
Health
Libraries Group



cilip

Chartered Institute of
Library and Information
Professionals

GUIDE TO WORKING IN HEALTH INFORMATION

Revised edition
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Introduction

Why choose health information?

Health information is required by a wide range of people in a variety of situations at any given time. The information provided may be about medical tests or treatments, clinical trials, conditions and diseases or how to access the information, but the list of possible topics is infinite. As a health information professional you may be working with health professionals such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, biomedical scientists amongst many others; patients, the general public, researchers or businesses etc. Thus health information helps health professionals provide quality care, provides evidence for researchers improving health care outcomes, helps patients to find out about their conditions and make informed choices and helps the public find answers to their questions.

Health information professionals provide an essential service to the communities they serve and it can be a very rewarding career as your input really makes a difference.

What job title might you have?

A health information professional may have any of a wide range of job titles such as:

Librarian or Assistant Librarian	Library Skills Trainer
Information Services Manager	Information Officer
Learning Resources Adviser	Outreach Librarian
Knowledge Manager	Academic Liaison Librarian
Electronic Resources Librarian	Web Editor

Whatever the job title, all the jobs will have the fact that they work with health information in common.

Where do health information professionals work?

Health information professionals can work anywhere that health information is needed and that includes:

National Health Service	Hospitals, primary health care, call centres
Academic institutions	Colleges, universities, Royal colleges
Research centres	Academic institutions, charities
Industry	Pharmaceutical, publishing,

	insurance, medical equipment
Charities	Provide information to a wide range of organisations and individuals including charity staff and members, research centres, government bodies and the general public
Public libraries	Reference libraries covering health information and promotion

What skills and experience might you gain?

There are a wide variety of jobs available in the health information field, so the skills and experience gained will vary widely according to the job you are applying for. As a general guide, the types of skills or experience gained from working in health information include:

- Experience of using online information sources, magazines, books, CDROMs to answer a wide range of enquiries that users may present.
- Skills for evidence-based practice, information seeking, online resource use, referencing, critical appraisal or using the Internet, to name a few.
- The ability to find the right information to answer questions.
- Being able to organise information in a logical and straight forward way so that users can access the information they need as quickly as possible.
- Web site creation skills.
- Team working skills by working as part of a team within an information service or with other professions to ensure the service meets the requirements of every interested party.
- The ability to manage a budget effectively.
- Marketing skills to promote your service.
- User education skills to give teaching sessions or to write manuals.
- Appraisal skills to monitor the performance of your service.
- The ability to manage strategically.
- Experience of providing outreach services to those working away from the main site.
- The ability to manage staff effectively.

What is the work like?

To find out more about the type of work undertaken by a health information professional take a look at these **case studies**:

Case study A - Working in a Primary Care Trust (PCT): Library and Knowledge Services Manager

Case study B - Working in a Primary Care Trust (PCT): Librarian

Case study C - Working in a Hospice: Librarian

Case study D - Working in a Further / Higher Education College: Learning Resources Adviser (part-time)

Case study E - Working in an NHS Trust: Assistant Librarian

How much will I get paid?

Health Information workers may be working in wide range of organisations so pay scales available to them may vary. In the early years of your professional career you can expect salaries to be generally comparable with that of school teachers, and later on your salary will very much depend on the path you choose. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) has produced a number of salary guides which will provide basic information about the wages you can expect in different sectors of the profession. The main guides of interest for health information professionals will be the ones concerned with health care, higher education, further education or special libraries. Follow the link below to access the guides: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/jobs-careers/careers-gateway/salaries/pages/default.aspx>

Training and Qualifications

What training and qualifications will I need?

To start on the path to becoming a health information professional you need to follow an information / library studies bachelors degree or postgraduate diploma or masters degree, accredited by CILIP.

A student with a bachelors degree in a non-library or information discipline needs to gain work experience in an information service, usually for one year, and then can follow a postgraduate course. The CILIP Graduate Training Opportunities (incorporating the SCONUL Trainee Scheme) offers graduate job opportunities in a wide range of settings for the one year pre-postgraduate diploma / masters work experience (see <http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/GraduateTrainingOpportunities>).

