have been asked to give my comments and impressions.

As you are aware, Route A candidates followed an approved one year on-the-job training scheme, and were then able to submit a 4-6,000 word Professional Development Report. Route B candidates, by contrast, had two years in which to create their own training programme (they were recommended to base this on Route A requirements) and then submit the same type of PDR.

Whilst appreciating the need for the A/B differentiation, I have two main criticisms to offer:

1) The candidate on a well organised Route A scheme has it easy! All they have to do is attend the training and write up the report. They even have someone appointed to help them prepare their PDR. A good candidate should have no problems, and even poorer candidates will probably get by. The Route B candidate's training, on the other hand, depends heavily on his/her ability to identify his/her own training needs and to seek appropriate courses/support, etc. This can be quite difficult when the candidate is newly qualified. The success of any Route B training also depends on the candidate's manager's ability and/or willingness to help meet the identified training needs, and to support the candidate.

2) Generally, smaller libraries are unable to offer Route A (unless they can participate in a Region-wide scheme), and yet a Chartership candidate working in a smaller organisation may well have a far wider range of work experience than his/her peer in a larger organisation, who may be employed in a very specific category and have limited experience of much else. To illustrate this, my duties in my first post included: user education; stock selection; classifying and cataloguing; enquiry work; supervision and training of Library Assistants; running the library in the Librarian's absence. One of my contemporaries, on the other hand, working in a large organisation, was limited to indexing and cataloguing, with brief visits to other departments.

Given these points, I fail to understand why a self-directed learner, with a wide range of experience should have to wait 2 years before submitting a PDR, whilst the recipient of a training programme, with possibly narrower experience, is able to submit a PDR after one year.

Having made the above points concerning the disparity I feel there is between Route A and B candidates, I'd like to conclude by considering the process of preparing a PDR. I found this an extremely valuable exercise, as it forced me to reflect on and evaluate my own work, and also on the library service of which I was a part. This evaluation resulted in a number of insights and

ideas, some of which - with my manager's support - I was able to put into immediate practice. The preparation of the report took quite a lot of personal time and commitment, but I feel that it was thoroughly worthwhile.

At the time of writing Jim was Acting Senior College Librarian at the University of Luton (Buckinghamshire)

APPEAL FOR HELP

As I approach the last year of my Information Studies Course, the requirement to undertake a dissertation is almost upon me. With this in mind, I have decided to undertake a research study connected with the following theme:

Title: Small is beautiful - an investigation into user preferences and library size in the Health Care Sector.

Outline: A study of user satisfaction among undergraduate nurses and apparent preferences for small information units. Case studies (large, medium, small) incorporated within the study.

The increasing emphasis for nursing to be a degree based profession has necessitated nurses to enhance their status by becoming graduates. Information discussions with a number of these nurses has led me to believe their information seeking behaviour is more suited to small information units. In my locality there is a preferred use of a small multidisciplinary library attached to a District General Hospital, rather than other options comprising a University Library and College of Further Education Library. This study will attempt to 'shed light' on this apparent preference and 'fuel' the debate as to how libraries in the health care sector should support nurse education into the next millennium.

I would be grateful for any comments, advice and additionally any notification of similar studies which will assist with the initial literature search and ultimately (hopefully) the successful completion of this study.

I can be contacted at:

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BOOK REVIEW

Hope on the heavy road : Learning to live with cancer

Michele Smith

ISBN 0952334135 58pp £4.95

(Available from St Theresa's Hospice, Harewood House, 14 Harewood Hill, Darlington, DL3 7HY)

Reviewed by Millie Hare

Michele Smith discovered she had cancer in 1986 and is now a patient of St Theresa's Hospice. In a series of articles, written over the years, she shared thoughts and experiences concerning her illness, treatment and the support she received. These articles, interspersed with deeply spiritual poems, have been collected together and reflect her experience of ten years of learning to live with cancer.

She wrote 'It was a time of shock and crisis, made worse by the feeling of being 'in the air'. It took me a long while to gather the information that eventually helped me to find my way about the maze of my life. In this short book, I try to make that task easier for others afflicted with cancer'.

The beginning is very religious but later the book is informative about the support available for sufferers from cancer and the value they derive from it. A chapter on support and self-help groups is very useful and a short list is provided in Appendix A. Appendix B gives some helpful literature on understanding cancer.

The holistic approach is emphasised and complementary therapies are mentioned. The value of certain therapies, eg aromatherapy, art therapy, visualisation, is described very well.

A useful addition to a hospice library, it will be of value to patients. Nurses will find it useful as a personal account by a patient. The message that patients need INFORMATION comes through clearly and, hopefully, will get through to all who read this short book..

Millie Hare is Librarian at St Helena Hospice, Colchester Essex.

THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES FOR NURSING

This paper was presented to the LfN Committee in July 1996. Your comments are invited.

Objectives of LfN

The objectives of LfN as laid out in the rules are:

- to provide a focal point for professional contact and discussion amongst qualified librarians/members of the Library Association serving nurses;
- to promote a dialogue between nurses and librarians and a greater understanding of the roles and functions of the two professions;
- to bring together periodically all persons involved in the provision of library and information services for nurses.

