**Continuing Professional Development and Learning from the Pandemic.**

**Continuing Professional Development**

One of the most important things in advancing learning for library customers is current awareness. One way to do this by circulating tables of contents of current issues of journals by e – TOCs or by or e -mails of pdfs of paper journal tables of contents. The Embase e – mail alerts are another example of current awareness. Another method of current awareness is to find out what are the current concerns of the scientific staff of your organisation and search databases and journals for material on these subjects. Your findings should then be circulated to the relevant staff.

One feature of Irish medical librarianship highlighted some years ago in the SHELLI report was the need for sharing library resources. Cartels of joint subscriptions to journals were suggested. What progress been made in this regard? The HSLG Journal Cooperative and later the HJNI cooperative were valuable steps towards this goal although they did not go far enough, in my opinion. I view with alarm the suggestion made last year to discontinue the HJNI cooperative. I strongly recommend that it should continue.

A very important area of medical science is clinical trials. I find webinars on this subject very enlightening. My thanks to Anne Madden for alerting me to a recent SCHARR Master Class webinar “Making Clinical Trials More Inclusive”. She did this through the HSLG e -mail list.

# The HSLG and EAHIL e – mail lists are good sources of information on webinars. The EAHIL mail list was my source for recent webinars such as the SCHARR online course: Rapid Review Methods organised by Andrew Booth and the Research4Life Publishing and Research Communication Webinars Series, The HSLG e – mail list was my source for Evidence Synthesis Ireland webinars.

Learning and continuing professional development can also be carried out by online or in person workshops in which participants get interactive training in the use of medical information resources. Workshops like CEC sessions in EAHIL conferences spring to the eye.

# On another level, YouTube tutorials are also useful for continuing professional development. Examples are *How PubMed Works* series, *The New PubMed - Online Tutorial* and *A New PubMed: Highlights for Information Professionals, PubMed,* and *PubMed Central – Ask the Experts.* Embase tutorials include *Searching Embase, Embase Literature Search Demo,* and *Embase Advanced Search.* *Searching the Cochrane Library - Updated January 2020, Cochrane Library - Using the Advanced Search, Cochrane SA Webinar Developing a search strategy for systematic reviews* are examples of Cochrane tutorials on YouTube.

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**Learning from the Experience of Other Libraries**

**Sharing COVID-19 experiences of health information and library professionals: an EAHIL interactive workshop**

The 2022 EAHIL Conference had “Libraries After COVID-19: a Learning Conversation” as the theme of one of its workshops

Covid – 19 has had a global impact on libraries. Some libraries closed. Others adapted to the new online environment and this workshop aimed to take stock of the challenges and responses of the EAHIL community to the pandemic. The aim was to get non – judgemental, supportive, interactive, and equitable participation, within a framework of design thinking and liberating structures. Topics included:

• Solving problems created by the pandemic.

• Opportunities created by the pandemic.

•Lessons learned during the pandemic to be used in future crises.

The findings of this workshop included:

• A crisis response team should be set up on a permanent basis.

• Keep hard copies of crucial information.

• Build relationships beyond the library.

• Communicating and sharing knowledge, including utilising our expertise in finding and making quality information accessible.

• Seek new opportunities:

• Adjust to working and teaching remotely and hybrid.

• Go to users where they are; accessibility and inclusivity (in spaces and online)

are critical.

• Experiment with and advocate for opportunities for innovative online services and resource digitization, keeping in mind the diversity of our users.

• Continuous adapting to (with technology, resources, and each other).

• Find out customer requirements and experiences with library resources.

•How can we improve our user experiences?

• Try to find wide ranging solutions to problems. We should subdivide big problems.

• Get customer views on your solutions to problems.

Source: Nicole Capdarest-Arest *Sharing COVID-19 experiences of health information and library professionals: an EAHIL interactive workshop* Journal of EAHIL 2022; Vol. 18 (4): 8-11

**Learning from the Experience of Other Libraries**

**Case Study 1: The Adaptation of the Tallinn Health Care College Library to the Pandemic**

# As the December 2022 issue of *JEAHIL* showed, the experience of Tallinn Health Care College Library during the pandemic gave rise to the librarians of the College having to break with old habits and discover new ways to practice librarianship.

