

Multiple photocopying of journal articles in nursing college libraries: what publishers think

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As nursing students are required to know more about research, nursing college lecturers may well want to do multiple photocopying of articles for class discussion or for homework exercises.

As pointed out in Cornish¹ or the Library Association² it is not permitted to undertake multiple photocopies. However, it is quite legal to write to publishers and ask for their permission.

The Copyright Licensing Agency acts on behalf of publishers and has come to licensing agreements with the universities and local education authorities. The NHS Procurement Directorate in January 1991 decided not to take out such a licence from the CLA. In a circular³ the NHS Procurement Directorate explained their decision by pointing out that the CLA wanted £3.5 million for a licence for multiple copies. This is far beyond the needs of the NHS for multiple copies. The circular also requires that a notice about copyright be placed next to photocopiers.

I wrote to the CLA about permission for multiple photocopies. They replied that a person wishing to do multiple photocopies should contact them beforehand for permission and that the cost is 7.5p plus VAT per page. It is permissible to write to the publishers themselves to ask for permission to make multiple copies for class use. I

wrote to a selection of publishers asking for their views. Most publishers will agree to copying on written application for class sets and this is either free or at low cost. Some charge for larger amounts. It is important to note that blanket permission for copying is not given, i.e. one must apply before doing each batch of copies.

Obviously, publishers are anxious that their sales should not be affected and a publisher of one popular journal said, in a telephone call, that he wanted students to buy the publication. However, another publisher of a specialised journal said that students would not purchase the journal anyway but hopefully might take out a personal subscription upon qualification. So most publishers require that due acknowledgement is given on each of the copies.

It comes as a relief that publishers of journals are willing to interpret the copyright act in a reasonable way. Librarians can reciprocate the goodwill by displaying publisher's posters and distributing their handouts.

It is worth emphasising that permission must be obtained each time. These comments refer only to journal articles and do not necessarily apply to books. Furthermore, publishers could change their position.

Below is a small selection of responses. Further details are in Health Li-

braries review.

Health Visitor (BMJ) Write in. Normally no charge but dependant on quantity.

Journal of Advanced Nursing (Blackwell Scientific) Write in. Copying charge of 3.6 pence per page but single tables free.

Journal of District Nursing (PTM) Multiple copies allowed. Give acknowledgement.

Nurse education today (Churchill Livingstone). All enquiries to CLA.

Nursing (Mark Allen) Write in. Up to 20 copies free.

Nursing (Springhouse) Written notice allows schools up to 100 copies.

Nursing Standard (Scutari) Write to editor. It is policy to give permission.

Nursing Times (Macmillan Magazines) Write. Permission normally given.

Professional Nurse (Austin Cornish) Write. Normally up to 10 copies free.

RN (Medical Economics Co) Write. Willing to give permission

Seminars in Oncology Nursing (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) Write. No charge for up to 50 copies.

References

1. Cornish G.P. (1990) Copyright: interpreting the law for libraries and archives. London, LA.
2. Library Association (1990) Copyright in NHS libraries. London, LA.
3. NHS National Procurement Executive. (1991) Copyright licensing. London, NHS Procurement Directorate.