

Libraries of good practice

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ENB Professional Officers and Regional Librarians have regular meetings in which issues of mutual interest are discussed. Membership also includes myself as the current NIS representative. Meetings are chaired by one of the ENB Officers and one of the Regional Librarians acts as Secretary to the group and prepares agendas. An issue which has been the subject of considerable discussion is the inspection of nursing library provision as part of the course validation process.

Evidence from the Survey of Libraries and Project 2000 Courses (Shepherd and Yeoh, 1990) confirms many anecdotal reports that inspection of libraries is either very cursory or does not take place at all. Anyone who has been involved in the course validation process will be aware that ENB Education Officers have intensive programmes of meetings with teaching staff and students and visits to clinical areas. Libraries have usually been accorded lowest priority.

In order to encourage the inspection of libraries and to move towards the development of a higher standard of provision a number of ideas have been considered during RLG/ENB meetings. It has been suggested that one possibility might be that a Regional Librarian or Higher Education Librarian accompany ENB Officers to provide professional advice. Another idea has been the compilation of a checklist of areas of provision which should be investigated by Officers.

Following discussion it has been decided to pursue the idea of compiling a listing of libraries of good practice, the aim being to provide examples of excellence which ENB Officers can visit to provide a basis for the validation process. As a result each Regional Librarian or Regional Representative has been contacted and asked for nominations of libraries of good practice. While it is unlikely that libraries would claim excellence in respect of all aspects of provision there may be parts of the library service which are examples of good practice. Such elements might include journal provision, staffing levels, user education programmes, budget levels or involvement in the College of Nursing committee structure.

A number of nominations have been received and will be discussed at the next RLG/ENB meeting. Clearly there are some difficulties involved in the production of the listing. Libraries are not static and the list would require regular updating. Nominations have not been made on the basis of clearly defined standards for nursing library provision and are therefore of a subjective nature. These and other issues clearly require discussion and I will keep you informed in future issues of the Newsletter.

Reference

Shepherd T and Yeoh J (1990). Resourcing Project 2000 nursing courses: the role of library and information services. NIS/RCN.