

The Current Awareness Service for Health (CASH) – harnessing the power of collaborative working

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Abstract: By offering current awareness services to their end-users, NHS libraries can add value to the organisations they serve. CASH is a national current awareness service which recently secured funding from the Strategic Health Authority Library Leads group. The collaborative service model and RSS technology offer an efficient and cost-effective way of delivering current awareness services within the NHS.

Introduction to Current Awareness

Current Awareness Services (CAS) are no longer a luxury or 'optional extra', but rather an essential component of all NHS library services.

CAS offer multiple benefits to the end user:

1. Taking the pain out of keeping-up-to-date
 - a. Saving clinicians time that they can then devote to the delivery of patient-centred care
 - b. Bringing information together into a single point of access, making it easier for health professionals to find the information they need. This is especially important given the volume of information now available online and the increased risk of 'information overload'.
 - c. Ensuring that information is delivered in a timely way – *where, when* and *how* it is needed
 - d. Quality is assured by a team of qualified library and information professionals
2. Contributing towards evidence based practice and ultimately to the quality of patient care
3. Informing new service developments (health management)
4. Enabling continuing professional development and lifelong learning

CAS can also increase the profile of the library itself, resulting in increased uptake of core services such as literature searching