

## Creating a user-centric library evaluation tool

Jackie Edwards | Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Jackie.Edwards@health.nsw.gov.au

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4223-3606>

### Biography

I am Library Manager at Murrumbidgee Local Health District based at Wagga Base Hospital. I have extensive experience in both health and university libraries. My interests include user experience, digital resources, data and developing teaching resources for health care professionals.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The author certifies that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organisation or entity with any financial interest, or non-financial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge, or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

No funding was sought for this project.

### Abstract

Understanding the user's perspective is vital for effective health service delivery. How can we, as library professionals, give our users a voice? How can this voice be recorded and presented? Can we create an evaluation tool that reflects users' needs to key decision-makers in our organisations? MLHD Library embarked on a User Journeys project mid-2023. We observed and recorded the journeys, feelings and "thinking out loud" of participants. The main objective was to create a user-centric evaluation process that can be replicated. Additionally, we aimed to create a visual tool to demonstrate critical issues to our colleagues, directors, vendors, and IT staff.

Keywords: Hospital, Libraries, User experience

### Key messages

Reflecting changing user needs to key decision-makers in organisations.

Improving the hospital library experience from a user perspective.

Creating collaborative pathways for solutions.

### Background

Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) Library embarked on a User Journeys project in mid-2023. MLHD covers over 125, 000 sq-kms in southern NSW. MLHD has 33 public hospitals, 12 community health centres and employs over 3,800 staff. Statistics show a marked change in user behaviour. Fewer print books were being borrowed and fewer training sessions were being delivered. Several long-term

collaborations had come to an end and relocations had been finalised. The project sought to improve hospital library experience from a user perspective. We aimed to create a visual tool to demonstrate critical issues to our colleagues, directors, vendors, and IT staff. We observed and recorded the journeys, feelings and “thinking out loud” of participants. We hoped to add User Journeys to the toolbox of library evaluation such as surveys, statistics and testimonials. Additionally, we wanted to create a resource which is easily replicated. This paper describes our journey.

## **Methodology**

Four stages of User Journeys:

1. selecting participants and conducting the sessions
2. collating and presenting the data
3. analysing the User Journeys
4. recommending changes and improvements

## **The Journeys**

Each personally recruited participant had the same type of goal though varied to suit their experience. The participants were a Clinical Education and Training Unit staff member, a novice user, a Clinical Nurse Specialist, and an Allied Health staff member. All users were on-site and using an NSW (New South Wales) Health PC. We collected journey responses to the task, goal completion, satisfaction and verbal feedback.

## **The Tasks**

Join the hospital library  
Find a selected journal  
Find a book about communication skills in nursing  
Find an eBook about leadership  
Book a training session

### **Stage 1: Selecting participants and conducting the sessions**

The scope of the project involved both clinical and non-clinical healthcare staff across the district. Many staff were approached by email and through various channels to participate. However, in person contact was more successful in attracting participants. The Librarians’ role was to be a scribe and not aid searches in any way. We emphasised the session was not a test. A short session was preferable to all, with no more than thirty minutes allocated. All users needed prompting to speak aloud during the session. Sessions were not recorded.

### **Stage 2: Collating and presenting the data**

How to collate feelings and “thinking out loud” of our users at each point of their journey proved challenging. Creating a visual presentation of the journey step, pain

points, user expectations and frustrations took some time and many fails. PowerPoint proved to be the best way to visually capture the information and provide screenshots. This template below demonstrates issues to non-health library staff like IT, departmental directors, and vendors.

Creating a template for presenting the data involved:

- using colour to identify staff roles
- emoticons to visualise feelings of the participants
- screenshots identify problem areas
- arrows for satisfaction ratings
- space for notes

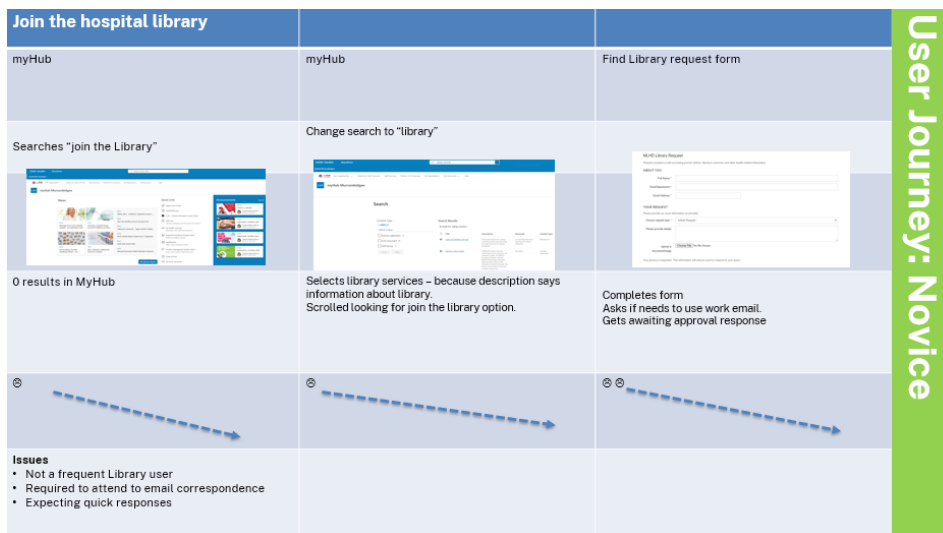


FIGURE 1: Example of PowerPoint slide recording a User Journey

### Stage 3: Analysing the journeys

The complexity of multiple access points for Library resources confused all users in the project. Many tasks were abandoned due to multiple layers of navigation, waiting for a response and a requirement to fill out forms. Recommendations were included in a final report, using scores to evaluate the success rates of the tasks.

### Find a book about communication in nursing

User success	Findings	Recommendations
2/4	Information regarding registering for a library account is missing in myHub	Enable MLHD staff to Self-Register for a Library account
	Staff didn't know they could join the library	Promote Library access to all staff
	Library membership currently requires 2 registrations	Provide clear instructions for Library registration to borrow print books

### Request a training session

User success	Findings	Recommendations
0/3	Users unwilling to fill out forms	Create online request forms
	Form uses library jargon	Reduce library jargon in forms
	Users abandoned task to request a training session	Provide clear outline of sessions offered in myHub
	Users expected training calendar to select training options	Provide training calendar and clear information

### Main navigation issues

- multiple access points for library resources are confusing
- information is text based and requires detailed reading
- users prefer communication with clear response times
- users prefer online forms

### Stage:4 Recommendations and improvements

It was encouraging that SharePoint is consistently the first starting point when logged on to a NSW PC. Many of the findings point to clear solutions which can be easily implemented at no cost. Changes were made by reducing confusion, distractions and simplifying instructions. Limiting the amount of text for users to read, using less library jargon, creating visuals, developing online forms are simple to address.

### Summary

This tool reflects changing user needs to key decision-makers, who are less immersed in the Library world and short on time. It clearly identifies staff roles, their feelings and frustrations. Specific applications are named, and screenshots added. Importantly this tool focuses on pathways for solutions. A formalised Quality Improvement approach will benefit future user experience evaluations.