



Global Connections

Newsletter of the IFLA Section of Health and Biosciences Libraries

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On to Argentina!

Members will soon be heading to Buenos Aires for the 70th IFLA General Conference and Council meeting. Theme of this year's Conference is Libraries: Tools for Education and Development. The Conference will run from August 22 through 27.

Health and Biosciences Libraries Program

The program for the Health and Biosciences Libraries Section, scheduled from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 24, features five speakers who will address the session topic, *Health Literacy for All*.

Speakers and their topics are:

Empowering patients through health information literacy training, by Rowena Cullen, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand

Medical websites: potential tools for education, research and patient care in India, by Raj Kumar, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India

Health information literacy and higher education—the King's College London approach, by Margaret Haines and Gary Horrocks, King's College, London, UK

Development and utilization of the medical information resources in China, by Zhan Youxiang and Hao Jiying, Medical Library of the Chinese People Liberation Army, Beijing, China

Libraries and text books: beyond a good read, by Rossella Proscia, Ovid Technologies, Ltd., London, UK.

Standing Committee Meetings

The Standing Committee will meet twice during the Conference. The first is scheduled from 2:30 p.m. – 5:20 p.m. on Sunday, August 22; the second from 11:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m. on Saturday August 28. Section Chair Bruce Madge will preside.

Dr. Rowena Cullen, Section Secretary, outlined the following major issues to be discussed.

1. Planning the Section program for the next IFLA meeting in Oslo in 2005
2. Review planning for the 9th International Congress on Medical Librarianship to be held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil on September 20-23, 2005.
3. Evaluation of presentations from the two contenders bidding to hold the 10th ICML meeting in 2009.
4. Discussion of scientific, technical and medical publishing. The Section has representation on IFLA's Publishing Relations Advisory Committee, a group focusing on how publishers can make information vital to the well being of communities more freely available to developing countries. This will lead to discussion of the recently announced initiative by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, a "Global Review of Access to Health Information" to be carried out during 2004-2005.
5. Election of officers replacing any standing down or whose terms have been completed.
6. Adoption of projects for the Section during the coming year.
7. Revising and updating the Section's Strategic Plan
8. Responding to issues raised by the Coordinating Board of the relevant IFLA Sections, including election of representatives for the Board.

Global News

The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) is dedicated to improve access to information for health professionals in developing countries. INASP-Health is a cooperative network of more than 1,000 organizations and individuals worldwide. It is a specific program of INASP, an international non-governmental organization founded in 1992 by the International Council for Science.

For detailed information about services provided by INASP-Health, see the following websites:

INASP-Health Advisory and Referral Network <http://www.inasp.info/health/>

Health Information Forum <http://www.inasp.info/health/forum.html>

INASP-Health Directory <http://www.inasp.info/health/directory/index.html>

HIF-net at WHO? email forum <http://www.inasp.info/health/index/html#3>

Capacity-building programme <http://www.inasp.info/health/>

INASP Health Links <http://www.inasp.info/health/links/contents.html>.

This website is a gateway to more than 600 selected websites for health professionals, medical library communities, publishers, and NGOs in developing and transitional countries. It consists of three sections: General Resources, Subject Index and Library and Publishing Support, and Use of ICTs. Sites that have a specific focus on users in developing countries are marked with a magnifying glass symbol.

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From Neil Pakenham-Walsh, Senior Programme Manager of INASP, comes a report on Access to Information for Health Professionals in Developing Countries: A Global Review of Progress, Lessons Learned, and Ways Forward.

Equitable and universal access to healthcare and health research information is recognized in the recent draft *World Report on Knowledge for Better Health* as an important part of worldwide strategies to reduce global disparities in health and achieve the health-related Millennium Development Goals.

Involving the wider community in a global review of health information access is one of the key recommendations of a recent draft position paper commissioned by WHO: *Improving Access to Information in Developing Countries* (Fiona Godlee, et al., April 2004). This paper calls for a multi-agency initiative to ensure **Universal Access to Health Information by 2015**. But it recognizes that in order to achieve this goal, we need to work together to share experience, review what has been achieved, what works and what does not.

The review, designed to mobilise, engage, and galvanize key stakeholder groups in the health information field to review and synthesise lessons learned and develop a shared agenda for the future, was launched in London on July 12, 2004.

The group plans to take advantage of existing health conferences during 2004-2005, engage all stakeholders through a series of structured discussions on the global email forum, HIF-net at WHO, and work with partners to prepare a series of discussion papers and mini-reviews that draw from the face-to-face and email dialogues described above.

Participating agencies include AHILA, BMJ, Cochrane Collaboration, Exchange, Forum for African Medical Editors, Global Forum for Health Research, Interactive Health Network, INASP, International e-Health Association, Latin American and Caribbean Centre on Health Sciences Information (BIREME), Wellcome Trust, and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office.

For further information, please contact Neil Pakenham-Walsh at health@inasp.inf.

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Arne Jakobsson reports that Finland is the first country to make a nationwide commitment to Open Access. All universities, polytechnics, and research institutes in Finland have become BioMed Central members. The membership agreement covers the cost of publication in BioMed Central's 100+ Open Access journals, for all 25,000 publicly funded researchers and teachers in Finland.

BioMed Central's agreement is with FinELib, the National Electronic Library of Finland. FinELib is a part of the National Library's services for libraries and also acquires Finnish and international resources to support teaching, learning, and research. A total of 86 institutions from the consortium will take part in the membership, adding 80 new institutions to BioMed Central's membership.

Finland's decision represents a landmark in the move towards Open Access for all biomedical research. BioMed Central, the largest Open Access publisher, has 500 member institutions in 39 countries.

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“Commitment to Equity” is the theme of the 9ICM to be held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil in 2005. There are tracks on ten subjects for the contributed paper, poster, and plenary sessions. They are:

1. Health and Medical Library Development
2. Evidence-based Health Information

3. Information and Knowledge Management. Learning and Knowledge-based Organizations
4. Policy Making
5. Scientific Communication and Electronic Publishing: Open Access, Open Archives
6. Health Consumers and Patients
7. Traditional and Alternative Medicine
8. Virtual Libraries and Virtual Communities
9. Distance Learning
10. Open Track

Please send news of your organization, meetings of international interest, or of members of the Section to the Editor at:

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