# Waterproof keyboards and mice on computers were introduced which librarians cleaned with detergents after use. Communication by telephone and computer (perhaps by Zoom?) were introduced. Telephone and e – mail loans were also introduced.

# The Tallinn Health Care College Library introduced the Radio-frequency identification (RFID) system. This involved much extra work for staff, such as new security elements on books and journals. A self-borrowing machine allowing multiple loans per reader was also set up.

# For visitors to the library, the Tallinn Health Care College Library has six individual working rooms and two group work rooms which can be booked online.

Every year the librarians have given a lecture on how to use the library. This had to be adapted to e – learning during the pandemic. The e – learning topics consisted of information search, use of statistical databases, preparation and formatting of student projects including references based on the reference management software Mendeley.

` To achieve this end, the topics had to be planned, conducting lectures through Zoom and Moodle had to be mastered and teaching materials, instructions and exercises prepared for the students. Students who successfully completed the teaching modules were confirmed in the study information system Tahvel.

# Tallinn Health Care College Library have also set up an e – course on information retrieval for those who are interested, which can be taken for a fee. An e - articles section has been inserted on the library webpage. It is constantly updated with free articles and online resources. Tallinn Health Care College Library’s Facebook page includes recent literature and a library information and a search game.

A key area of an institution of professional higher education is conducting, writing, and publishing research. Two librarians are on the staff of ETIS, the Estonian research information system. Tallinn Health Care College Library posts data from their staff on the ETIS website. To make the College’s research better known, its librarians set up a discussion group “Using research in the study process: on the example of research conducted at Tallinn Health Care College”. The purpose of the discussion was to give an overview of the research carried out, the publications published on it and their use in the teaching process. Professors gave papers on various disciplines. Training in information systems for children and adults were also organised by the Tallinn Health Care College Library.

The pandemic provided challenges but also opportunities for librarians. It provided the incentives to learn new skills. Teaching and in-service training can be daunting but manageable undertakings. In 2020 a survey of Tallinn Health Care College Library showed a 72% customer satisfaction rating. The library won an Action of the Year Award 2021 from the Estonian Librarians Association.

# Source: Eve Pohlak, Ülle Kuuse, Angela Räis *The Pandemic Made Librarians Step Out of Frames* Journal of EAHIL 2022; Vol. 18 (4): p. 4-7

**Case Study 2: The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Library, Stockholm, Sweden**

In March 2020, COVID forced theSwedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Library to close its campus and adopt remote working and teaching. Online information resources and Zoom tutorials to publicise the library worked very well.

In Spring 2022, information literacy training for students was held in hybrid form to maximise student availability on and off campus. The reopening of the campus saw a decrease of library visits but an increase in website traffic. This was because of more online teaching and less on - campus teaching.

It is always difficult for librarians to meet students, but the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Library have adapted well to online communications with their customers since March 2020. The pandemic has created opportunities as well as challenges for off – campus communication. It has given a fresh impetus to access and connectivity to resources, designing for online education, and fostering the development of digital literacy.

Despite the successful digitisation of the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Library, some challenges remain. Online instructions are not always easy to create. Interactive learning environments should be carefully designed and planned. Due to the quick transition to online teaching, some aspects of online instruction were left out. Sense of community (due to a loss of in - person instruction) and student motivation suffered as a result. It is difficult to design physical space of a library online and some customers need this. Some customers, particularly first year students, are not fully aware of the range of library services as a result.

For many new students at the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Library, it is their first experience of an academic library and their first taste of online instruction. Due to hybrid learning, there is a greater demand for more flexible studying. This is in turn requires academic libraries to re-examine student needs of both in person and online interaction with libraries.

Academic libraries need to be aware of changes in educational practices after the pandemic and to test and use the knowledge gained during the pandemic. They must investigate the causes of reduced student use. They should integrate embedded librarianship into the student communities and understand students’ needs to better meet them in a timely way. This will help them design libraries using the best features of online and physical libraries.

Source: Malin Ekstrand and Monika Janvari *Reflections from a post-pandemic library*

Journal of EAHIL 2022; Vol. 18 (4): 12-14