Regional Medical Library Travels the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast

Headquartered at the Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL) since 1985, the National Network of Libraries of Medicine’s Southeastern/Atlantic Regional Medical Library creates partnerships across the entire southeastern United States. The HS/HSL’s five-year, $12 million competitive contract with the National Library of Medicine (NLM) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) employs 10 staff members who go into the field to promote the NLM’s mission of providing health information to professionals and the public. The NLM administers this mission through eight Regional Medical Libraries (RMLs) across the U.S. The staff of the HS/HSL, RML under the leadership of Executive Director Janice Kelly, travel extensively throughout the region supporting and promoting NLM products and services through consultations, classes, exhibits at association meetings, referral networks, and competitive awards. “We work with large and small groups, doctors in rural referral networks, and competitive awards. “We operate in a vacuum, and it is clear that our future lies in our interconnect- edness with our users and in the strength of our partnerships. We are neither defined by our space nor confined to our building. We seek partnerships in teaching and learning, discovery, clinical decision-making, and community outreach. This, our first annual report, contains stories about our partnerships—on campus, in the community, throughout the state, and across the region and the United States. We hope you enjoy and learn from them. And if you have any ideas about strengthening or expanding our partnerships, let us know. We’re interested in hearing from you. M.J. Toosey, MLS, AHIP Executive Director mjtoosey@hshsl.umaryland.edu
Creative Thinking Leads to Model Partnerships

Partnering with the University’s schools, the Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL) has made resources available that benefit the entire campus community.

The HS/HSL licenses RefWorks, a Web-based personal citation manager that allows researchers to create databases and share them with others. The cost of the resource is shared among the University’s schools and the library. “It’s been a huge success,” says Alexia Mayo, MLS, AHIP, associate director for services at the HS/HSL. “Our faculty, staff, and students benefit from this unique collaboration.”

In another joint project, the library has worked with the School of Pharmacy to extend access to a drug information database, Lexi-Comp Online, for all University faculty, students, and staff.

The library has also worked with schools to test the usefulness of several online resources—such as Primac Images, an interactive anatomy tool—through pilot programs, says Mayo. “We are funded by a variety of Federal Projects for one year to test its use, with the understanding that schools would pay a portion of the cost if the subscription was continued.

“Only through creative partnerships would these resources be free for our campus,” Mayo says. “The library is proud both of our role as leader and in the wonderful services we’ve received from the campus community.”

Web Site Navigates Through Sea of Health Care Services

Researchers Tap Library’s Historical Collections

Researchers throughout the campus and beyond rely on the vast historical and archival collections of the Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL) as valuable resources. The University’s bicentennial year of 2006 afforded an excellent opportunity for agencies on campus to contact us for historical information,” says Richard Behles, MLS, historical librarian, preservation office. “Similarly, we receive requests from external scholars in search of information relevant to us and our history.

In 2006 and 2007 the library worked with Philip Mackiewicz, MD, on his book Post Mortem—Solving History’s Great Medical Mysteries. Three recent books on the University’s History were written with the help of the HS/HSL: University of Maryland School of Medicine—The First Two Centuries, by Larry Pittot; Baltimore’s Own: The World’s First Dental School, by John H. Hyson Jr.; DDS, MS, MA; and The History of Dermatology at the University of Maryland by Ronald Goldner, MD, FACP.

“During the depth of the library’s collection was invaluable in conducting research for the School of Medicine’s bicentennial book,” says Pittot, executive director of the School’s Medical Alumni Association.

Research Partnerships Expand Role of Library

When the School of Medicine determined that it would be a good idea to have nonscientists on the institutional review boards (IRBs) that monitor the welfare of medical research subjects, it recruited librarians at the Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL).

Nonscientists focus on the informed consent document and assess whether it conveys the appropriate information in a manner that would be understood by a potential participant,” says Susan Bukinski, MS, RN, RN, executive director of the University’s Human Research Protections Office (HRPO).

To be sure, librarians Jamie Friel Blanck, MLS, AHIP, liaison to the School of Medicine, Torrey Lyons, MLS, head of reference and research services, Paula Raimondo, MLS, AHIP, head of outreach services, and Stefanie Warlick, MLS, liaison to the School of Nursing, are dedicated to making the language of consent forms understandable to research subjects.

“I am lauding the program. “I thank you on behalf of the Baltimore City Health Commissioner of the Baltimore City Health Department, Paula Raimondo, and Tierney Lyons.”

Debra Benjamint, MLS, liaison to the School of Medicine, partners with the Schools Office of Policy and Planning to look at health care disparities and cancer survivorship. HS/HSL librarians also provide research training and education to, among others, the HRPO, the School of Social Work’s Social Work Community Outreach Service, and—through Miriam Blitzer, PhD, and her colleagues at the media school—the School of Human Genetics—the Genetic Alliance, a national coalition of advocacy groups for people with genetic conditions.

Through partnerships on campus and beyond, HS/HSL librarians have taken on major roles in advocacy for research participants, and in the conducing of research.

Library and SWCOS Help People Themselves to Better Health

The Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL) has joined forces with the Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS) at the School of Social Work to educate the public about health information that is available online.

Named with a $45,000 award from the Regional Medical Library for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Southeastern Atlantic region, the partnership is a vehicle to train community-service professionals— and community members themselves—how to use Maryland Health Go Local, a Web-based statewide resource for finding local health services and programs (see related article, and MedicinePlus, the National Library of Medicine’s consumer health Web site. Hundreds of HS/HSL and SWCOS staff have provided training at public events such as festivals and health fairs. They have also provided instruction for agencies and organizations such as Head Start, the Baltimore City Public Schools, and the Latino Providers Network in Baltimore.

“We have further expanded the impact of Maryland Health Go Local to the people who need it,” says Ramona Harrison, an advanced placement graduate student at the School of Social Work who coordinated the training program. “We provided basic instruction on how to find the site, how to log in, and how to use it to access health resource information. The site is easy to use. The training has paid off At one Baltimore meeting, Harrison instructed a woman with an autistic son how to find local treatment options. At the Baltimore African-American Heritage Festival, a woman who had suffered a heart attack found a cardiac rehabilitation program close to her home, and someone who recently lost her sight located services for the newly blind.

For more information about the training program call 410-706-1880. Training materials are available at www.hshsl.umaryland.edu/goportal.