

Report from the 2010 Libraries for Nursing Study Day

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This year the Libraries for Nursing Study Day held in the Palace Hotel, York, focused on Health Information Literacy. Sheila Webber opened proceedings by looking at “Identifying the information needs of your diverse users”. Kate Clark followed looking at “New ways of communicating for information literacy: keeping it personal, making it appropriate, making it effective”. After lunch, Susie Andretta covered “Everything you always wanted to know about information literacy but were afraid to ask”. The final session was an opportunity to explore issues that came up during the day and reflect on the study day as a whole.

Sheila Webber, from the University of Sheffield, opened with a talk looking at the differing information needs of users. She presented an overview of users already discussed in research and then facilitated the group in identifying some diverse users encouraging us to share problems, experiences and solutions to the situations identified. It allowed the study day participants to share common issues and solutions. Sheila left us with plenty to think about from her session. A good example from the discussion was international students using mobile phones in lectures. The trainer noticed that these students were on their mobiles throughout her session, so afterwards she went up to them to discuss why they were using their phones. It turned out, that they were using it as a translation device for the lecture. This highlighted the importance of not jumping to conclusions about what people are doing and having the conviction to discuss issues that arise calmly, rather than challenging them and creating a confrontation where there is no need for one.

The next session was run by Kate Clark from the RCN as she presented some of the communication strategies currently being used at the RCN (Royal College of Nursing) to support their dispersed user population. Kate highlighted their virtual enquiry service and offered insights into their new webinar services.

Susie Andretta, from London Metropolitan University, began her session by highlighting some of the answers that had come up during her pre-session diagnostic questionnaire where she invited attendees of the study day to ask questions about Information Literacy (IL). These formed the basis of her session as she took us through the maze of IL. Her organic presentation style took us gently through Bruce *et al.*'s, (2004) Six Frames of Information Literacy model. The key point from Susie's talk was assessing the skills of the students/users before they begin training, stressing it was important to build from what they already know, rather than assuming you know what they need to do. She highlighted the risk of trainers making assumptions which may lead to disinterest amongst the group and training that bares little relevance to their needs. The ideas raised in Susie's session fed into the discussion at the end of the day.

Personally, there were two key things I took away from the LfN study day. The most useful of which was to have the confidence to ask the students what they want and what they expect. To have that initial discussion to assess their level, to build from where they are and not to inflict what I 'think' they need to know on them, but rather to ask what they expect. In an ideal situation I would introduce a diagnostic test before the session to assess my students' level and to run the session according to their needs and expectations.

Susie Andretta made the interesting point that a story or case study is worth more than hundreds of statistics. She made the point that many people find it easier to identify with a story than with a table of figures, which will better allow us to justify the relevance and impact of our IL training.

The speakers gave us plenty of food for thought and ample reading to further our understanding of IL. The day concluded with an opportunity to write a reminder to ourselves of what we thought we should most take out of the day. This was effectively a letter to ourselves, which the committee then posted to us a month later so that we could remind ourselves of what was important.

The study day offered a wonderful opportunity to discuss the wide range of issues around IL. It allowed us to compare experiences and explore various solutions to commonly shared problems. The speakers gave us their insights into specific aspects of IL and helped us to build our knowledge and experience.

Information Literacy models discussed by Susie Andretta:

SCONUL (1999) available at:

http://www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/seven_pilla

[rs.html](#) [Last accessed 7th December 2010]

ACRL IL standards (2000) available at:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm> [Last accessed 7th December 2010]

ANZIL IL standards (Bundy, 2004) available at:

<http://oil.otago.ac.nz/oil/index/ANZIIL-Standards.html>

[Last accessed 7th December 2010]

Bruce, C et al (2006) 'Six frames for information literacy education: a conceptual framework for the relationships between theory and practice' *ITALICS* 5 (1) [Available online: <http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/italics/vol5iss1.htm> last accessed 7th December 2010]