Graduates from a black or minority ethnic background may be eligible for a trainee post via the Encompass scheme. This provides a graduate trainee post and a place on a CILIP-accredited course. See <http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/encompass>

Please note that there are some instances when an employer will ask applicants to have a degree in a subject related to their organisation, as well as an information / library degree, for example you would need a science degree to work in the information departments of some pharmaceutical companies. Therefore, if you do have a particular sector in mind it is worth contacting potential employers before embarking on your degree.

However, there are many routes that you can take to become a health information professional, before following a degree course. For example: You can work as a library assistant and gain City & Guilds or S/NVQ qualifications which will provide entry onto an Information Studies degree (see [http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/QualificationsforLibrary Assistants](http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/QualificationsforLibraryAssistants)).

Many universities recognise the skills of mature students and have adopted widening participation policies that encourage applicants without traditional qualifications. It is also worth noting that some degree courses can be undertaken part-time or remotely with distance learning.

CILIP implemented a new framework of qualifications in 2005, which provides more routes to qualifications and will recognise members' experience and qualifications from within and outside of the library and information sector. There will be a greater emphasis placed on work-based learning. You can find out more at

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/FrameworkofQualifications>

CILIP Accredited Undergraduate & Postgraduate Courses

Please see <http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/Wheretostudy>

Undergraduate & Postgraduate Courses With A Specific Health Information Element

Some of the CILIP accredited courses listed in the above website may have a health information element, but it is not always obvious from the course / module titles. If you are interested in attending a particular institution it is always worth discussing with them if they do incorporate health information. The courses listed below were accredited with CILIP when this guide was last updated, but please check with institutions before applying.

Aberystwyth

The following courses offer the optional module Health Information Management:

Full-time (campus based) mode:

BScEcon Information & Library Studies Single Honours

BScEcon Information Management Major

BScEcon Information Management Single Honours

Diploma/MSc Econ Information & Library Studies

Diploma/MSc Econ Records & Information Management

Distance learning mode

BScEcon Information & Library Studies Single Honours

Diploma/MSc Econ Information & Library Studies

Diploma/MSc Econ Records & Information Management
Diploma/MSc Econ Management of Library & Information Services

All courses are subject to regular content review. Please contact the University to confirm the inclusion of health information modules.

Department of Information Studies
University of Wales
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3AS

Tel: 01970 622188 direct

Fax: 01970 622190

Email: dis-dept@aber.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.dis.aber.ac.uk/en/courses/courses.asp>

Brighton

PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Information Management (Health)

This course can be studied full-time or part-time and is delivered in a semi-distance learning format.

School of CMIS
University of Brighton
Lewes Road
Brighton BN2 4GJ

Tel: 01273 642455

Fax: 01273 642405

Web: <http://www.cmis.brighton.ac.uk>

Bristol

PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Information and Library Management offers the following optional module:

Health and Social Care Information Services

Graduate School
Bristol Institute of Technology
UWE Bristol
Frenchay Campus

Coldharbour Lane
Bristol BS16 1QY

Tel: 0117 32 84242

Fax: 0117 32 83670

Email: BITGraduateSchool@uwe.ac.uk

Web: <http://courses.uwe.ac.uk/GP5112/2009>

Liverpool

BA Business Management & Information offers the following optional module at level three:

Health Information Management

PG Dip/MA/MSc Information and Library Management. The following optional module is available:

Specialist Information Services (Business, health or law)

Liverpool Business School
Faculty of Business and Law
Liverpool John Moores University
John Foster Building
80-98 Mount Pleasant
Liverpool L3 5UZ

Tel: 0151 231 3815

Fax: 0151 707 0423

Web: <http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/BLW>

London – City of

The following courses offer the optional module Health Policy and Information Management:

MSc in Information Science

The following courses are **not accredited by CILIP**, but may be of interest:

MSc in Health Informatics

MSc in Healthcare Technologies

Health Informatics short courses

School of Informatics
City University
Northampton Square
London EC1V 0HB

Tel: 020 7040 0248
Fax: 020 7040 0233
Email: pgenquire@soi.city.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.soi.city.ac.uk>

London - Metropolitan

MA in Information Services Management contains the optional module:

Health Information

Department of Applied Social Sciences
London Metropolitan University
Ladbroke House
62-66 Highbury Grove
London N5 2AD

