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Trends in Health Sciences and Biomedical Sciences Information Provision

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Against the Grain

“Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians”

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Trends in Health Sciences and Biomedical Sciences Information Provision

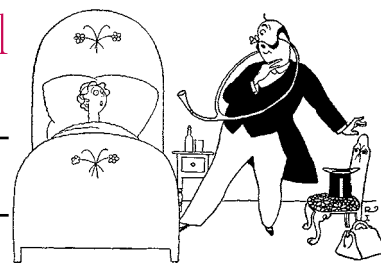
by **Ramune K. Kubilius** (Collection Development / Special Projects Librarian, Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library) <r-kubilius@northwestern.edu>

According to an ancient Chinese proverb, “All that is constant is change.” That is certainly the case in the world of the health and biomedical sciences. Content, services, and efforts continue to be directed to those who are a part of the ever-evolving scholarly communication, research, education, and patient care continuum. A number of issues and trends reported in the November 2008 special issue of *Against the Grain* still resonate today. The 2011 eclectic mix of articles provides a new sampling of successes, issues, trends, challenges, and opportunities for information provision in health and biomedical arenas.

The U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM) is the largest medical library in the world, one unit in the very large National Institutes of Health. In 2010, at the 10th Health Sciences Librarians Lively Lunch during the 30th Charleston Conference, Dr. Elliot R. Siegel, then recently retired from NLM (and still serving as a consultant) was the invited

speaker. He highlighted NLM milestones and included his personal insights, particularly in the areas of technology and international outreach, of which he was a part, during his long career with the library. In 2011, as NLM celebrates its 175th anniversary, **Maria Elizabeth Collins, John Doyle, and Martha R. Fishel** provide an overview that illustrates some of NLM’s more recent initiatives, particularly in forging domestic as well as international partnerships with librarians, libraries and publishers, building and maintaining its own collections, and providing leadership for medical libraries of all types.

On the other end of the spectrum from NLM are the most basic “frontline” local and regional healthcare providing units — hospitals. For a number of years, many, if not most U.S. hospitals operated libraries. The larger hospitals might have had separate libraries for physicians, nurses, and even patients. A 2009 article highlighted survey



results from the time period 1989-2006, and one listed trend continues to this day: “The status of hospital librarians and libraries is still volatile due to the dynamic nature of the health care and financial environments.” (Trends in hospital librarianship and hospital library services: 1989 to 2006, **Thibodeau PL, Funk CJ** *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 2009 Oct; 97(4): 273-9.). Contributing to the “volatile and dynamic nature” are library closures and downsizings, changing and expanding duties for hospital librarians, administrations’ wide-ranging, often differing perceptions about cost efficiencies and self-sufficiency of health professionals in

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If Rumors Were Horses

Have just learned that ALA Publishing has acquired Neal-Schuman Publishers effective December 23! Neal-Schuman was formed in 1976 by **John Vincent Neal** and **Patricia Glass Schuman**. ALA will relocate Neal-Schuman from New York City to Chicago over the next three months.

http://www.libraryjournal.com/lj/home/893124-264/ala_publishing_acquires_neal-schuman_publishers.html.csp

We all missed the smilingly earnest **John Dove** at the 2011 Charleston Conference! But he had an excuse. He was undergoing surgery! Ouch! **John** underwent “skull surgery” to relieve a subdural hematoma from a bicycle fall. Thankfully **John** is home and is on the mend and still riding his bicycle!

Is that wise, **John**? Does your mother approve? **John** had told me back in 2005 that **Charleston** was on his permanent schedule so he promises that we will see him next year in Charleston! **November 7-10, 2012.**



Shown is **Adam Jordan Censer**, **Pam Censer’s** grandson. He’s a cutie!

Speaking of **Charleston**, we were slammed with attendees this year — a record 1,551 registrants! I am speechless! We missed some of our regulars like **Tony Ferguson** who was attending his mother’s 90th Birthday party. But he will be back!

We were so excited to give the **Vicky Speck Leadership Award** to the deserving **Glenda Alvin** (Assistant Director for Collection Man-

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the online information age... The landscape continues to change as hospital and medical center librarians have been assigned or have found new and expanding roles that serve the goals, needs, and priorities of their institutions. Some hospitals are owned by small or large corporations. Others have affiliations with or are owned by universities (medical schools). There is no uniform model for all hospitals and how they could, should, or do meet their constituencies' information needs. In a recent "Hospital Librarianship" column (*MLA News* 51(4): 17-18, April 2011), **Patricia A. Hammond**, the immediate past chair of the **Medical Library Association's** largest section, the Hospital Libraries Section, reported on a "Hospital Library Summit" held in her National Network of Libraries of Medicine region on January 6, 2011. In her article for *Against the Grain* readers, **Pat** provides an insider's view on some of the issues, challenges, and opportunities faced by hospitals' libraries and librarians, particularly in the areas of information provision and collections. While the landscape described may reflect some uniquely American issues, other hospital and clinical library concerns and issues may very well be universal.

