

HLA Professional Development in 2022

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The highlight of the 2022 Health Libraries Australia professional development program was the return of our face-to-face conference. Held at Westmead Hospital over two days in November, the event saw approximately 100 participants gather to hear from guest speakers and health librarians around the theme of Transformations.

The health sector moves rapidly and libraries must embrace the challenge of continuously reinventing our services to meet ever-changing needs. Our conference theme, Transformations, provided an opportunity to learn more about the ways health libraries are transforming their service delivery models, their library spaces and utilising new technologies to respond to the needs of their clients and organisations. The conference also explored the transformation that is occurring in the scholarly publishing environment, greatly impacting the availability of information.

Day one of the conference opened with Professor Ginny Barbour, the Director of Open Access Australasia and Co-Lead of the Office of Scholarly Communication at QUT. Ginny gave the keynote address and set the tone for the conference by exploring the wave of transformation in scholarly communication and open access. James Humffrey delivered our second keynote address exploring the role of Librarians in knowledge engineering, supporting consumer health literacy and the work of Healthdirect Australia.

The remainder of day one was a chance to hear about the transformations taking place in health libraries via service delivery, space and technological initiatives. Cecily Gilbert and her colleagues from the University of Melbourne explored the role of health librarians in making digital health information accessible to all. The Great Debate was a popular inclusion in the program. Moderated by Daniel McDonald the topic of print vs electronic books gave our speakers from each side an opportunity to passionately and humorously argue their case, with the winning argument falling on the side of maintaining print book collections in health libraries.

The Conference is also an opportunity to acknowledge HLA's award winners. We were delighted to be able to confer awards in person this year. The Ann Harrison Award to Keren Moskell and colleagues from Monash Health Library, and the HLA/Medical Director Health Informatics Innovation Award to John Prentice from ANZCA Library. We look forward to sharing more information about these award winning projects as part of our 2023 professional development program. We were pleased to be supported by our Gold sponsors: Wolters Kluwer, Ebsco, Amboss, and Digital Science, who presented around initiatives being developed of relevance to health libraries. Delegates all enjoyed the opportunity to meet in-person with our Gold and Silver sponsors: Cambridge University Press, Taylor and Francis, Medical Director, Thiem, JR Medical Books, Ollexi Publishing, Springer-Nature, McGraw-Hill, and Oxford University Press.

The second day of the conference saw the opportunity for more hands-on style learning with workshops delivered on systematic reviews by Leila Mohammadi from Campbelltown Hospital Library. Alana McDonald from Sydney Children's Hospital Library helped delegates explore H5P for producing interactive content for online engagement. Slides from the presentations and workshops are available on the HLA website. <https://hla.alia.org.au/videos/>

The highlight of the Conference was the opportunity for those fortunate to be able to attend to meet in-person again. The value of the informal networking provided by these face-to-face events cannot be underestimated. Planning for our conference in 2023 is underway, keep your eye out for information about this event over the coming months.

In addition to the Conference, HLA remained committed to delivering professional development through a variety of webinars and workshops that took place throughout the year. These sessions were free to members or delivered at a low cost to non-members to ensure that as many people as possible had the opportunity to engage in PD activities. HLA had over 1200 participants in our online sessions in 2022 proving that this format for delivering professional development is still popular with those working in the sector. We are developing a calendar of diverse activities for 2023 based on your feedback and look forward to sharing these with you early in the New Year.

I'd like to thank all of the speakers who presented at our PD events this year. We value the support of our health library community and willingness to share initiatives so that we all have the benefit of learning from each other. I'd also like to thank the members of the Professional Development Portfolio Committee for their hard work. This small, committed group of volunteers worked hard to produce an engaging program of activities this year. Thanks to those of you who have supported HLA PD

events this year, we look forward to a great year of professional development in 2023.

Several attendees were asked to reflect on their experiences at the HLA conference...

Frances Guinness: For a regional librarian like me, the chance to attend a conference in the company of other real live librarians is a joy. Yes, we have a small team out here in western NSW, but we are remote from each other, so even social meetings such as birthdays are conducted virtually. And no, I don't particularly enjoy going to Sydney, but it's a small sacrifice to pay for the opportunity to spend nearly two days listening to and learning from colleagues, and contributing questions and thoughts on issues that affect us all. The recent Health Libraries Australia (HLA) conference at Westmead Hospital was just such an occasion, and not to be missed.

