

## The times they are a changin'

**The implications of Project 2000 for libraries in the 1990s. Report of a study organised by NIS on 24 May 1990.**

**David Stewart**, NIS Chairman, District Librarian, PGMC Library, Medway Hospital, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 5NY.

**Margaret Green**, the Chairperson of Project 2000 and the current acting Deputy General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing was the first speaker at our Spring Study Day.

Her first comment was on the essential role of librarians in the process of introducing change in nurse education.

She examined the background to P2000, noting that there had been 50 years of trying to change the way nurses were trained, culminating in the government's acceptance of P2000 in May 1988. How did this happen?

- The P2000 working group encouraged the entire profession to be involved in the debate
- The P2000 group was made up of 24 people, representing all specialities
- The group emerged with a consensus of what should be done, and produced six discussion papers, followed by discussion events around the country

Margaret Green suggested that the government agreed to the report because of the likelihood of nurse shortages and the clear need for a response to changes in the health needs of the population.

She sees the major implications for the individual nurse as being:

- a greater involvement in service planning and development
- a manager of the change process
- a reorientation towards the community

In summary, P2000 proposed

- a new division of labour, between a registered nurse who would plan/coordinate and give care, and
- a 'helper' or support worker
- a new pattern of preparation, with a common foundation course dividing into branches
- a better educational framework. Nurses will still learn in the clinical situation but this will be education rather than service led.
- students will be supernumerary for 80% of the time, and will have grants
- much closer links with higher and further education.
- an all graduate teacher workforce and better student/teacher ratios

The benefits were intended to be:

- a rationalisation of nurse education
- costs savings
- preparation for a lifetime's practice
- increased productivity

Margaret Green then focused on the second phase of P2000, PREPP,

which has examined the continuing educational needs of nurses once they are registered. The group is still working on issues such as education; credits and assessment of experiential learning and there should be a discussion document ready in September 1990.

This was a very concise and often humorous presentation and provided an excellent starting point for the day's discussions.

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**Maureen Bleasdale**, Nursing Librarian, College of Nursing, Mayday Hospital, Mayday Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 7QU.

**Maureen Theobald** is the Director of East Sussex and West Kent Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visitor Education. Her talk focused on the management of the organisational structure of the Institute, and the part played by library services in successful implementation of P2000.

The Institute was formed from four health authorities; Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings and Tunbridge Wells, and two higher education institutes, namely the University of Sussex, and Brighton Polytechnic. Amalgamation was always previously resisted because of fears of loss of identity, power and autonomy, but Project 2000 has, because of funding, made amalgamation a necessity. It became clear that a review of the existing management structure and proposals for a new structure were urgently required in order to clarify the lines of communication and decision-making. The Registry is one of the five proposed

departments. Its main responsibility is the maintenance, co-ordination and control of business support to the Institute. The functions associated with the Registry are:

- recruitment and selection
- allocation of clinical placements
- budgetary control
- library
- audio-visual and resources
- secretariat

Future library requirements are being developed in line with the new curriculum for nursing education. The new diploma programme is three calendar years in length with four terms per year. Two of the first six terms and one of the second six terms will be spent on the Higher Education campus. There are to be two intakes of 175



students per year giving a school size ultimately of 1,050. Clinical experience offered across the four health authorities is complete. The books required to meet the needs of diploma students differ from those used by current students. A considerable investment in books and journals will be essential. There are no plans or aspirations to have one single college building that will house all students at all times and the students will be spending three quarters of their time in their sponsoring health authority hospitals. Resources must, therefore, be available to all students wherever they are based.

Current staffing in the schools of nursing is a mixture of qualified librarians and clerical staff. It will be necessary to appoint a Senior Librarian to act as

co-ordinator between the Higher Education Institutes and the health service libraries. The Senior Librarian would manage the budget, held by the Registrar. Further responsibility would be to chair an Institute Library Committee which would consist of library, higher education, student and teacher personnel. Future responsibilities could include the management of AV resources.