Perceived problems

LfN is a group in transition. Its changing position has been brought about by the move of nursing education into higher education. This has resulted in many nursing libraries being absorbed into multidisciplinary hospital libraries or into universities. Library staff have been made redundant, retired or absorbed, with varying degrees of success, into larger institutions. LfN members have gone through sometimes protracted periods of uncertainty and stress about the future, for themselves, their services and their organisations. We should not underestimate the impact that this has had on some people.

Librarian members of LfN finding themselves in the 'grand' university setting may feel that a mere sub-group of a group of the Library Association can no longer represent them. Should they be seeking representation through the Health Libraries Group more directly, or the University Health Science Librarians, or SCONUL, the association of University Librarians? Is part of the problem that LfN is now seen as lacking clout in representing them?

LfN works through committees, through study days and through publications. LfN was not allowed foundation membership of the new LINC Health Panel; ironically one of the first things that group decides to concern itself with is libraries for nurses. Study days continue to be a focus for LfN membership, serving as excellent ways of gathering information and meeting members. They almost always produce positive evaluations. The latest, however, attracted only 40 people compared with 70 or 80 at previous events. Is this indicative of lack of interest in the topic or general decline? The *LfN Bulletin* has improved in recent issues. Articles do not flood, or even trickle, in. The Bulletin depends on write-ups of study days and the occasional review. Contributions and feedback from members are minimal.

Nursing education itself continues to undergo change. There is a shift to more resource based and self directed learning. Continuing education, in the form of PREP, and demands for evidence based practice place greater demands on library services and their staff. Many librarians are in varying degrees of dispute with their actual or potential customers because contracts have failed to precisely identify client groups. Nurses often do not know who

is supposed to be providing them with a library service and librarians are sometimes not in a position to clarify things for them.

Seeking solutions

Should LfN be seeking to raise its profile? Should we be seeking to strengthen our links with other organisations, Health Libraries Group, other HLG sub-groups, Regional NHS Library groups, UHSL, the LINC Health Panel, the Medical Information Working Party, the RCN, the National Boards? Should we become a more active lobbying group, within the LA, HLG or beyond? Does this mean more active seeking representation? regular meetings between Committees or joint study days, for example with UHSL?

Should we be actively promoting ourselves more directly to nurses? Should nurses be made more aware of our presence? Should we be concerning ourselves more with the attitudes of nurses or encouraging them to join with us in lobbying for better library facilities?

Should we be looking to more actively bring together people with an interest in nursing and libraries - NHS purchasers/providers/managers (who seem to be the great under-represented in any nursing/library forum)?, publishers?, booksellers?, educationalists and course providers?

Should we continue to run study days? Do we need to promote them better or be more imaginative in our choice of subject? Does the future lie with combining with other groups or should we carry on as we are?

Has the *Bulletin* served its purpose? Should we investigate integrating it with the *HLG newsletter* or the *Health Libraries Review* in order to widen its audience? Should we seek to promote it more, in its own right or as a membership benefit? Should we promote it to prospective advertisers, other publishers and other organisations in order to get on to mailing lists for press releases?, or should we let it carry on as it is?

Some concluding comments

Nurses remain a distinct client group for libraries by virtue of the nature of their job and their work patterns; like everything else, though, both of these are changing. There is evidence that an extra 4000 new basic nurse training places will be needed by 2001. As students and as professionals they will continue to require library services. Librarians, whether in universities or hospital libraries or elsewhere, will continue to serve them.

LfN would still appear to have a role to play. In some ways its problems stem from doubt as to whether it can carry out that role. It is a voluntary organisation. All the people that work on its activities are increasingly pressured for time because, often, of the additional demands made by the very people that LfN itself is attempting to support, the nurses and the librarians who work with them.

These are comments to conclude this paper, they are not a conclusion. We have attempted in this paper to raise some issues and to present some alternative views; there are almost certainly others to be expressed.

Over to you.

WIN £20

We would like your views on LfN - present and future.

Tear out the next page or send a photocopy.

The questionnaire is anonymous so if you want to be included in the Prize Draw put your name and address on a separate piece of paper and enclose it with your questionnaire. These will be put into a hat and drawn and the winner will receive £20.

Further comments on the question of the future of LfN and the Bulletin can be included on additional sheets.

Please return by 31 December 1996 to Paul Moorbatch, Library,
St Bartholomew School of Nursing, London EC1A 7QN



Libraries for
NURSING

Promoting Informed Nursing Care

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES FOR NURSING

Please tick

- Are you a member of the LfN? Yes No
- Type of Library you work in (a) University
(b) Institute or College of Health
(c) Multidisciplinary
(d) Post-grad. medical
(e) Hospital
(f) Other (Please give details)
- Should LfN continue to exist as a separate Sub-group of HLG?
Yes No
- Should the interests of nursing libraries be channelled mainly through HLG?
Yes No
- Should LfN try to
(a) have its own links with other organisations, e.g. National Boards or LINC?
(b) act entirely through Health Libraries Group?
- Should the *Bulletin* (a) continue to be published quarterly?
(b) cease publication?
(c) be integrated into *HLG Newsletter*?
(d) other (please specify)
- Should LfN study days (a) continue?
(b) cease?
(c) be held jointly with HLG or other groups?

8. Have you attended an LfN Study Day in the last two years?

Yes No

9. How much of the LfN Bulletin do you read?

- (a) very little
- (b) about half
- (c) all of it

Additional comments, for example on the future of LfN or the Bulletin:

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