

NOTES AND NEWS

Meeting with the NHS Library Adviser

Members of the LIN Committee met with Margaret Haines, the NHS Library Adviser, at the beginning of May 1995.

Part of Maggie's role includes meeting with the many groups which provide information services for groups within the health service. She is charged with advising on a national policy for the effective co-ordination of healthcare information provision and the dissemination of the knowledge base. Among the issues discussed were the provision of library services for trained staff, the transfer of library staff to higher education employers, the nature of contracts with Trusts for information provision and who pays for what services.

Problems at work?

The experience of staff working in libraries serving nurses as they are incorporated into the higher education sector has varied across the country. It has come to the attention of the LIN Committee that some staff are being demoted or otherwise disadvantaged or being made redundant. If any of these things is your experience, please contact:

Libraries for Nursing
c/o Tony Shepherd, LIN Chairman
Royal College of Nursing
20 Cavendish Square
London W1M 0AB.

All information received will be treated in strictest confidence.

The Library Association is also keen to do what it can to protect members affected by mergers and transfers of nursing library staffs into H.E. Legal advice can be made available to individuals through the LA Professional Practice Department, from Citizens Advice Bureaux and from Trade Union legal officers. Regional librarians may also be able to give general advice or support.

Library Association Professional Adviser (Special Libraries)

Veronica Fraser is the person at the LA who glories in this title. She is the person to contact if you are having difficulties relating to your work. She is also liaison officer for the Health Libraries Group. In order to help Veronica improve her knowledge about the healthcare sector the LfN Committee has agreed to invite her along to their meetings as an observer.

Core Nursing Texts

It has been proposed by the Medical Information Working Party that LfN might like to put together a core list of nursing books and journals. The purpose would be to provide nurses with a set of books which would support them in their patient care and give librarians a set of 'key texts' which could guide them in their title selection. This might create a list covering a wide range of titles and subject areas. As you may know, medical practitioners already have a list of core titles of this type.

Do you think that this would be a worthwhile thing to do? Do you need such a list? Do you think practising nurses would find such a list useful? Please let Paul Moorbath have your views (tel.0171-601 8653 or write to the address given in the list of Committee Members pp38-39).

LINC Health Panel

LINC, the Library and Information Co-operation Council, is proposing the establishment of a Health Panel, to enable the health sector to speak with one voice and to address issues which cut across the interests of the various groups in the field. Among the issues identified as key are the transfer of the provision of diploma level education into higher education institutions and the education and training of health information professionals.

The activities planned for the group include:

- coordinating and representing views of membership on issues related to health libraries and information services
- raising awareness at senior governmental level of health related LIS issues
- promoting UK views with international bodies and organisations in matters relating to health information
- facilitating information sharing and promotion of good practice
- feeding back to members on the dialogue with policy and decision makers
- working with those supplying products and services to the health library and information community
- encouraging information professionals in involvement with policy formation in the NHS and other relevant bodies.

Calling all Authors

Do you have an idea for a book on an aspect of health or nursing related librarianship? or something more startlingly original? LA Publishing are always on the look out for ideas from authors. The person to contact is Helen Carley at LAPL, based at LAHQ. Think through your idea, what you want to write about and what sort of market you think your book might have, and contact Helen at an early stage for advice (0171-636 7543).

New Members

If LfN is going to be effective it needs members. If you have received this Bulletin the chances are you are already a member. If you know someone who isn't, then contact a member of the Committee and we will send them an application form. Membership is open to anyone interested in bringing together librarians and nurses. (Only LA members are allowed to vote in elections.) The cost is £10 (£5 for students).

Libraries for Nursing - Yorkshire and Humberside Sub-Group

The group was formed around 1980 as a support network for those providing library services for nurses in the old Yorkshire Region. At the time there was no Regional Librarian and little formal support for these staff. The group now numbers about thirty, and includes those working in Colleges of Health/Nursing, old and new universities and multidisciplinary libraries. The aims of the group are:

- to be a communication and support network for library staff working with nurses, nursing students and professions allied to medicine within the Yorkshire and Humberside area, facilitating the exchange of information, help and advice.
- to liaise with and work alongside the Libraries for Nursing National Group, ensuring representation of regional interests and the communication of regional views on issues affecting nursing libraries, to both the National Group and through them to statutory organisations when required.
- to organise meetings and study days in pursuit of these aims.

The group is an informal one, but does have a Chair and Secretary - there is no budget, so a Treasurer is unnecessary! Meetings are normally held three times a year in different members' libraries, so it is possible to see one's colleagues operate and how their facilities compare with others. The support role of the group is central, especially now, as the Yorkshire colleges prepare for integration into higher education in April 1996. Exchange of experience is also useful - other people's ideas may be different from your own and throw a different light on developments.

The Chair of the group is also a member of the Libraries for Nursing National Committee and this facilitates communication - news from the Committee is a regular item on the group's agenda.

The group continues to flourish and I can see no reason for this to change in April 1996, as our users will still have unique needs in terms of library services, and we as librarians will continue to need the support which the group provides.

Christine Pinder, Learning Resources Manager, Humberside College of Health and Chair of the Libraries for Nursing - Yorkshire and Humberside Sub-Group.

