

My first Health Libraries Australia Professional Development Day

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This year I was lucky enough to attend the ALIA Health Libraries Australia (HLA) Professional Development Day in Sydney, supported by my relatively new workplace (The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists – ANZCA). The theme of the day, ‘Innovation for enhancing library value’ was of particular interest to me, given the types of projects ANZCA Library is undertaking. The benefits of seeing what fellow health library organisations are talking about, planning and achieving made this type of event accessible to everyone in the health library community.

Being new to the field of health libraries (almost 10 months now), it was helpful to learn from more experienced colleagues, and to see the ways in which technology tools and trends are being adapted to meet the needs of patrons and staff in other health library contexts.

The first session of the day emphasised ‘Innovating using technology’. The presenters from Curtin University (Rosalind Dunning and Diana Blackwood) highlighted the many features of Adobe Captivate software, which enabled them to create engaging and interactive online tutorials. The presentation detailed the process for creating ‘projects’ in Captivate, as well as where the videos are embedded to promote access and use by staff and students (including Curtin’s [YouTube Channel](#) and Library Guides).

The next presentation showed an inventive way of using the task management application [Trello](#) to enhance communication across the multiple branch locations of the Central Coast Local Health District Library Service (CCLHD). What interested me from this presentation was how Sally Turbitt and Narelle Hampe explored the potential of this tool to facilitate communication, provide a common point of reference for projects, and even to create a makeshift share-drive/library intranet. They shared positive features of Trello, such as not requiring IT support. They also described challenges they faced, which included differences in features between the free and paid version of Trello, and training all staff to use a new system. Such a simple tool, when used well, can inspire so many ideas and use cases. For example, CCLHD collaborated on ideas for library marketing brochures, and will use this to track articles for their new journal club. In my own team, this could replace the lengthy ‘email-chains’ about articles to be posted on LibGuides, or ideas for new resources to be added to newsletters and promotional material.

Graham Spooner’s presentation offered a new perspective on current awareness services through the implementation of new processes and software to streamline the delivery of journal electronic tables of contents (eTOCs) to patrons of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS). The software used was [Mail Chimp](#) and Dreamweaver. Mail Chimp is free software, which according to the website can help you ‘send better email’. The content of eTOCs has been enhanced with the addition of RACS branding, and the ability for patrons to subscribe to eTOCs based on specific medical areas of interest. Most interesting was the availability of statistics from Mail Chimp, such as how many articles have been clicked on and how many eTOCs have been opened.

Highlights of the second session of the day, 'Enhancing value to our clients', included two presentations by The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network library staff. Firstly, Andrew Spencer, Information Services Librarian, spoke about the success of their pilot project to test the Patron Driven Acquisitions (PDA) model for eBook acquisition. I have always wondered how a user-driven model of collection development would affect the library budget. Titles were only purchased after their third use, and this gave SCHN the flexibility to quickly add titles to the collection. The purchase price of items varied based on the titles that were accessed. For this library, it was a successful pilot of the PDA model. Whether you are looking to use this model or not, it is indicative of a new way of thinking about collection development, with policies and practices changing in response to patron needs.

Here is where I give a bit of a shout-out to librarian Alana McDonald from the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, Children's Hospital at Westmead. My library only launched LibGuides in April 2016. Alana's presentation about their LibGuides impressed me so much I had to follow up with her by email after the PD day. This emphasises the positive aspects of this type of event, such as networking opportunities and the chance to build a shared knowledge base in the health library community. The [SCHN LibGuides](#) have a fantastically clean and customised landing page, well-used side-navigation, and they have even started using LibGuides for a library blog (yes, my nerd colours are showing...)! It is always interesting to see what other libraries are doing, and this glimpse into how LibGuides can look with a bit of CSS talent makes me want to find out more.

As this was my first HLA PD day, my own interests guided my note-taking (which informed this article), There were many more thorough, interesting and innovative presentations on the day – too many to go into depth with here. It was definitely a worthwhile experience and I would recommend people attend the next one if they want to learn from their peers and be inspired.

Editor's note: The slides from these presentations at HLA PD Day are now available to view and download from the ALIA website:

<https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/HLA%20PD%20Day%202016%20Program%20with%20presentations.pdf>