Special libraries and COVID-19 - Lessons learned and future directions

Health Libraries Perspectives

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Overview of Presentation

- Highlights of the HLA Survey results – Australasian Health Libraries responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

- HLA Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Redeployment: my journey from the Library to the Emergency Department

- Insights into Library responses from the international literature

AUSTRALASIAN HEALTH LIBRARIES RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:
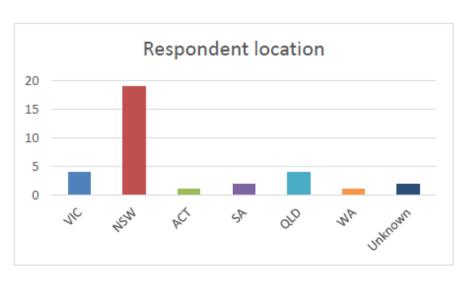## HLA Survey Results

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Introduction

In May 2020, the Australasian health library community was invited to participate in a short survey to gather information on the ways that libraries have responded to COVID-19. The following is a summary of those responses. If you haven't participated yet, but would like to, please contact the JoHILA editor at hlanewsed@alia.org.au The survey had received 33 responses at the time of writing: 16 in May through our first weblink invitation and 17 in early June after the second invitation, with collection dates ranging from 8th May to 3rd June. At this time, COVID-19 restrictions (social distancing) had been in place for approximately 6 to 10 weeks so libraries had some opportunity to make changes, adapt and make early reflections (Ting & Palmer, 2020).
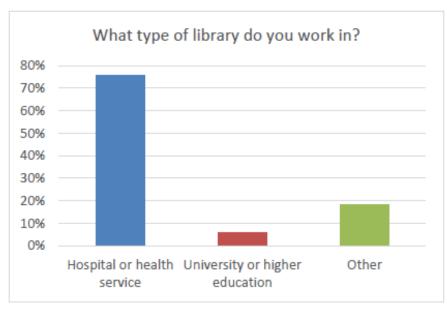
Demographics

Respondent location

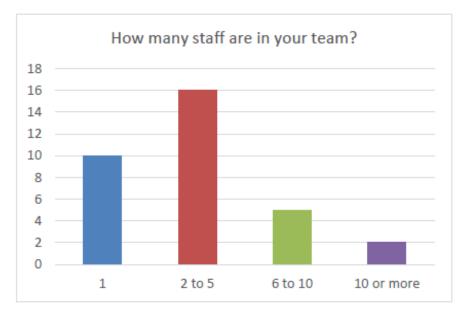**33 respondents to the survey**

- Majority were from NSW
- 75% were from hospital or health service libraries
- 33% were solo librarians and 50% with 2-5 staff in their team

What type of library do you work in?

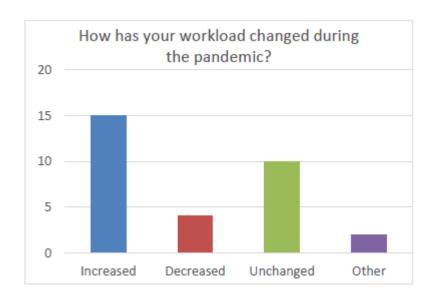How many staff are in your team?

Redeployment

- Four or 12% of respondents

- Creating e-learning modules

- Driving patients

- Different departments for COVID specific work – Medical Records, Emergency

- Contact tracing

Workload levels during COVID

How has your workload changed during the pandemic?

- 50% of respondents indicated an increase in workload

- Increase in literature search requests

- Increase in working from home

- Increase in interlibrary loans/document delivery

- Increase in support for technology

Operational Challenges

- Working from home

- Rescheduled training (or moving it online)

- Establishing new processes for online meetings

- Managing individual staff needs for altered tasks for working offsite

- Temporary restructuring of jobs and teams to facilitate working from home, changes to work hours and responsibilities

Tools, techniques or strategies to support staff working online or offsite

- Use of online tools such as MS Teams, Skype, Slack, Zoom, VPN access, laptops, monitors and keyboards for home, Pexip, Padlet, email and phone calls

- Flexibility in work arrangements: alternating teams to provide onsite coverage

- Social and/or physical distancing policies at work

- Some libraries chose to close their doors to clients to manage infection control while others increased the use of disinfecting procedures at work while remaining open

Changes to Library services and modifications as a result of COVID-19

- Print circulation and ILL

- Training delivery

- Collection development

- Literature searching

- Physical spaces

- COVID specific alerting services

- Budgets

HLA Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Issued a Statement of Support to Health Libraries and Health Library Workers

- Curated content and resources regarding COVID-19

- Hosted an online PD Event 'Now, Next, Beyond COVID-19 – Health Librarians' Experiences' in July 2020

- Surveyed health librarians' experiences and published a COVID-19 feature edition of JoHILA

- Funded a special research project: What Place has the Library Space? Lessons & reflections from COVID-19

- Collaborated internationally to produce a suite of COVID-19 literature searches

COVID-19 Live Literature Searches

TOPICS 35+ PUBMED SEARCHES

GENERAL	PREVENTION	DIAGNOSIS	MANAGEMENT	HEALTH SERVICES	OTHER
COVID-19	Personal and protective equipment (PPE)	Screening	Therapeutics	Surge planning	Immunity
LitCOVID	Infection prevention	Diagnostic testing	Populations	Education and training	Rehabilitation
COVID-19 Evidence Search	Containment	Diagnostic imaging	Complications	Staff wellbeing	Telehealth
	Forecasting		By speciality		

This page provides automatic PubMed searches on a range of COVID-19 topics. MLA also has searches available.

