

Librarians' response to PREPP

Prepared by Nursing Interest Group, South East Thames Regional Health Authority

Introduction

In April 1991, the Library Association produced a document on their response to PREPP. In addition to this document, nursing librarians in South East Thames Regional Health Authority (SET) felt it appropriate to comment on PREPP given the SET situation. Nurse education as well as the library profession is currently experiencing many changes. Thus library staff in SET have become accustomed to managing change in their various areas and in meeting an increasing variety of information needs from nursing staff. The introduction of PREPP will further enhance the commitment of SET library staff to actively contribute to and participate in the continued education of nurses.

Within this framework, this document aims to address the implications PREPP will have for SET libraries and hopes to provide a basis from which library staff can plan and manage for the forthcoming changes.

Hopefully this document will be of use to those people in their area who are managerially responsible for nurses, not just those responsible for their training.

Present provision in SET

South East Thames Regional Health Authority has one of the best library networks in the country for interlibrary loan of books and photocopies of journal articles. Libraries are run by dedicated personnel – most have professional staff

input, though perhaps not full time. SETRHA libraries can call upon the Regional Librarian for guidance and support. There are few nurses who are not physically near library provision, although not all will be eligible to have access to all library services.

There are factors which might alter the present library provision in SET. The nursing funding (EAG) this year has been greatly reduced. SETRHA is reviewing its involvement at local levels. In order to maintain current financial support, a concerted effort must be made to secure funding from other sources if necessary.

Implications of PREPP on libraries

There is a pressing need for library skills courses (literature searching, using computerised catalogues, CD-ROM, microfiche equipment, etc.), both as separate in-service study days for those doing independent work or incorporated into existing curricula for those following formal learning. CD-ROM searching by users is being introduced to increase speed and expand on printed journal indexes. In addition, due to changes in learning modes, libraries will be using more AVA equipment and resources – for example video, interactive video and computer assisted learning.

Libraries will need to expand professionally staffed opening hours in order to make the library accessible during the off-duty hours of nursing staff. As in-

creased use occurs, larger facilities, including extra study space, will be required. Increased use will also lead to the need for more computerisation of circulation and other library record-keeping such as interlibrary loans.

Libraries are equipped to advise on the feasibility of planned programmes such as what resources are available or possible. As there is a time delay of three months or more in facilitating change and ordering new materials, forward planning is essential.

Cost implications

EAG funds provide nursing libraries with the majority of their present funding, ie staff, materials and equipment costs. PREPP represents a new development in the continuing education of nursing staff and, as a result, will increase the use of SET libraries. The subsequent costs incurred by this increase should not be met by existing EAG funds. All courses should include library funding for resources and library staff. Health authorities should make provision for general professional information needs of their nursing staff.

Library staff need to consult their managers regarding funding from alternative sources, such as hospital or district training budgets. In the new NHS climate with Working Paper 10, units can purchase library services from whichever library they choose.

There are also implications for staff to be considered. As highlighted earlier, the role of the librarian may change as a result of PREPP to include more planning and organisational skills. Senior staff should be upgraded to reflect these additional responsibilities.

Resume of PREPP recommendations

1. There should be a period of support for all newly registered practitioners to consolidate the competencies or learning outcomes achieved at registration (4.4)
2. A preceptor should provide the support for each newly registered practitioner (4.11)

All the following recommendations will be statutory requirements:

3. All nurses, midwives and health visitors must demonstrate that they have maintained and developed their professional knowledge and competence (5.4)
4. All practitioners must record their professional development in a personal professional profile (5.8)
5. During the three years leading to periodic registration, all practitioners must complete a period of study or provide evidence of appropriate professional learning. A minimum of five days study leave every three years must be undertaken by every registered practitioner. (5.14)
6. When registered practitioners wish to return to practice after a break of five years or more they will have to complete a return to practice programme (6.2)
7. The standard, kind and content of preparation for advanced practice will be specified by the Council. Advanced practitioners must have an appropriate Council-approved qualification recorded on the register (7.12)
8. To be eligible to practise, individuals must every three years:
submit a notification of practice;
EITHER provide verification that they have completed their personal professional profile satisfactorily; OR show evidence that they have completed a return to practice programme; and pay their periodic fee (9.5)

9. Practitioners after a break of less than five years returning to practice using a specific registered qualification shall submit a notification of practice and, within the following calendar year, provide verification that they have completed their personal professional profile satisfactorily (9.7)

Action list for librarians

1. Meet with nurse managers/supervisors in the area you serve to:
 - a. explain what services are presently available
 - b. discuss your area's perceived plan for approaching PREPP – including the library's role as an information source
 - c. consider future library needs in light of above plan
 - d. establish possible ways of funding
 - e. emphasise library staff are capable of managing change and dealing with an increasing variety of information needs.
2. Repeat the above with the nurse education centre serving your area.
3. Become involved in planning approaches to PREPP – where not possible to attend meetings, ensure you are kept aware of changes and plans.

4. Monitor library use to ensure:
 - a. adequate funding for present and future needs
 - b. funding is coming from those areas using it.
5. Increase and develop in-service training (mainly for library/technology skills) both with local nurse education centres and within the area's in-service training structure.
6. Promote the library as a source for keeping up to date with new nursing information.
7. Consider setting up an external fee-paying membership scheme with full guidelines on the services available and any additional costs that may be incurred by these members. Such action will ensure that nurses working in isolation can gain access to library facilities.
8. Keep up to date with new open learning initiatives like RCN/Nursing Standard/BBC, Distance Learning Centre of South Bank Poly modules, Continuing Nurse Education at Barnet College, etc.
9. Consider alternative indexing services to improve the coverage of key UK journals.

This document, which can be freely copied, is available from SET libraries, or Regional Librarian, SETRHA, Thrift House, Collington Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3NQ.