

## EDITORIAL

This is a time of great developments in the world of health information. The NHS has recently published its strategy document, *Information for all*, in which it announces the setting up of a National Electronic Library for Health. Exactly what form this will take is still becoming clear but it is something we should all be aware of and be ready to exploit. It was the subject of one of the talks presented at a conference entitled *New Libraries for old: information for health in the new NHS*, organised by Veronica Fraser, NHS Library Advisor at the Department of Health. This was one of those 'vision things' where the speakers attempted, and in large part succeeded, in inspiring their audience to see how wonderful things nearly are, or will be when all those little problems which we haven't sorted out over the last x years are resolved. A fuller account will feature in a future issue of the *Bulletin*.

This issue reflects the onward march of the electronic library, national or otherwise. There is an article on *Evaluating resources on the web*. This is derived from the study day organised by Lfn jointly with the Scottish health librarians (SHINE) last year. It is timely, for readers come to the web with great expectations and are usually surprised and horrified at the junk they have to sort through. They also often expect to be able to read full text journal articles or get instant answers to any question they have. Needless to say the expectations do not always live up to the reality. Other features this issue include news of a virtual health centre in Scotland and an article listing useful websites in health.

The *Royal College of Nursing* library is considering offering a corporate membership service during 1999. There would be an annual charge and subscribing libraries would be able to apply for photocopies for an additional charge. The advantage of this scheme is that effectively *British Nursing Index* citations would be available to subscribing libraries. Also corporate member libraries would be able to borrow books and postgraduates and lecturers of subscribing institutions would have access to the RCN library. Let us hope this scheme takes off and flourishes.

Keen *Bulletin* readers will have noticed that we have yet another change of format this issue. This is partly because our typist of several years, Mrs Jean Smith, has decided she can face our illegible scrawls no more. Our thanks go to her for the many years of unheralded work she has put into the *Bulletin*. This now means that we produce these issues via Macs, PCs, assorted versions of Word, and email and the typing efforts of Mr Moorbath. We will hopefully end up with a stable identity for the *Bulletin* before long. Meanwhile, there would be no *Bulletin* at all without your efforts, so don't forget to send us any news, views, articles and reports, so that we may share them with the membership.

*The Editors*