Tel: 020 7133 4202
Fax: 020 7133 2677
Email: admissions@londonmet.ac.uk or for further academic questions,
contact socialscience@londonmet.ac.uk
Web:
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/depts/dass/subjectareas/informationmanagement/>

Loughborough

BSc Information Management & Computing
BSc Information Management & Business Studies

Both include the following optional module:

Information and Knowledge Management in the NHS

Department of Information Science
Loughborough University
Loughborough LE11 3TU

Tel: 01509 22 3052

Fax: 01509 22 3053
Email: dis@lboro.ac.uk
Web: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/is/>

Sheffield

MSc Health Informatics

The following accredited courses also offer the optional module Healthcare Information:

BSc Information Management
MA Librarianship
MSc Information Management
MSc Information Systems

Department of Information Studies
University of Sheffield
Regent Court
211 Portobello Street
Sheffield
S1 4DP

Tel: 0114 222 2630
Fax: 0114 278 0300
Email: dis@sheffield.ac.uk
Web: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/is/>

Funding Opportunities:

Further information about funding opportunities for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses is available from the following sites:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/Financialassistanceforstudy>

Undergraduate courses -

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/index.htm>

Postgraduate -

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/ChoicesAfterYouGraduate/DG_10012463

Further Information

Organisations

There are a number of organisations that support those already working in health information but many can also offer advice and guidance to those thinking of becoming health information professionals.

UK

Health Libraries Group (HLG)

HLG, the compiler of this Guide, is the forum in the UK for all those working or interested in libraries and information services that provide health and community care information. HLG is a special interest group of the Chartered Institute of Library and Health Information Professionals (CILIP), but you do not need to be a member of CILIP to join.

For further information on the benefits of being a member of HLG and how to join please visit the HLG Website at:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/health/>

Health Libraries Group Wales

A network of individuals in Wales working in or professionally interested in health and social care information.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/health/sub/wales/default.htm>

Libraries for Nursing (Lfn)

A special interest group of HLG.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/lfn/default.htm>

Information for the Management of Healthcare (IFMH)

IFM Healthcare (IFMH) is a partnership organisation of the CILIP groups Libraries for Nursing and the Health Libraries Group.

<http://www.ifmh.org.uk>

PIPA (Pharmaceutical Information and Pharmacovigilance Association)

PIPA is the professional organisation for individuals in the pharmaceutical industry involved in the provision and management of information.

<http://www.pipaonline.org/>

ASLIB Biosciences Group

The Aslib Biosciences Group promotes the exchange of information in the fields of biology, agriculture, medicine and the environment.

<http://www.aslib.com/members/biosciences/index.htm>

CHILL (Consortium of Health Independent Information Libraries in London)

CHILL's goal is to provide the independent health libraries of the London area with opportunities to improve their services through mutual communication and co-operation.

<http://www.chill-london.org.uk>

SHINE (Scottish Health Information Network)

SHINE is committed to sharing services, sources and skills for health information across Scotland.

<http://www.shinelib.org.uk>

UKCHIP (UK Council for Health Informatics Professionals)

UKCHIP has been established to promote professionalism in Health Informatics and the certification of those who work in the profession.

<http://www.ukchip.org>

University Health and Medical Librarians Group

UHMLG is the representative group for university health and medical librarians in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

<http://www.uhmlg.ac.uk/>

International

CHLA (Canadian Health Libraries Association)

<http://www.chla-absc.ca/>

EAHIL (European Association for Health Information and Libraries)

<http://www.eahil.net/>

IFLA (Health and Biosciences Libraries Section)

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s28/index.htm>

MLA (Medical Library Association – USA)

<http://www.mlanet.org>

Publications

Directories of Health Libraries

The main guide to health libraries in the U.K. and the Republic of Ireland is the online directory HLISD (Health Library and Information Services Directory) which can be found at <http://www.hlisd.org/index.aspx>

Libraries and Information Services in the UK and ROI 2009-2010 36th edn Facet Publishing August 2009; 480pp; paperback; 978-1-85604-679-4; £49.95

Career Guides

Pantry, S. and Griffiths, P. Your essential guide to career success. Facet Publishing, 2003.
ISBN 1-85604-491-2

