

professions, a series of one-day workshops have been organized. The penultimate of these was for the paramedical professions, with representatives from relevant educational institutions, professional societies, district officers and other practitioners as well as a DHSS officer and several librarians: about thirty people in all.

Mrs Margaret Ellis, District Occupational Therapist, Tower Hamlets, identified the information needs of the various groups common to all the paramedical professions in a paper which led into the morning's discussion. Many present felt the need for time-saving services such as current awareness, abstracting, photocopying and bench book provision. Much of the paramedical literature is not research-based yet and there are few tools to retrieve it anyway. Paramedical literature is often not accepted by the major medical journals. Mrs C A Miller, librarian, Pinderfield's General Hospital, Wakefield, spoke about the rehabilitation current awareness bulletins produced at Wakefield and the hope to create a data-base which would be accessible on-line. The question of dissemination via journals came up again during the afternoon session, when a Regional network was mooted as an alternative, possibly by view-data.

Several people reinforced Mrs Ellis' request for user education, particularly with the increase in use of technology within libraries about which many present expressed a lack of knowledge and confidence. User education should start as early as possible, preferably when students. Students need to be taught both how to use libraries and to appreciate the potential of libraries. There is a need for greater communication between teaching and library staff, as students now often receive self directed study and project work and need guidance as to how to approach it.

It was felt that standards of service were extremely variable and access often difficult. Mr Roy Tabor, Regional Librarian, Wessex, pointed out that this was due to development in the past of separate provision for the various professions, dominated by post-graduate medical education. It was also noted that access was often difficult for community-based workers and in multi-sited hospitals. There is a need for members of the professions to demand at District and Regional level that money be provided for services. Mr Tabor spoke in the afternoon of the Help for Health project, as an example of response to a demand, but he was aware of a conflict: money spent on this would be detracting from more traditional, educational services. Mrs B Hughes, librarian, Combined Training Institute, University Hospital, of Wales, pointed out that financial provision was not the only requirement: user-education and good library services were likely to generate such a demand that present staffing levels could not cope.

After this review of existing services, Mr Tabor who opened proceedings for the afternoon, considered ways in which they could develop to meet changes and expanding demands. He looked forward to better managed services employing modern management techniques, with Regional Librarians for all Regions and a structure which provided for at least one qualified librarian per District, serving all NHS information needs, with Regional back-ups and networks for dissemination of information. Technology would have an important part to play in this network, with use not only of established data-bases, but of in-put into Regional data-bases from local centres, with use in interlibrary loans, current awareness, union lists of periodicals etc. Terminals could be used for communication and dissemination and could be used for viewing of information (view-data).

The final workshop, on December 7th will aim to produce a document to define expected library needs in the NHS professions over the next 20 years.

Katherine Clark

Converting Information into Care

Report of RLG/DHSS Workshop, 7th December 1983, King's Fund Centre.



This workshop was organized to bring together the results of the four workshops which considered the information needs of managers, nurses, medical staff and paramedicals in the NHS. The morning session began with short reports of the four workshops, Miss B. Vaughan of Oxford School of Nursing (Senior Tutor-Practice and Development) reporting on the nursing workshop. The speakers identified the problems of information provision, the G.P. giving a fairly good overall view of the problems which can equally be applied to the other professions:-

- a) Volume of information.
- b) Motivation of the user.
- c) Emergency needs.
- d) Drug information.
- e) Diseases and support groups for sufferers.
- f) Current awareness.
- g) Human touch - a problem - orientated information system is needed, the librarian (information provider?) should be able to help users to define their problem.
- h) Demands of performance review.

The solutions in the G.P.'s view include a national base for some information sources and a 'problem - orientated information person' locally.

The other speakers identified further problems including difficulty with access, the wide range of subjects covered by one profession, lack of co-operation between people and the particular problems experienced by community staff.

The information needs of patients and the level of involvement of NHS libraries was discussed by Roy Tabor.

The discussion of the morning session centred around the development of multidisciplinary libraries and regional library services.

In the afternoon after a talk by Mike Carmel on organization and resources of information services, the workshop considered in some detail the paper prepared by Roy Tabor which formed the basis of lengthy discussion.

It is the intention of the RLG/DHSS group to produce a report which will be sent to interested organizations and people for comment before being presented to the Department. The report will be presented under the Körner Working Group banner.

Jane B Jones

#### Rcn Library Enquiry Service

Due to the current heavy demand on our enquiry service we have regrettably had to limit this to Rcn members only. The library itself is still open to non-members. Those in the London area are very welcome to visit us to carry out their own literature searches. We are always happy to advise which bibliographic tools to use.

We are also advising Rcn members who are seeking information for essays, projects etc., to use the library servicing their course. If the information they require is not available locally then we are willing to help. We are continuing to provide a service for nursing libraries.

Elizabeth Carew  
Deputy Librarian