- If you are a librarian and would like to contribute a search, please contact us. Noticed a search error or improvement? Use the library link under the search to contact the library involved directly.
- If you are a clinician and would like to suggest a search, please contact your health service library. If you don't have a health service library (or it is closed/understaffed), please contact us.

PubMed may not have the very latest publications available as it takes some time to index content. Consider also the preprint servers (Caution - not yet peer reviewed) MedRxiv, bioRxiv and SSRN. Google Scholar can also be useful for very recent publications.

Redeployment: my journey from the Library to the Emergency Department

- Expressions of Interest for non-clinical staff to be redeployed

- Emergency Department redeployment to set up a PPE Safety Program and conduct compliance audits

- PPE Literature Search

- Completed in-service in donning and doffing PPE, use of the N95 mask

Redeployment: my journey from the Library to the Emergency Department

Auditing and Feedback of PPE Use

CDC

HRET
HEALTH RESEARCH &
EDUCATIONAL TRUST
In Partnership with AHA

STRIVE
States Targeting Reduction
in Infections via Engagement

- This is one of the key resources that I found that actually helped me in setting up the PPE audit

- Reconfigured the space in ED: to have separate areas for donning and doffing increase in working from home

- Ensure that there is one way in and one way out in terms of patient flow so to minimise the spread of the infection and contamination

- Developed a checklist for the audit: checked over by the Clinical Nurse Educator and the Infection Control Clinical Nurse Consultant before we went with it

Direct Observation Checklist

Donning Issues	Y	No	comments
Performed Hand Hygiene			
Tied gown and fastened at the neck and waist			
Selected appropriate mask or respirator			
Applied mask appropriately			
Selected Eye Protection if appropriate			
Applied gloves to cover cuffs			
Doffing Issues			
Used proper glove in glove technique for removal			
Performed hand hygiene			
Removed face shield or googles without touching face			
Removed gown using appropriate rolling technique			
Took care not to have inside of gown touch clothing			
Performed hand hygiene			
Observation			
Took care not to touch unprotected areas of the body or clothing			
Did not adjust mask or clothing			

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What does the audit process involve?

Starts with competency based training

Demonstration of selection of appropriate PPE

Ability to locate PPE

Demonstration of correct donning and doffing

Trainee demonstration of correct donning and doffing

Regular audits for adherence

Competency - Based Training

Audit

Feedback

Insights into Library responses from the international literature

Repurposing resources

Using 3D printers in academic libraries to manufacture of PPE. Typical items included ear savers, clear plastic face shields, and face shield head bands.

Provision of information resources

- Access to critical consumer health information resources about the virus

- Library home pages incorporating quick links to general consumer health information resources, scientific organisations, federal and state health agencies

- Developing LibGuides with more expansive lists of reliable information resources

- Prepopulated searches to help researchers efficiently identify studies in subject areas of broad interest and need. For example, ALIA HLA produced a suite of COVID-19 literature searches for use in PubMed

Provision of information resources

- Use of preprint servers such as MedRxiv, bioRxiv, ResearchSquare and Preprints.org. Google Scholar can also be useful for very recent publications on COVID-19

- Many major publishers are providing free access to articles on COVID-19 or making their content freely available for a fixed period of time

- Increased requests for literatures searches, systematic review or research synthesis services

- Increased access to and use of library online resources by students, faculty, and researchers

Challenges posed by the pandemic

Impact on library spaces

- Library closed with remote services operating

- Library repurposed for use by clinical teams or for operational needs e.g. COVID Hotline call centre

- Reduced opening hours as staff are working remotely and/or in rotating teams when on site

- Provision of hand sanitiser and alcohol wipes to clean keyboards, mouses and print devices

Challenges posed by the pandemic

Impact on library spaces

- Provision of social distancing measures to limit space capacity in rooms and at computer terminals/study desks

- Provision of screens on reception/circulation desks

- Reduced ability to obtain books and other materials on interlibrary loan as many libraries were closed or chose not to lend because of potential contamination from coronavirus

Remote Service Delivery

- Working from home – challenges of accessing facility based IT systems; Internet connectivity

- Supporting staff and students remotely

- In-person sessions were quickly turned into an online format and delivered via Zoom or Microsoft Teams

Increased use of online tools and technologies

- Email

- Google Hangout

- Messaging (SMS)

- Microsoft Teams

- Slack

- WebEx

- WeChat

- Zoom

Support from Library Associations

- Providing information and webinars to their members

- Dedicated COVID-19 pages on the provision of library services during the pandemic

- Reopening strategies

- Sanitising of library materials and devices

- Promotional material

- Listing of related professional development activities

Closing Remarks

- The global coronavirus pandemic has caused librarians to rethink how they delivery library services and support their respective clients

- With many libraries closed, librarians were required to work remotely and embrace online tools to connect with colleagues and clients

- For health librarians, managing the volume of COVID-19 information is a significant challenge

Closing Remarks

- Librarians are resourceful in creating, LibGuides, prepopulated searches, links to specific COVID related resources

- Be flexible and adaptable - be prepared for a whole new way of working

- For those with the opportunity for redeployment - don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone – you may surprise yourself how well you handle the new role and the various challenges that come along your way

Closing Remarks

"The information needs of health providers, consumers, and patients are continually evolving in response to the spread of the pandemic, so librarians must be able to identify the roles for which their essential skill-sets are needed and be ready to provide the vital resources that their communities need."

Morgan-Daniel, J., et al. (2020). "COVID-19 Patient Education and Consumer Health Information Resources and Services." Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet 24(3): 302-313.

Thank you, any questions?

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