### Future proposals

A rational development would be the formation of multidisciplinary libraries on each of the health authority sites. Nursing librarians have expressed concern over the threat of demise of the expertise that they have developed.

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**Christine Hardaker** Bradford School of Nursing, Saint Luke's Hospital, Little Horton Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 0NA.

In ideal world all schools of nursing (sorry, should that now read Colleges of Health?) would have a Philip Cheung as their Head or Principal. No longer would libraries be poorly staffed, inadequately funded and resourced and be preparing to meet the demands of Project 2000 with concern, anxiety and trepidation as to how their already overstretched resources are going to meet the demands of the new educational content of Project 2000.

For Philip Cheung is a staunch advocate of libraries and librarians, regarding them not as a 'showcase' for their respective institutions, but as a verit-

able 'powerhouse' of knowledge and information, fundamental to the successful implementation of educational training programmes within nurse education.

He may be regarded as unusual amongst his senior nurse educator colleagues in the importance which he attaches to library service and in his own work in this area; some say he is even idealistic in his belief that we as librarians can change things if we are 'pro-active' and continue to make our voices heard amongst the people who count.

However, I do not believe anyone in

the audience listening to his paper would disagree with his formula for the constitution of a comprehensive library service:-

- conducive environment for studying
- bookstock at different academic levels
- wide coverage of journal titles
- audio-visual material
- services of a professional librarian/support staff
- inter-library loan facilities
- photocopying facilities
- user education
- CD-ROM facilities

How does one try to achieve such a service? In his view, this broad-based service provision is more likely to be achieved through a multi-disciplinary, district library service, rather than through a single library working in isolation which tends to have been the way nursing libraries have operated over the years. Interestingly, this was a point also mentioned by Maureen Theobald, and perhaps lends weight to the belief that nursing libraries and the NIS should explore this particular avenue in the near future.

Although the ENB has not shown itself overly concerned with the standard and provision of library and information services when validating courses run by schools of nursing, nevertheless, their attention must continue to

be drawn to the necessity of including them in their appraisal in the same way as clinical areas are assessed when approval for a course is sought. Educational Advisory Groups and Health Authorities also need to be contacted and one suggested option when seeking increased funding would be to use the 'Per capita' basis which would establish the costs of the service by predicting the required funding based on number of students and also allow argument for more money because of inflation.

Though there will be many changes brought about by P2000, Philip Cheung isolated one particular issue on which to base applications for more funding for P2000 courses - namely the supernumerary status of students which would result in a 31% increase in college attendance over the traditional RGN training. Or to put it another way, 90 weeks over the 3 years would be spent in college as compared to 28 weeks in school with the traditional training programme. The effect on the library and library services is not too difficult to imagine - larger intakes of students in the library for longer periods of time; a variety of teaching methods such as assessment, self-directed learning, project and research work making heavier demands on library facilities. It must be remembered too, that P2000 students would not be the only student group requiring library services. They would be in competition with other students on existing RGN courses in addition to qualified nursing staff still needing provision of information services. All of this must be included in any application for funding.

Examples were quoted as regards the



salaries Philip Cheung though appropriate for librarians to be placed on - which drew gasps of envy from those present who were ruefully comparing the lofty scales quoted with their own impoverished gradings - I guess there were several of us wishing we could work in Philip Cheung's authority in 'bonnie Scotland'! The Library Association representative at the study day deftly interceded at this point to remind us that the LA are closely monitoring the situation with regard to P2000 and were available to any member requiring help.

Idealistic and unattainable we may think it is to achieve the type of library set-up described by Philip Cheung, as most of us are only too well aware that

we live in the real world where our own employing authorities do not regard us so sympathetically. That does not mean however, that we must give up trying to improve our situation, and I believe that some very practical and concrete advice and suggestions were made which should help us in our fight for our fair share of the cake and enable us to put up a good case for more resources.

One final word. Was I the only one to be a little disconcerted and sad to think that a non-librarian could so ably and incisively sum up our present situation and present us with such practical solutions to help us resolve our problems? Food for thought!