Guides to Health Information and Professional Skills

Booth, A. and Walton, G. (eds) Managing knowledge in health services. Library Association Publishing, 2000. ISBN 1856043215

This publication is out of print but is available online:

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/mkhs/index.htm>

Millares, M. (ed.) Applied drug information: strategies for information management. Applied Therapeutics Inc., 1999.
ISBN 0915486288

Snow, B. Drug information: a guide to current resources. Neal-Schuman Publishers Inc; 3rd ed. 2008.
ISBN 978-1555706166

Walton, G. and Booth, A. (eds) Exploiting knowledge in health services. Facet Publishing, 2004.
ISBN 1856044793

Welsh, S., Anagnostelis, B. and Cooke, A. Finding and using health and medical information on the internet. Aslib-IMI, 2001.
ISBN 0851423841

Newsletters / Journals

Health Information & Libraries Journal

Published on behalf of the Health Libraries Group of CILIP by Blackwell.

Print ISSN 1471-1834

Online ISSN 1471-1842

Information at: <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=1471-1834>

He@lth Information on the Internet

Royal Society of Medicine Press

ISSN 1460-4140

Information and selected free issues at: <http://hii.rsmjournals.com/>

Health Libraries Group Newsletter

ISSN 0266-853X

Available online for free at:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/health/Pages/newsletter.aspx>

Journal of the Medical Library Association

ISSN 0025-7338

Available online for free at:

<http://www.mlanet.org/publications/jmla/index.html>

Websites

British Library's health information pages

Includes details of health information websites and databases plus details of special interest groups and email discussion lists for health information professionals.

<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/index.html>

BUBL

Lists selected internet resources from a huge range of subject areas.

<http://www.bubl.ac.uk>

Subject pages of interest include:

BUBL: Health <http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/h/healthlinks.htm>

Health care: <http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/h/healthcare.htm>

Health charities: <http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/h/healthcharities.htm>

BUBL : Medical sciences, medicine

<http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/m/medicallinks.htm>

Medical libraries: <http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/m/medicallibraries.htm>

BUBL: Information Science. Includes links to career guides.

<http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/linkbrowse.cfm?menuid=19>

INTUTE

Quality assessed subject gateway to web sites containing information on health and the life sciences, including patient information. JISC funding was withdrawn in 2009 and the site is set to close in 2010. <http://www.intute.ac.uk/>

Jobs.ac.uk recruitment site

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/jobs/information-management>

Job Hunting: Finding work in information and libraries

Includes links to salary guides, job advertisements and job agencies.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/jobs-careers/pages/default.aspx>

Medical Library Association in the United States

Includes a career guide to becoming a medical librarian (inevitably with a US slant) and a host of other useful pages for health information professionals.

<http://www.mlanet.org/>

Netting the Evidence: A SCHARR introduction to EB practice on the Internet

A list of resources available via the Internet to support health professionals and students in their evidence based practice.

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/ir/netting>

NHS Evidence For Librarians section.
<http://www.library.nhs.uk/forlibrarians>

NHS Structure

The initial page describes the NHS in England, but links are provided to the NHS in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Pages/NHSEngland.aspx>

Jobs and Recruitment

CILIP – jobs section

Includes job advertisements and job hunting tips.

<http://www.lisjobnet.org.uk/>

Infomatch – CILIP's online agency: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/jobs-careers/jobs/infomatch/>

Email: infomatch@cilip.org.uk

Glen Recruitment: <http://www.glenrecruitment.co.uk/>

Email: info@glenrecruitment.co.uk

Guardian Newspaper – jobs section

<http://jobs.guardian.co.uk>

Information World Review

<http://www.iwr.co.uk>

Jobs for Information Professionals: <http://www.jobsforinfopros.com/>

Jobs in Information – Jinfo: <http://web.jinfo.com/jobs/search/index.php>

Sue Hill Recruitment: <http://www.suehill.co.uk/>

Email: jobs@suehill.com

TFPL Recruitment: <http://www.tfpl.com/recruitment/index.cfm>

Email: info@tfpl.com

Join HLG

For further information on the benefits of being a member of the Health Libraries Group (HLG) and for details of how to join please visit the HLG Website at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/hlg>

Your Feedback

This Guide is very much an ongoing and interactive project and HLG would very much welcome your feedback. Please send any comments, corrections, additions or improvements to Marishona at mortega@lincoln.ac.uk or Pat at englanpm@lsbu.ac.uk

If you have found the Guide useful do let us know.

