

## Western Australia Health Libraries Update

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This paper is part of an ongoing commissioned series on health library updates from around Australasia. Please note information was correct at the time of writing, but some time has elapsed between then and the article being published.

For those of you located on the east side of our country, throw your glances about 3500 km to the west and you see the very friendly library staff in the WA Health Libraries waving hello. So, what has been happening over here in the west? We consulted with our colleagues and offer the following with humour and haiku.

### **MIMS to AusDI**

At the beginning 2024 the WA Health subscription to MIMS was cancelled and replaced by AusDI. This subscription provides access to this drug index for clinicians working across WA Health, including all public hospitals and country health services. It also feeds information into the State Drug Formulary. Whilst library staff working within WA Health were not directly consulted on this decision we were certainly referenced as the source of support for clinicians during and beyond the transition. With enthusiasm and energy, library staff swung into action preparing communications and guidance to assist staff to let go of their often very long relationship with MIMS and embrace the quirks and idiosyncrasies of AusDI.

### **A Review of Library Services**

In early 2023 the WA Health Chief Executives Committee (HEC) employed an external consultancy to undertake a review of WA Health Libraries and make recommendations for a sustainable model of service delivery into the future. The review made a clear recommendation to merge the WA Health Libraries into a combined library service. In June 2024 HEC agreed to a modified version of this recommendation. Whilst details have not yet been released, we understand that the model will offer opportunities for improved efficiencies in collection management, better purchasing power, and a better and more sustainable workforce structure. Watch this space.

### **A library on the move**

The KEMH Library started with a donation of medical journals and books in 1956, and the first qualified librarian was employed in 1977. The other part of the library service at KEMH, the Women and Newborn Health Library for patients, was established in

1993 in a demountable in the KEMH car park and was relocated in 1999 to its current position in the main corridor. For many years the 2 libraries were co-located until in 2013 the staff library was moved 'temporarily' to a demountable to make way for the MRI. Nearly 11 years later, the staff library has moved back into the special, heritage listed part of the hospital, directly above the front entry on the second floor. Patrons really love the new library space for its bright and airy feel and central location.

*New staff and setting,  
Change of layout, same order,  
Fresh view, rapt patrons.*

### **The welcoming of new team members**

In the past 12 months we have been very fortunate to have some great staff join our health libraries.

Em Zwart joined the team at the Women and Newborn Health Service Library in January as a library technician, having recently graduated from TAFE. Vanessa Murphy joined the Department of Health Library in December 2023, making the transition across from public libraries. Rugare Paradza, Catherine Monk and Clare Hew all joined the East and South Metropolitan Health Services Library in recent times as Client Services Librarians, and Sophie Moynihan joined the team as a librarian in Content & Access Services. Catherine moved across from the State Library of WA, Rugare from the Department of Justice and Clare moved from the Federal Court of Australia, as did Em! Sophie relinquished a role managing library systems in the public library sector to join the Health Library sector. As you can imagine, they came with a great wealth of skills and knowledge that will strengthen the quality of our library services.

Are our new staff enjoying their move to the health libraries sector? We asked them this question, and this is what they said:

*"I'm enjoying working in the fast-paced health industry and providing research information to the health policy and clinical guideline decision makers."*

*"A public hospital is an interesting workplace, literature searches sometimes intriguing, and it's great to play a role in connecting health professionals with information that helps them provide patient care."*

*"Joining Health Libraries has been an exciting adventure. With a background in Corporate and Legal environments, I'm thrilled at how my skills set are growing each day in my role."*

*"After the slightly daunting task of studying, I was fortunate to complete an industry placement at the library that has become my permanent posting. I'm really enjoying*

*finding my footing with a great team and two great libraries that bring rewarding challenges my way."*

*"I've worked in various libraries for over 15 years; mainly public but also academic, and state. Making the switch to health libraries has been a game-changer for me, with so many new and exciting things to learn!"*

And in Haiku:

*From law libraries*

*To the world of health research*

*No more tax law, yay!*

And with humour:

*"Why did the health librarian always carry a stethoscope?*

*Because they loved checking out heartwarming stories!"*

### **And not forgetting our academic health librarian colleagues**

Our health librarian colleagues in the academic sector report business as usual and although inundated with requests for research support from academics during the semester break still managed to create a reflection to share with you:

*In semester break,  
the health librarian toils,  
for the researcher.*

