

## **Executive Summary**

This was the first year of a new RML and much of our energy was spent developing the infrastructure and procedures upon which the organization would run. How we work together was an important issue and we continue to build a communication structure that bridges the geographic distances between us.

We did have major accomplishments this year. The state liaisons are becoming known in the library communities, public as well as medical. They regularly attend local consortia meetings within their cities and states. They are calling and visiting health organizations and public libraries in order to update the region's DOCUSER records and to assign the appropriate status (member or affiliate member) to institutions. Though these personal contacts are labor and time intensive, we are learning who our members are and will benefit when we conduct our Network membership drive next year.

Inner City and Special Populations was our most productive program. Dennis Haack, the Inner City and Special Populations Liaison, made inroads in the public schools in Omaha. He developed a lesson plan for using MEDLINEplus to guest lecture on health professions and has begun making the contacts in Kansas City, KS where we decided that the program would next be tried. With the Eccles Health Sciences Library video staff, the RML is working with the Youth Without Borders to produce a series of Spanish language health promotion tapes that can be streamed over the web. Tribal Health Connections funded by the Gates Foundation through the Pacific Northwest Regional Medical Library spurred a meeting in Salt Lake City among all the organizations who are interested in improving health information access in the Four Corners area. This meeting resulted in a plan identifying areas where we would continue to work together.

We funded the Virtual Reference Cooperative Pilot that will, upon expansion help us support and bridge the differences between collections and geographic distances among Network members. And we are in the process of funding more projects in the region.

The Public Health Online Project will produce the regional model for making public health electronic publications and data accessible on the web. It is also developing a methodology for looking at public health literature and MeSH to come up with subject heading recommendations to improve access to this body of knowledge.

Consumer Health was concentrated in Colorado where the Consumer Health Liaison is located. A listserv and a consortium were established for librarians interested in consumer health information services.

## **Administration**

A difficult transition moving the RML to Salt Lake City was accomplished with the gracious aid of the Director and Associate Director of the NN/LM Midcontinental Region in Omaha, NE and the assistance of the National Network Office.

Agreements were signed with Sally Patrick, Public Library Consultant, and Linda Lange and George White, Public Health Consultants.

All positions within the RML were filled by the beginning of April, some more than once.

Associate Director—Joan Stoddard followed by Claire Hamasu

Public Health /Utah State Liaison—Kay McCloskey

Wyoming Liaison—Mary Henning followed by Susan Whitson

Education and Nebraska State Liaison—Teresa Hartman

Inner City and Special Populations Liaison—Dennis Haack

Assessment and Evaluation Liaison—Audrey Newcomer followed by Betsy Kelly

Consumer Health and Colorado State Liaison—Stephanie Weldon

Technology and Kansas State Liaison—Whitney Davison-Turley

Library Improvement and Missouri State Liaison—Deborah Sommer

Administrative Assistant—Carolyn Osterman

Technical Director—Nancy Lombardo followed by Michael Carr

Dennis Haack, Mary Henning, Kathleen McCloskey, and Claire Hamasu attended the RML orientation at the National Library of Medicine October 9-10, 2001.

Technology has greatly facilitated the building of team spirit among staff and liaisons and the ability to conduct the business of the RML. A Lotus product, Sametime, enables videoconferencing for the MidContinental Region's (MCR) weekly meeting. Yahoo chat identifies whether or not a person is in the office and supplements email and the telephone as an immediate way of communicating. Another Lotus product, Quickplace, on Washington University's server became the virtual office space for the RML. Here "rooms" were built by each liaison to house documents that could be easily shared and worked on together. Quickplace Discussion is used to gather input from liaisons on issues and Quickplace Calendar keeps everyone informed about exhibits, vacations, and road trips.

MCMLA Tri-Chapter meeting in New Orleans in October Mary Henning presented a paper and poster session on the Wyoming Desktop Videoconferencing

Ms. McCloskey attended the 2001 meeting of the American Public Health Association in Atlanta. co-author of the paper "Report from the 129th American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA: Lessons Learned was a convener for a session

The Education Liaison co-authored and presented a paper on handhelds: "From Visionary to Shoestring: Practical Steps to Becoming PDA Compliant" at the TriChapter MLA Conference, New Orleans, LA, October 26. 52 attended.

## **Network Programs**

### **Document Delivery Services**

A meeting was held with Resource Library ILL staff preceding the October 2001 Tri-Chapter meeting held in New Orleans. At this meeting the new RML structure was introduced and members were enlisted to assist liaisons and network members with their DOCLINE issues. Ruicha Mishra, Education and

Communications Coordinator, was borrowed from Region 5 to provide a DOCLINE update.

Administrative rights were obtained for state liaisons to enable them to update records, add new members etc for their state, but the new distributed model had not initially designated a person to take responsibility for DOCLINE issues in the region. We found that when the DOCLINE Team or DIRT (DOCLINE Interface Review Team) requested input, no one placed this as a priority. To improve our feedback, the Library Improvement Liaison was assigned the responsibility of representing and coordinating DOCLINE for the region. DOCLINE has proved to be the most challenging of the resources for new liaisons to learn.

Susan Barnes, Resource Sharing Coordinator from Pacific Northwest Regional Medical Library, offered to add our region's data to the Public Serhold Directory. There was discussion among the liaisons about LIBID's being included in the directory. Network members had complained about Loansome Doc requests being received from unknown users who had obtained LIBID's from the Find a Library webpage. The decision was made to proceed with the Public Serhold directory because it is not a site that is not promoted to the public and one that is not easily found on the NN/LM website.