CASE STUDY A

Working in a Primary Care Trust (PCT): Library and Knowledge Services Manager

Organisation:

Like elsewhere in the NHS, working in a Primary Care Trust can be challenging and is often in a state of change. This is driven by both internal and external forces. This changing environment means that you have to keep yourself aware of what is going on nationally as well as locally to keep up to date.

My library service is almost completely virtual. I have no physical library resource save for a couple of shelves of books and no paper journals. The PCT is geographically dispersed and this makes it difficult to choose just one location for a service point. This is why the service has been developed as a virtual one.

The users I serve are varied and range from GPs, to community midwives and nurses, occupational and other therapists and managers of all kinds. Being based at so many locations means that I rarely see library users. Most of my enquiries come by email or phone.

I am a solo librarian and as such provide all aspects of the service from training to literature searching, to the provision of inter library loans. Being able to manage these competing demands is crucial.

Main duties:

- Develop strategies and business plans for the future development of library services across the PCT.
- Identify and develop alternative means of providing library services to a dispersed user group.
- Work cooperatively with local health care libraries to provide a consortium approach towards the provision of library services.
- Provide appropriate information to ensure that the best evidence is used to support both clinical and management decision making.
- Provide training to assist staff in identifying information in support of both their professional and personal development.
- Develop a communications strategy that ensures that all staff members are aware of the range of services and resources available to them.

Lesley Allen

Library and Knowledge Services Manager

Heart of Birmingham Teaching Primary Care Trust

Lesley.allen@hobtpct.nhs.uk

CASE STUDY B

Working in a Primary Care Trust (PCT): Librarian

I work as a librarian for Lincolnshire Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT). This was a new post when I took it up in 1997, created in anticipation of a Health Service Guideline later that year which focused upon ensuring access to libraries for all NHS, including those based in the primary care sector as well as a hospital or medical school setting. The service now provides literature searching, enquiries, inter-library loans, current awareness bulletins and information skills training.

The PCT staff are dispersed across a large and mainly rural county and this factor has guided our development. Our focus is on enabling access to information - taking the information to the user electronically - rather than building up a physical resource which they would have to visit. We have invested in inter-library loan schemes rather keeping journal titles on our shelves, and one of our busiest services is undertaking literature searches on behalf of our users, sending the results out by email. We have little face to face contact with our users so communication is essential and we keep up a steady output of newsletters and current awareness bulletins to maintain awareness, targeting new staff with our promotional material, and attending meetings or workshops.

There are three and a half of us in our team, so the work is varied and hands-on, switching from a detailed literature search to standing by the photocopier. Working for the PCT has provided opportunities to develop services to support researchers, social care teams, public health campaigns and staff undertaking distance learning. We work closely with our fellow hospital librarians in Lincolnshire, meeting regularly to address cross-sector issues within NHS libraries and have established links with the public library service to develop consumer health information services. An aspect of my role which I have found particularly rewarding is the support from fellow Primary Care librarians across the country, who are always willing to share best practice and ideas. Variety is perhaps the essence of working for the NHS primary care sector, after twelve years in post there is always something new on the horizon.

Main Duties:

Strategically:

- Developing and delivering the overall strategy for the library and its services, incorporating the requirements of the National Service Framework for NHS Library Services
- Promoting the service through a rolling programme of publications, electronic communication, presentations and campaigns linked to PCT priorities.

- Maintaining links with local and regional NHS library services through meetings and Service Level Agreements.

Day to Day

- Undertaking literature searches on behalf of PCT and community staff.
- Delivering information skills training.
- Producing a range of regular current awareness bulletins

Alison Price

Librarian

Lincolnshire Knowledge & Resource Service

alison.price@lpct.nhs.uk

CASE STUDY C

Working in a Hospice: Librarian

Modern hospices have always had an emphasis on caring for people who have advanced cancer but this remit has gradually broadened to other illnesses such as heart failure and neurological illnesses. Hospice care is also now known as palliative care (1). The recent end of life strategy(2) recognises that the care of dying people takes places in a great variety of settings and hospices frequently now provide education for personnel who look after dying people as part of their overall responsibility e.g. in care homes.

