

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - JULIA HOUSE -

<i>Name:</i>	Julia House
<i>HLA Member Since:</i>	2018
<i>First Professional Position:</i>	Library Cadet
<i>Current Position:</i>	Librarian and Research Governance Officer, Mt Isa Hospital, North West Hospital and Health Service, Queensland Health
<i>Education:</i>	Cert IV TESOL; Bachelor of Education (Primary); Masters of Information Studies.
<i>Favourite Website or Blog:</i>	While not technically a website, I enjoy ALIA Weekly and their PD Postings popping into my inbox. When I feel like a giggle, I also scroll through the Fake Library Stats Twitter page.

What do you find most interesting about your current position?

Talking with clinicians about their work challenges is fascinating given our remote location, patient populations and dispersed service provision. In these conversations there is always the question of 'how can the library help' which can lead to interesting literature search requests, book purchases or support with research proposals.

Currently, the Nurse Researcher and I are working on ways to support research beyond those only doing postgraduate study. Staff have difficulty finding time to do research as they are often wearing multiple 'hats' in our resource limited environment. At the moment, we're developing policies and support resources on research collaboration to support our clinicians to undertake research with the assistance of universities, having recently received \$50k from HIRO to fund translational research projects lead by staff in our district.

What has been your biggest professional challenge?

Ensuring continual engagement with library services is an ongoing challenge. Like most rural and remote areas, we have high staff turnover. Loads of locums, a rotating door of agency staff and most permanent clinicians only stay two years before moving on. The library champions who know and spruik our value come and go.

Therefore, it's never been more important to have the elevator speech ready, because you will bump into someone who did not even know we had a library service, despite the small size of our hospital campus.

How did you join Health Librarianship?

As one of the few librarian positions in Mount Isa, when the Librarian & RGO job was advertised it was serendipitous that I was moving to Mount Isa at the same time, so I felt it was meant to be.

I never thought I would be in the health librarianship space coming from education, but I'm so glad I've had the opportunity to experience it. Health librarians are truly unique, they need to understand a clinician's speciality (and all the language that comes with it) without being clinicians themselves. They have loads of knowledge about evidence-based practice, systematic reviews, health research tools ... the list goes on. Having this insight has made me appreciate the extent of a health librarian's dedication to their area of expertise.

What was your previous employment background?

After graduating to become a primary school teacher and dipping my toe in the casual teaching pool, I jumped ship to library studies after moving to Melbourne and volunteering in a small not-for-profit early childhood community library. I immediately knew that I had 'found my people' in libraries. I was lucky enough to work at the University of Melbourne engaged in their cadetship program before moving into some casual work and then coming to Mount Isa.

What would you do if you weren't a health librarian?

I would be working in another type of library – they are all fabulous. When I have been sitting in front a computer for too long though I long to be a horticulturalist working at a beautiful rose garden.

What do you consider the main issues affecting health librarianship today?

It seems like health librarians must really become embedded within their health service to avoid budget cuts or being cut altogether, which is difficult to do if there is a lack of culture that supports continued education and research.

I feel that I am lucky here that our library and my position is jointly supported between a University Department of Rural Health and a hospital. It's a mutually beneficial venture whereby we function as both an academic and health library, increasing our value to the health and university communities in the region.

What is your favourite non-work activity?

I enjoy the challenge of trying to have zero food waste by finding and making delicious recipes out of leftover food in our fridge. Last weekend I made some dried chilli flakes from some shrivelled birds eye chillies that had been lying dormant in our fridge door. Soon I plan to give pulled banana skins a go!

What advice would you give to a new member of Health Libraries Australia or a new graduate information professional?

As someone still relatively new to the profession myself, I would say don't be afraid to ask questions and reach out. Librarians are generous with their knowledge and usually very happy to support new information professionals as they develop their own skills. In my experience, some of the best tips and tricks I have picked up are by chatting with librarians, not by looking at a database help menu.