The VIVO interdisciplinary and collaborative open source Web application, begun at **Cornell University** and described in the 2008 special issue of *Against the Grain*, continues to thrive. With support from a stimulus grant from the **National Center for Research Resources (NCRR)** of the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, there is now an interdisciplinary national network, VIVO. Members have "local installations of VIVO or those with research discovery and profiling applications that can provide semantic Web-compliant data." (*www.vivo.org site*, accessed July 15, 2011). In recent years, VIVO institutions and others have experienced an increasing interest and involvement in e-Science, driven in the United States, by government agencies' initiatives and directives. **Carol Tenopir** has summarized that e-Science is "computational, data driven, collaborative, and interdisciplinary" (**Medical Library Association**, 2010 annual meeting abstract, *www.mlanet.org/am/am2010/pdf/mla10_abstracts.pdf*, accessed June 24, 2011). Libraries and information professionals increasingly have become involved and included in their institutions' grants and research initiatives. E-science boot camps and web portals have been developed to help enhance librarians' skills and knowledge bases (**Gore, Sally A.** *Medical Reference Services Quarterly* 30(2):130-40, Apr-Jun 2011 and **Creamer, Andrew; Morales, Myrna; Crespo, Javier; Kafel, Donna; Martin, Elaine Russo.** *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 99(2): 153-5, Apr 2011). In her article for *Against the Grain*, **Sally A. Gore** provides an overview of e-Science and writes about the different players, including librarians and information professionals, who bring their expertise into the e-Science continuum.

Remote (and mobile) access to information is expected not only by bench (research) scientists and by clinicians, but also by those involved in health professional education, educators and students alike. Publishers and information providers are constantly challenged to "find the right containers" for their information, and health professionals' increasing use and reliance on mobile technology drive the demand for new products and applications. E-science involves multiple input, storage, and access points, often involving large databanks and repositories. Health professionals may want access to information related to patient care, clinical research, or even educational responsibilities. The use of new mobile technologies in the education of health professionals is not surprising. In a short report (*MLA News*: 51(6): 3, June/July 2011), **Mark Puterbaugh** reported on "The Kindle E-reader in the Nursing Classroom," his library's findings after having received a small projects grant from the **National Network of Libraries of Medicine**, Middle Atlantic Region. In any country, medical students comprise a very large component of users for the libraries that serve medical schools. According to figures from the **Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)**, the 2010-2011 entering class in North America was 18,665 students. (The AAMC represents all 133 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; approximately 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, source: *www.aamc.org/about/medicalschoools/* accessed July 20, 2011). In her article, **Stephanie C. Kerns** commemorates the 100th anniversary of a seminal and internationally recognized report on medical education, the *Flexner Report*. She provides a snapshot view of the current calls for education reform, including funding support, and she highlights the current use of mobile technology in meeting information literacy, evidence-based healthcare, and lifelong learning goals in health professional, specifically undergraduate, medical education.

In the 2008 *Against the Grain* special issue, **Melissa M. Nasea** and **Ruth M. Moskop** over-viewed collection development as it related to the history of the health sciences, particularly in academic libraries' special collections and general book collections. In 2011, librarians and archivists **Heather J. Stecklein** and **Nathalie X. Wheaton** describe another pertinent area in the history of the health sciences, that of archives. Archivists are in a unique position in their institutions to collect the local "treasures," to share what they know and what they have collected, priorities that are common among libraries and archives. In recent years, both special collections and archives have become quite visible (internally at their institutions, and externally), thanks to digitization project initiatives, grants, and anniversaries that highlight items "from the vaults." Medical archives (or units that serve that function) may be based in hospitals, medical schools, medical societies, and even biomedical or health-related companies. Some archives reside in or are administered by libraries, others are separate entities. Some archivists have library degrees and certificates in archives studies, while some have educational backgrounds in other areas,

enhanced by additional training. Archival collections in the health sciences may feature a wide variety of materials: photographs, health professions' graduating class composites, paintings, architectural drawings and building fragments, doctors' bags (with intact medical powders and liquids), microscopes, medical instruments, medals, coins, etc. Archives may also include collections of highly confidential doctor and patient records. Archives' and libraries' missions are similar — they collect, organize, and preserve information "items" and resources for later retrieval and use. Although many may serve a wide audience (i.e., are open for controlled use by the general public), the primary clientele is internal (institutional). In the area of archives, preserving institutional memory is the mission, provenance is key, and careful handling of materials is a must. However, even the most organized and comprehensive archival collections are of little value if they are not used and are not visible. Digitizing treasures and providing finding aids often isn't enough... As the authors illustrate from their experience as archivists "embedded" in their institution's activities, (potential) use often needs to be fostered and encouraged by outreach, publicity, marketing, partnerships, and other strategic efforts.