There are two main things that stand out for me from attending the HLA conference: learning and networking. No matter the subject, there will always be something of value to take away, even if it is the decision that no, that's not a service we have the resources to offer at present. For example, there have been discussions in other fora where library staff are (quite legitimately) concerned about conducting systematic reviews. After listening to Leila Mohammadi's presentation, "The design of a methodologically rigorous systematic review", I realised that even when our patrons come to us saying that they want help to do a systematic review, a bit of judicious questioning soon reveals that that's not what they need at all. The beauty of attending Leila's presentation is that I now have the detailed information to help my patrons better understand what's involved and to decide on the level of information retrieval they really need.

On a more positive note, Dr Ginny Barbour's keynote address on Riding the wave of transformation in scholarly communication and open access gave a thorough explanation of open access publishing, and that it involves far more than just "free articles". There is a great deal of infrastructure that surrounds the concept, and structural changes are required to ensure fair and regular access to scholarly information. I believe that this, along with data management skills, has become a major pathway forward for our profession.

Another presentation that really got me thinking about things to do in my library space was Alice Anderson's Evolving and re-imagining library space. Twice in recent times I've had to defend library space from being taken over by other health units because they thought that it wasn't being used. Alice's contention is that library space is essentially an education space, and there should be a plan for the space, including future changes. There are some things I can do to improve my library

spaces, while others I'd love to see are more structural and unlikely to happen. Either way, this presentation got me thinking.

Of all the presentations I attended, the most interesting to me was Gemma Siemensma's Measuring impact of a hospital library service. Gemma described the process by which a survey was undertaken to gather local data, and this project has recently been published in Journal of Hospital Librarianship. Essentially, I have done a slightly smaller version of her study with the same purpose – to evaluate and quantify impact – and am now analysing my results. It will be interesting to compare Gemma's results with mine. Listening to Gemma, it was nice to realise that I'm not the only paranoid librarian out there!

Now to the networking (some would say that this is more important than the presentations, while others dismiss it entirely, but I think they are of equal value). How nice to be able to put a face (and in these virtual days, a whole body!) to a name. Reacquainting "old" friends, meeting new librarians, and strengthening bonds was done at both formal and informal level. Of most value formally was the Koha (library management system) users group workshop, led by Gnana Segar and Rolf Schafer. As the Koha user community grows, it will be useful to create a more formal Australian users' group, which could help to take the pressure off Prosentient Systems, whom most, if not all, implementations use for the management of Koha. Informal networking happens, of course, at every refreshment break – chatting about the last presentation, general socialising, or buttonholing a speaker. We were well catered for by sponsors who were present at booths on the first day, and who also presented product to the conference.

Overall, the HLA conference was well worth the trip, even if I did forget my credit card and rely on the good auspices of my home-town colleague, mainly to get my car out of hock at the end of each day! Thank you for an on-topic, stimulating and thought-provoking experience, and lovely to see you all.

Glynis Jones: Attending the HLA Conference recently was both a pleasure and a privilege. Having 2 days out of the workplace allowed me to free my mind from the day to day details of my "day job" and to focus on learning new skills and gaining new knowledge. It was also a great opportunity to engage with a fabulous group of colleagues and make new connections. As a bonus it was also the catalyst to get me back into the world of airplane travel and crossing state borders after several years of COVID lockdowns.

So, what did I learn? So many things, but the highlights were as follows:

It was great to hear about the work that is being done globally by librarians to advocate for open access to scholarly research outputs, and locally through our own Open Access Australasia Group. Initiatives such as Plan S in Europe (<https://www.coalition-s.org/>) and the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science (<https://en.unesco.org/science-sustainable-future/open-science/recommendation>), along with the statement from the US White House in support of government funded research being openly available, are testament to the power of advocacy. I eagerly await the next announcement from Dr Cathy Foley, the Chief Scientist for Australia, on her recommendations for open access to research outputs in Australia. All of this gives me pause to wonder how the shift from "Pay to view" to "Pay to Publish" will impact on our researchers and on our subscription costs.