The hospice movement is based on a philosophy of care. This involves good symptom control; attending to the psychosocial and spiritual needs of both the patient and the family: care that extends from pre-death into bereavement; relevant research (3). It also emphasises the importance of holistic care and multidisciplinary team working. Good communication is regarded as key to the provision of an effective service. Staff development and staff support is another tenet of the philosophy. Death education is an additional aspect of hospice work and is provided in a variety of ways in different hospices. All the above topics are represented in the library.

In the hospice where I work, there is an inpatient unit, a home care service and day care. I work in the education centre. The hospice was founded by Cicely Saunders in 1967. She is regarded as the founder of the modern hospice movement. Because it is the first of the modern hospices, the library contains both historical material as well as current material. The library is funded by the hospice which is a charity but does obtain some funding from the NHS.

Overall it is a rewarding experience because you work in a relatively small organisation where you can help people with information needs from all departments and at all levels within an organisation. (My organisation employs about 250 staff and this is large by hospice standards). Often you will also deal with enquiries from people (health professionals and the general public) external to the hospice. You also have the advantage of working in a specialist area and therefore of being able to gain in-depth knowledge of one area of health care. Library users are generally eager to learn and committed to their work and this really adds to work satisfaction. The downside of working in this workplace is that there is not a great deal of scope for developing management experience and for furthering one's career. As you generally work as a solo librarian, you have to deal with every aspect of library work; this is a mixed blessing!

This job has similarities to working in hospitals dealing with specific conditions or to working in a charity devoted to the care of people with particular illnesses.

The core responsibility of the librarian is to manage plan and develop the library service to meet the information needs of staff involved in clinical care, research and education. This involves selection of materials relevant to current activities in the hospice; maintaining a catalogue of this material as well as of all staff publications; administering the budget; providing individual and group training in information retrieval; providing an interlibrary loan and photocopy service within the terms of the Copyright Act; liaising with local NHS library networks to keep up to date with professional development; ensuring staff know about and have access to databases and e-journals provided in the national and regional collections of NHS organisations; promoting the library both inside and outside the organisation where appropriate; taking part in hospice meetings and committees where relevant; managing a group of volunteers.

There are other interesting aspects to the post. I write abstracts of relevant articles for a journal published by the hospice (4). I am on the editorial team that supports the NHS Evidence Supportive and Palliative Care specialist collection. I host a meeting for personnel involved in hospice libraries annually and I run a small bookshop that has a current income of c£7,500. Two of the most satisfying projects in this post have been a) the opportunity to design a new, larger space for the library b) providing support innovative university accredited courses on bereavement. All hospices have their own unique projects so a librarian has an opportunity to develop her/his work in line with these.

There are not many librarians employed in hospices. However, personnel working as outreach librarians in primary care trusts may have an opportunity to work with local hospices. Library staff in public libraries may be involved in some aspects of this work via the information prescription scheme (4). In addition NHS hospital librarians may work with palliative care teams that are established in many hospitals. If you are interested in bereavement issues, there are likely to be many social care and social work courses where, as a librarian, you would have an opportunity to develop information on this subject. So there are opportunities in this area of work beyond the hospice world!

Denise Brady

Librarian, St Christopher's Hospice

Sydenham, London SE26 6DZ.

Tel: 020 8768 4660

Email: d.brady@stchristophers.org.uk

References

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<http://www.helpthehospices.org.uk/about-hospice-care/?locale=en>.
Accessed 04/01/10
2. Dept Health. End of life care strategy. DH, 2008.
http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_086345.pdf (accessed 04/01/10)
3. Saunders C. The evolution of the hospices in R. Mann
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CASE STUDY D

Working in a Further / Higher Education College: Learning Resources Adviser (part-time)

Organisation:

I've found that working within a FE/HE college is a challenging and varied role where the primary aim is to support staff and students in their teaching and studying. In my college 80% of students are on further education courses and require a different level and kind of support from those on HE courses. In my college, there are 5 learning resources advisers who manage the library resources over 3 sites, for different subject areas.