Last but not least, it can be said that the "dust" has yet to settle in the area of eBooks. Though the health sciences eBooks landscape has been reviewed before (*Against the Grain* 2001/2002, 2005, 2008), it seemed timely that an area related to eBooks in the health sciences again be addressed, particularly in the arena of discoverability. Recently, in the "Doody Core Title Featured Article" site, **Mark A. Spasser, PhD**, Director of Research Services, **Palmetto Health**, Columbia, SC wrote about "Intelligent Content for Librarians" (*www.doody.com/dct/PublicFeaturedArticle.asp?SiteContentID=59*, accessed July 18, 2011). He wrote, in part, "All institutions must consider seriously how to make their content more intelligent and how to continuously improve the information products they produce, manage, and distribute." **Leslie J. Czechowski** and **Nancy Tannery** provide a case study on one solution for discoverability and retrieval of information contained in licensed eBooks, including textbooks. It is an overview and update about their library's partnership with a search engine ("information optimization") company to provide a federated search discovery solution for eBooks available at their institution. The partnership, begun in 2005, continues to this day, and has expanded beyond the initial product. (It definitely helps that the company's headquarters are in the same city as the library). While the premier literature in medicine and health is often found in journals, there is often a need for the overview, review, or synopsis so well addressed in the book format and at educational institutions in textbooks. How many of us in the health sciences field would love to have a solution in response to a common students' query — "When can we search eBook content the way we search PubMed?"...When questions are posted on discussion lists, asking about models and products for federated searching of

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health sciences eBooks (across platforms), the success of a **University of Pittsburgh** “home-grown” solution is often mentioned. 🌱

Special Issue Editor’s Note: Thank you to all of the special issue authors who took time away from their busy, frontline jobs to share their thoughts, insights, and experience. The contribution of **Shana Potash**, Public Affairs Specialist at NLM, should be acknowledged. Though she didn’t seek authorship credit for the introduction to her colleagues’ texts, it was thanks to her coordination that a timely and pertinent contribution was specifically customized for *Against the Grain*. A thank you should also be extended to **Katina Strauch** for once again seeing a need for such a special issue. The 2011 collection of articles provides a snapshot view of a few areas. A comment made in 2008 still holds true, “someone will likely need to revisit information and collection trends in the health and biomedical sciences again soon.” There are still other themes that have not yet been addressed, and representatives from various health and biomedical information-related sectors who have not yet voiced their thoughts. — **RK**

against the grain people profile

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PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Worked in the **UCLA** library system, at VTLS, and KPMG. At NLM, I am the team lead for **DOCLINE** and the Emergency Access Initiative.

PHILOSOPHY: “The ideal man bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of circumstances.” **Aristotle**; “Great is the man who has not lost his childlike heart.” **Mencius**; “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” **Leonardo da Vinci**; and “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” **Philo**

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Increasing move to electronic only publishing and use of electronic resources. The electronic environment provides great advantages, but also will pose increasing difficulty in resource sharing due to publisher license restrictions, elimination of print collections, and tightened collections budget. Overall, reduced budgets will result in additional library consolidations and prioritizing of services, and innovation to meet user needs. 🌱



The National Library of Medicine: 175 Years of Information Innovation

by **Maria E. Collins** (Technical Information Specialist, Public Services Division, National Library of Medicine)

and **Martha R. Fishel** (Chief, Public Services Division, National Library of Medicine)

and **John Doyle** (Technical Information Specialist, Systems Office, Technical Services Division, National Library of Medicine)

National Library of Medicine

The year 2011 marks the 175th anniversary of the **National Library of Medicine**. NLM started as a small collection in the office of the U.S. Army Surgeon General. Today, NLM, as part of the **National Institutes of Health**, is the world’s largest medical library and the producer of electronic information resources used by millions of people around the world every day.

NLM has changed the way scientific and medical information is organized, stored, accessed, and disseminated through its technical innovation, partnerships, and early adoption of the Internet. For example, the library has developed databases and software tools that make it easy to find medical literature and health information; enable scientists to study genes and their roles in the disease; and provide emergency responders with critical information to handle disasters. NLM’s leadership of the **National Network of Libraries of Medicine**, with nearly 6,000 members, brings high-quality information

services to health professionals and the public across the country, regardless of where they live or what level of access they have to computers.

The library is committed to making its remarkable resources available to users around the world to support scientific discovery, enhance clinical care, and improve public health.

Partnerships

NLM – Publisher partnership provides free access to medical literature following a regional disaster — by Maria E. Collins

The Emergency Access Initiative (EAI) is a collaborative partnership between NLM, participating publishers, and the **National Network of Libraries of Medicine** to provide free access to full-text articles from over 230 major biomedical serial titles, three online databases, and over 2,000 books to healthcare professionals and libraries affected by disasters.

The idea for the **Emergency Access Initiative** developed in regular meetings between NLM and a small group of publishers following the widespread devastation in the Gulf Coast caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Access to medical literature and information resources was lost or severely restricted by the damage to hospital and academic medical libraries which serve healthcare professionals in the region.

The primary goal of the Emergency Access Initiative is to provide free, full-text access to key medical and scientific journals most useful to healthcare professionals and libraries responding to a disaster, and to serve as a temporary replacement to library collections damaged or rendered inaccessible following a disaster. EAI can also be used by healthcare professionals responding to disaster and post-disaster medical issues of the affected population. The Emergency Access Initiative is not an open-access collection — it is intended only for those affected by the disaster or assisting the affected population.

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