WANTED

Articles, News, Photographs,
Letters, Ideas, Gossip, Features
Opinions, Comment, Study Day details
Cartoons, Courses, Research Reports
Conference Reports, Forthcoming Events

These are some of the things we want. If you have any, send them to the Editors, c/o Paul Moorbat, Senior Librarian, St Bartholomew and Princess Alexandra and Newham College of Nursing and Midwifery, West Smithfield, London, EC1A 7BE.

REWARD

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UNNDERPIN Project News

University of Northumbria at Newcastle Development of and Research into the Provision of Information to Nurses UNNDERPIN started on January 1st 1995. It is a 6 month joint research project between the Information Services Department (ISD) and the Department of Information and Library Management (DILM) at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN), and the Bede, Newcastle & Northumbria College of Health (BNN).

UNNDERPIN is focusing on the individual user via a case study of both clinical staff and students at St George's Mental Health Trust, Morpeth. The various strands of the national picture of health information provision (such as its move into higher education, the withdrawal of conventional library services and the increasing use of electronic information) will be viewed from the individual's viewpoint. A picture will be built up of users' information needs, problem areas and possible solutions.

A critical review of the literature has recently been completed and the fieldwork will be based on focus groups, interviews and a user questionnaire.

Project Leaders: Prof. Joan Day (Head of Dept. DILM)

Graham Walton (Faculty Librarian ISD)

Barry Chalk (Vice-Principal BNN)

Senior Research Assistant: Dr Linda Banwell

If you would like further information please contact: Dr Linda Banwell, DILM, Lipman Building, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST, tel: 0191 227 3222; fax: 0191 227 4572.

Library Services and the hearing impaired

(Project based at Liverpool John Moores University)

Vincent Roper and Elaine Ansell have been awarded funding by the British Library Research and Development

Department to investigate the needs of hearing impaired library and information service users. They will also look at recent initiatives with a view to establishing standards.

The work will initially concentrate in the North West of England, but will initially concentrate in the North West of England, but will also investigate other areas and services who have approached this area.

The research will look at deaf people of all ages and in all walks of life, and at the giving and receiving of information for such users. New technology in the form of text telephones (Minicom), computer bulletin boards and videophones are being introduced and used in both public and university libraries. Staff are also being trained in deaf awareness. Accordingly, the research will examine how such instruction and technology is introduced, and how acceptable and useful these improved services are to deaf people.

This research, to be undertaken between May 1995 and April 1996, aims to:

- * establish the varying needs of the hearing impaired in terms of library and information services - their needs in education, recreation and community information - liaising with individuals and local and national organisations.
- * survey existing services in the North-West in both public and academic environments.
- * establish standards of "good practice" in terms of communication and information about and for the hearing impaired.

Mrs Yvette Jeal, Research Assistant, Information Management, Liverpool Business School, Liverpool John Moores University, 98 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool L3 5UZ. Tel: 0151 231 3453; E-mail: y.jeal@livjm.ac.uk; Fax: 0151 707 0423.

OMNI: ORGANIZING MEDICAL NETWORKED INFORMATION

The National Institute for Medical Research announced in March 1995 the launch of the OMNI project. This is a project to build a gateway for the higher education and research community to facilitate access to selected high quality information about clinical, research and management aspects of health and biomedicine. This information is accessible through the Internet. (OMNI = Organizing Medical Networked Information.)

The Internet is potentially a major source of medical information. It is highly pervasive and organisations have used it to publish a wide range of information resources. This torrent of new information is, however, unorganized. Furthermore, the quality of Internet information sources varies greatly. OMNI will create a catalogue of networked information resources through a process of discovery, filtering, describing, classifying and indexing. Users of the OMNI Gateway will be able to browse through or search for entries and dynamically connect to resources of interest. The project will promote awareness of networked information resources and will provide training in their use.

Project Co-ordinator Frank Norman comments: "There is much information of value on the Internet but unfortunately this is swamped by information sources which are ephemeral or of dubious quality. OMNI aims to be a quality service, facilitating access to useful information sources, particularly those generated in the UK. Before connecting to a resource, users will have access to a description of its scope and content. Coupled with a proper structuring of resources by subject, users of OMNI should find the Internet a more productive avenue to medical information.

OMNI is funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) through its Information Services Sub Committee (ISSC). The OMNI Consortium brings together seven organisations experienced in the provision and use of networked biomedical information. It will aim to achieve wide recognition and support through workshops, presentations and annual seminars to obtain feedback. It will collaborate with related initiatives in the UK, Europe and the United States. OMNI will be led by a Project Officer, to be based at the National Institute for Medical Research. The gateway service will be hosted on a machine at Nottingham University.

The use of libraries by nursing researchers

Some of you will have helped in this research by filling in questionnaires at a study day or making contact by post or email. You may be interested to know that the report of the project is now available.

A single page summary is also available from Maurice Wakeham (see address on Committee pages, pp38-39), in return for a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The use of libraries by nursing researchers, by Elaine Blair and Maurice Wakeham is published as British Library R & D Report number 6207, and may be purchased as a photocopy or microfiche from the British Thesis Service, British Library Document Supply Centre, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7BQ.