It was inspiring to hear about the many initiatives within and outside of libraries to support consumer digital health literacy, something that I perhaps take for granted as someone who is skilled in seeking and finding information. I was particularly intrigued to hear about the behind the scenes work at Health Direct Australia via the Australian Health Thesaurus to ensure content on the site is easily discoverable. I use websites so often without giving any thought to how they are constructed although I can certainly be critical when they don't work as I think they should. The work done on search engine maximisation to push Health Direct up the list of results in common search engines was a good reminder to me to be conscious of this when undertaking literature searches for clients on the web. Search engine maximisation for some sites can push relevant results further down a list of results.

The presentation on the Monash Health Library where staff spoke of the Library as providing a sense of sanctuary for clinicians and a clear role in supporting client well-being really resonated with me. With so many of our services rightly online it is nevertheless important not to lose sight of this "other" role that libraries have a place and space away from the busy clinical setting. Given that library spaces are often under threat this dovetailed nicely with the presentation on measuring the impact on a hospital library service which reminded us of the importance of evidence based advocacy for library services through the regular collection of data and feedback on all aspects of library services.

David Wong-See: It was a very interesting presentation by Ginny Barbour about open access and impressive to have someone like her agree to be at our conference. Also it was generous of her to stay after her address and participate and chat with the delegates. James Hummfray's presentation was also interesting and he also stayed to participate and chat.

Other observations

- * It was a balanced mix of presentations from the various parts of Australia, not only the various states, but also a mix from regional areas plus capital cities.
- * It was affirming to hear that other libraries are also moving more and more to digital – with less emphasis on the print collection.
- * The systematic review workshop by Leila Mohammadi helped me to realise how much I do not know about systematic reviews. And also how important the planning is at the very beginning to help with rest of the tasks.
- * I realised that the lecture rooms had a monitor at the lectern – which meant the presenter could extend the display to use 2 screens. The display on the laptop can used in the background to prepare , logon, move etc. And then the PowerPoint could be dragged across when it was time to present – which is much more professional than the whole audience watching all the preparation.

Jennifer Nielsen: First and foremost, it was great to meet in person. Zoom has its place, but ...

The theme was Transformation, and the breadth of presentations was super. My take home favourites were Ginny Barbour's keynote presentation on scholarly communication and open access (OA), Alice Anderson's reimagining library spaces, Monash Health's overview of their state-wide library services, and who could go past the very memorable Great Debate!

Having worked for 6 years in a NSW hospital and health service, it was great seeing so many familiar faces; the various 'minglings' before, during and after the sessions was like a homecoming. Oh my, the food was plentiful and yummy. The other pleasant meeting was with the various vendors, some of whom we already work with and were able to put a face to the name, some we know (face and name) and some totally new (to me).

Ginny's presentation gave international background to the concept of OA (with a Creative Commons licence), connecting the UNESCO recommendations on Open Science, the Open Climate campaign, and policies in Australia and New Zealand. Open Access Australasia has run OA 101 courses for its members, and given the queries from those present, she offered to go back and see if something similar could be done for librarians.

Alice's presentation on library spaces put some 'absolutely' as well as some non-intuitive (for me) ideas on the redesign table. The library should be the heart of the hospital. Growth in digital services is a good reason for redesign and use the book bays as sound buffers around study nooks. Talk about it; design it; apply for it. Keeping this presentation in mind, it was interesting seeing Westmead Hospital

library's redesign. My memories of Westmead library was 20 years old, so I enjoyed seeing its light and bright make-over.

Monash Health has some similarities to Queensland Health so I was keen to hear their presentation. There are 5 campuses, and no print journals. The directories of OA ejournals and ebooks are included in their catalogues, which helps bulk up their collection. They are not afraid of borrowing ideas from public libraries, e.g. they use stickers on spines of physical books to indicate they are also available as ebooks. (Westmead has shelves specifically for 'popular' titles.)

The Great Debate was competitive and fun. The topic print vs ebooks, and the audience got to vote for their choice of winning teams. And the winner ... Print can coexist with ebooks!

Oh, did I mention the food ... ?