



## ***GLOBAL CONNECTIONS***

# **Newsletter of the IFLA Section of Health and Biosciences Libraries**

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### **August in Scotland**

Three national libraries are among the many that will welcome visitors to the 68<sup>th</sup> IFLA General Conference and Council in Glasgow, August 18-24, 2002. The British Library, the National Library of Scotland, and the National Library of Wales extend invitations to visitors to include tours of the libraries when planning activities while at IFLA. Glasgow is a beautiful city, the largest in Scotland. It is renowned for its style of architecture, parks and gardens, as well as for shopping.

The conference has an extensive list of programs and events set around the theme: Libraries for Life: Democracy, Diversity, Delivery. The opening reception will be held at the Glasgow Science Park by invitation of the Lord Provost of Glasgow and the closing events are scheduled in Edinburgh following the library tours. Many cultural and educational treats await attendees in Glasgow.

It is most fitting that IFLA comes to Scotland this year for IFLA was founded in that country in 1927 and this year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the international library organization.

## **Section of Health and Biosciences Libraries**

The Section program, *Expanding the Scope of the Virtual Health Library*, features three speakers on the revolution in publishing, the impact of informatics, and human genome information. It is scheduled for 13:30 – 16:00 Tuesday, August 20 and is co-sponsored by EAHIL. The speakers bring a variety of points of view to these current topics.

Jan Velterop will speak on *Turning Publishing On Its Head*.

Now publisher of the BioMed Central Group, he has long experience in the scientific publishing world. Throughout the 1990s he was the Managing Director of Academic Press Limited where he was responsible for the innovative IDEAL project. He has also held positions at Macmillan Publishers and at the Dutch Media Group, Wegener.

Prudence W. Dalrymple will speak on *The Impact of Medical Informatics on Librarianship*.

She is Dean and Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Dominican University. She has served as president of the Association for Library and Information Science Education and on the National Library of Medicine's Biomedical Library Review Committee. In addition, she is a distinguished member of the Academy of Health Information Professionals of the Medical Library Association.

Miriam Pollack will speak on *Democratizing Human Genome Project Information: A Model Program for Education, Information and Debate in Public Libraries*.

Now the Assistant Director of the North Suburban Library System, she has worked in library organizations for more than twenty years. Her primary areas of responsibility include continuing education and training.

Arne Jakobsson serves as Chair of the Program Committee and issues an invitation to all to attend this stimulating and thought-provoking program.

## **Section Business Meeting**

The business meeting for the Section of Health and Biosciences Libraries will be held from 14:30 – 17:20 on Saturday, August 17. Section Secretary Rick Forsman, who will be chairing the meeting on behalf of Section Chair Ysabel Bertolucci who is unable to attend, states that while only Standing Committee members may cast official votes, guests are always welcome to attend and participate in the discussions.

The agenda for the business session includes:

- Call to order and welcome
- Self introductions of all present
- Review and approval of minutes from the Boston meeting
- Report from Division II Coordinating Board meeting of 16 August
- Review of the Section's Strategic Plan for 2001-2003, noting accomplishments to date

- Identification of tasks and assignments for the coming year
- Continued discussion of program ideas for Berlin and subsequent meetings
- Ideas for new programs or projects
- Decision regarding need to hold a second business meeting on 23 August
- Other new business
- Adjournment.

Again, all librarians from health and other science libraries are welcome to attend the Business Meeting.

### **Assessing User Satisfaction**

From Rick Forsman, Director of the Denison Memorial Library, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and Section Secretary/Information Coordinator, comes this report of a user satisfaction survey supported by the National Library of Medicine.

Thirty-five academic health sciences libraries in the United States participated in the administration of a Web-based user satisfaction survey in the spring of 2002. The LibQUAL+ survey was developed by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and Texas A& M University and has been refined through repeated testing of survey questions over time. The 2002 administration included 128 other U.S. libraries as well, all from general academic settings, and attracted input from more than 78,000 respondents.

The LibQUAL+ project has four main goals: 1) development of web-based tools for assessing library service quality; 2) development of mechanisms and protocols for evaluating libraries; 3) identification of best practices in providing library service; and 4) establishment of a library service quality assessment program at ARL. ARL has received significant grant funding to develop the survey instrument, and the latest funding sources encouraged the Association to test the applicability of the survey in different types of libraries. Consequently, ARL and the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) crafted an agreement for 35 AAHSL libraries to take part in the 2002 survey.

Participation of AAHSL libraries was generously funded in part by the National Library of Medicine. AAHSL and the participating libraries were responsible for other costs. This cost sharing arrangement made it possible for numerous libraries to be involved in the survey despite financial constraints facing many of the libraries.

In June each library received a summary report of the survey responses of those users who responded to the request for input as well as a summary of the total responses for all 35 AAHSL libraries. This allows a library to review its own data and compare the results to the larger group. Via the survey, users were asked to identify the minimal acceptable level of service they expect, then state the degree to which the library met this threshold. In all, 30 questions were used to ask input on four broad dimensions: the appeal of the

physical library space, ease of access to information, affect or service orientation of the staff, and the extent to which users could be self sufficient.

For the AAHSL group as a whole, nearly 14,000 user responses were received. Users were broadly distributed across age groups and user categories, with greatest input from individuals located in a school of medicine. In almost all cases the libraries as a whole were perceived to be more than meeting the minimum service expectations of users, yet there was room for improvement.

Overall level of satisfaction with quality of service averaged 7.35 out of a possible nine points. Faculty members were the most critical users, faulting libraries for not having complete runs of journals and for not providing comprehensive access to electronic resources. They also expressed frustration with the telecommunication and other barriers that impede remote access to digital information products licensed by the library.

Staff from the 35 AAHSL libraries will take part in a full-day workshop this fall to aid them in interpretation of the data from the survey. Subsequently AAHSL will decide whether to participate in another administration of the survey to be held in the spring of 2003. The Association will also explore whether there are connections between the survey results and annual statistical data that are collected separately from the entire AAHSL membership of approximately 125 libraries. For example, it would be interesting to establish whether or not there is a direct correlation between the number of journal titles and user satisfaction with the collection.

This is a brief and preliminary report on the pilot project. As the AAHSL libraries study the data and draw conclusions, more information will be shared with colleagues in the United States and around the world.

Editor's Note: We look forward to more on this survey and what the results mean to libraries.

All readers are invited to submit reports of interest to the Newsletter. We would welcome reports from sessions that provided new or exciting information during the IFLA meeting.

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