I provide support and resources for students on courses in Health & Social care, Counselling, Pre-foundation and English as a Foreign Language. It is essential that we develop a good understanding of the course curricula so that we are providing access to relevant materials for each course area.

Main Duties:

- Managing stock in my subject areas e.g. ordering items; classification and cataloguing of new stock and editing stock to ensure currency of information.
- Liaising with teaching staff to ensure library stock reflects course content, checking reading lists for modules (and ordering items where necessary) and keeping staff / students up to date with new developments in the library and getting feedback on services by attending course committee meetings.
- Maintaining portal pages for subject resources with links to journals, training materials, databases, useful websites and resources for modules.
- Helping to provide a general enquiry service to students during all opening hours, where you could be asked about anything!
- Providing tours and inductions for new staff and students plus training sessions on searching the Internet, using databases and referencing skills.
- Producing help sheets for specialist resources in our subject areas and resource lists for the students on a particular module.
- Producing current awareness bulletins for staff and posters to market our services

Tracey White

Learning Resources Adviser – Health & Social Care
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CASE STUDY E

Working in an NHS Trust: Assistant Librarian

Organisation:

The NHS Trust I work for provides hospital and community services for 600,000 people, employing some 16,000 staff.

The aim of the Library is to provide a comprehensive information service to all employees of the Trust and medical, nursing and allied health students on placement from local universities.

The majority of the Library funding is provided by the Trust, the University of Glamorgan and the Postgraduate and Undergraduate Deans of Cardiff University

I work in a team of four – a senior librarian, assistant librarian (myself), library assistant and clerical assistant.

Main Duties:

- Assisting in the development of user education including the preparation of leaflets and guides, helping to produce online courses and instructing staff and students in the use of databases and other relevant websites to find up to date evidence.
- Showing different staff/student groups which online journals are available and how to access them
- Undertaking literature searches on online databases via HOWIS (Health of Wales Information Service).
- Maintaining the Library Webpage on the Trust Intranet.
- Dealing with telephone and personal enquiries as required.
- Developing an up to date stock of books, periodicals and DVDs to reflect the needs of each user group and providing an information service from that stock to answer enquiries.
- Providing an inter-library loan service, ensuring rapid delivery to staff of any book, article or DVD that they might need.
- Managing the budget that is provided by the University of Glamorgan as their contribution to Library funding.
- Setting up and running a current awareness service for staff.
- Undertaking training to update and acquire skills, including attendance at relevant study days and courses.
- Showing new staff and students around the Library as part of their Trust induction.
- Keeping up to date with developments in librarianship by reading appropriate articles

- Helping staff to find and go on courses as part of my duties as a Union Learning Rep. (ULR)

Philip Rawle

Assistant Librarian

Princess of Wales Hospital

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CASE STUDY F

Working in an NHS Trust: Library Services Manager

Organisation:

Working within the NHS gives a huge variety to your role as the libraries are generally small so everyone is expected to have a hands-on approach. The opportunities for trainee librarians are great because of the variety of tasks, getting involved in enquiry work and management of the staff team from day one.

NHS libraries usually have comparatively small budgets and so library resources can be limited. The service is very much a "special library" one with current awareness services and urgent action requests for patient care taking priority. There is a wider range of users than one would imagine at first. Porters and Nursing Auxiliaries may rely on the library for their first experience of computer use whereas Subject Specialists such as Nurse Consultants may need training on the use of evidence-based healthcare literature. Junior staff of all kinds: doctors, nurses, optometrists, radiographers etc. need support for their education and training.

Main Duties:

- Managing stock e.g. ordering items; classification and cataloguing of new stock and editing stock to ensure currency of information.
- Inter-library loan service to provide specialist materials not provided by the library itself.
- Liaising with Trust Management and the Regional Library Advisers to ensure the library service reflects the Nationally Agreed standards for NHS Libraries.
- Maintaining Intranet pages with links to journals; databases, useful websites and resources for a variety of healthcare professions.
- Helping to provide a general enquiry service to local NHS Staff via phone, fax and email.
- Providing tours and inductions for new staff and students on placement in the hospital or primary care setting.
- Providing training in literature search techniques across a variety of healthcare databases.
- We are also part of the South West Library Link providing information exchanges in our Regional area.

Dorothy Curtis

Library Services Manager
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CASE STUDY G

Working in an NHS Trust: Acting Head of Library Services and Knowledge Management

Organisation

The Library and Information Service provides a service to two mental health Trusts, two Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), the South East Coast Strategic Health Authority, South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the acute Trust (SaSH).

I have been working at Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (SaSH) for just under five years now, first as Deputy Head of Library Services, then in my current role as Acting Head which I have been in for two and a half years. I have overall strategic management of the library service and also still do a lot of operational work.

Main duties:

- Planning the future direction of the library by writing the overall library strategies and annual plans.
- Managing the library budget.
- Formulating policies and procedures.
- Securing additional funding to further develop the service.
- Ensuring all staff both professional and paraprofessional get equitable access to staff development.
- Working in collaboration with the other health libraries in the Kent, Surrey and Sussex area to secure access to jointly-purchased resources, share best practice, and ensure equitable access to services and resources.
- Attending meetings within SaSH such as Workforce Governance and the Trust Trainers Operational Group.
- Selecting book stock to ensure we are meeting the needs of our diverse user group.
- Rolling out a knowledge management strategy in the SaSH via close working with the Chief Knowledge Office.

I enjoy in depth literature searching, so I try to keep my searching skills up to date by participating in the staff literature searching club.

I enjoy my role because it is so diverse, no two days are the same and being at SaSH has enabled me to get involved in a number of interesting projects such as the partnership between the Sir Albert Cook Medical Library, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda and Kent Surrey and Sussex Health Libraries & Knowledge Services. I am the UK lead for this partnership, the partnership has enabled me to learn that health librarians in developing countries such as Uganda have exactly the same goals as health librarians in the UK but they just have greater obstacles to surmount such as regular

power cuts and lack of access to resources. Partnerships like this one enable projects such as the launch of the Albert Cook Library website to take place. The partnership has also enabled me to build on and learn new skills that I don't use in my day job such as web design and organising and giving training sessions. More information about the partnership can be found at the following website: <http://www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/lis/partnerships.asp>

Outside of my traditional library roles, I am a trained Trust investigator, investigating disciplinary and grievances. This role raises the profile of the library and highlights how librarianship skills can be used in a number of different areas.

The above is just a taster of what I do in my current job at SaSH. If you would like to have more information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Potenza Atiogbe

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CASE STUDY H

Clinical Librarian in an Acute Trust

Organisation

I am a Clinical Librarian at the University of Leicester, working in a joint NHS / HE library, but funded by the NHS. The Clinical Librarian role was particularly supported by the Sir Peter Hill Report in his review of NHS library services in 2008. ²

“One model encountered during this Review is that of “Clinical Librarian” as part of a clinical team... This role includes seeking the most up to date evidence for the clinical care of individuals and for systematically applied protocols or guidelines. Team discussions of clinical or related topics and “journal clubs” may also be supported. The clinical librarian can usefully act as a bridge or conduit to the local NHS library service, not least because most such people have a background or training in librarianship.”

I work in a large acute trust. I am part of the one of the UK's largest and longest established Clinical Librarian¹ teams, consisting of two Clinical Librarians dealing with clinical matters and one who supports our corporate teams, including audit, guidelines and infection control. We go on ward rounds and to clinical and management meetings in the trust, so that we can be where the questions are generated about patient care and hospital management. Then we do literature searches to help find the evidence for a way forward. It's a very rewarding job because you can make a very direct impact on patient care and trust management, and you get a lot of positive feedback from delighted customers. Because the role is still quite new nationally and internationally we have had the opportunity to travel internationally to discuss the service, which has also been fantastic.

Main duties

Going to meet the clinical and management teams in their working settings to get their requests for information and build relationships

Literature searching, writing digests of results of the search and providing a selection of the best articles in full text, in response to requests from the clinical teams. These may come from visits to the clinical setting or via email, internal post or phone.

Providing current awareness services to the clinical and corporate teams

Keeping records of your work

Promoting the Clinical Librarian service within the trust by meeting new staff, doing presentations at meetings or any other legal and legitimate means!

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