One of the priorities for this region is to encourage participation in the Electronic Fund Transfer System. The first goal was for all Resource Libraries to participate. This goal was reached by the end of year 01. To encourage participation the Resource Library ILL staff promoted EFTS at a booth in the exhibit hall at the Tri-Chapter meeting.

### **Resource Libraries**

Subcontracts for the seven Resource Libraries, participating in the new contract were written and signed. There is one in each state and two in Missouri and Nebraska. Recruitment for liaisons started immediately. Few candidates applied for the positions and this was of concern, but the library directors and the RML are pleased with the caliber of the liaisons that have been hired. The Director and Associate Director participated in many of the interviews describing the new model being tried in this region and the types of projects liaisons would coordinate.

The Associate Director visited all resource libraries to introduce herself and to partner with the local liaison(s) in a presentation explaining the new RML to all library staff and their responsibility as a subcontractor.

Quarterly teleconferences were held to keep the library directors abreast of RML activities and to address regional issues.

## **Communications**

Early in July, the RML launched a new website for the region ([nmlm.gov/mcr](http://nmlm.gov/mcr)) reflecting the technology orientation and the special projects of the liaisons. A redesign to facilitate changes was completed in February. The Colorado Liaison completed a page with links to health and information resources in the state.

*Plains to Peaks Post*, the RML's newsletter, is taking longer than expected to reach publication. As we are working through the decisions that needed to be made for the newsletter, technology has become our only mode for keeping Network members current on RML and NLM activities.

As the result of an inquiry to Network members, RML messages will continue to be delivered through the MCMLA (Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association) listserv rather than a separate NN/LM MCR listserv. The RML began by sending single messages via the listserv but heard back that we were sending out too many messages. We decided to compile all messages and send them out as an RML News message once a week. This has met with appreciation from those who have busy email boxes. Templates were developed by the RML Technology Director that allow all liaisons to contribute to the RML News and selected news items to be sent to any email address. This versatility allows customizing for special audiences. Liaisons use this feature to contribute regularly to existing local listservs such as Utah's public health listserv and Nebraska's public library listserv. A new consumer health listserv was created for Colorado librarians.

Articles by the liaisons at Eccles Health Sciences Library and Creighton University Health Sciences Library have appeared in their library newsletters to inform their institutions of the local RML activities.

## **Regional Advisory Board**

Ten members for the Regional Advisory Board were recruited from recommendations by liaisons, Resource Library directors and Network members. The first meeting was held on November 8, 2001 and broadcast over the web. Approximately 80 logins were recorded during the day. The primary discussion focused on grants and the RML received suggestions on offering awards and improving grant writing skills in the region. Advisory board members agreed to be reviewers for proposals for regional awards.

During the year, RML staff and liaisons visited five advisory board members to learn more about programs of their institutions.

## **Evaluation & Assessment/Feedback**

In October as part of our presentation to MCMLA members at the Tri-Chapter meeting we asked participants for their wish list from the RML and also to indicate whether they would be willing to assist us in working on their wish list. We got a good response from the in person (captive) group. Not many

contributions came in through the web form of the questions that we put on our home page.

### **Awards**

Fifteen proposals were received as a result of our call for projects in either the mini (\$2,500) or impact (\$10,000) categories. Liaisons were instrumental in helping Network members turn their ideas into projects. Ms. Kelly is coordinating the process of forming review committees and moving the applications through the stages of review, approval, and funding. She developed a 40 question tool to assist reviewers in scoring the proposals. Reviewers had questions on all but one of the proposals. The RML intends to fund as many projects as possible, but the liaisons will have to work with most of the principal investigators to get their concepts to a fundable level.

### **Health Professionals Access to Information**

Most of the activity in this area occurred in Wyoming and with public health professionals (see Public Health section). Liaisons focused their efforts on Network members and public libraries.

The Wyoming Liaison visited ten communities checking on their videoconferencing equipment that had been funded by an RML award and providing training on NLM resources.

Teresa Hartman was appointed to the Board of Nebraska's newly funded AHEC and in its first meeting was able to raise the issue of information access.

### **Network Members**

Procedures to renew and recruit Network members are being formulated.

RML staff and liaisons visited fifteen Network members during the year and regularly attended local health science library consortia meetings in the states of Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Utah. There is no consortium in Wyoming. By placing staff locally we are more visible and more accessible at the community level, a definite advantage of a distributed RML.

There were four library closures in the region and one new library (Kansas).

## **Outreach Programs**

### **Consumer Health Information Services**

Sally Patrick, the Public Library Consultant formulated a plan for recruiting public libraries into the NN/LM. An assessment tool is being developed to obtain baseline data to be used for outreach and evaluation purposes. A consortia of hospital and public libraries interested in consumer health information services was born in April during a Colorado Consortia of Medical Libraries (CCML) meeting at the suggestion of the Consumer Health Liaison.

Liaisons have met with state librarians or made contact with state library staff in the states of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming and Utah to inform them about the NN/LM and the services that state liaisons can provide. Liaisons have started visiting public libraries and attending state library association meetings to introduce public librarians to consumer health resources and encourage membership as Affiliate members.

### **Public Health**

A public health project evolved out of a query from one of the RML public health consultants. There was no indexing or cataloging of electronic documents that reside on the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) server. The question was asked, "What can the RML and Eccles Health Sciences Library do to help solve this problem"? Two activities quickly emerged that together became the Public Health Online Project. Eccles Library technical service staff began cataloging the documents and adding them to the Eccles Library online catalog. It was evident that many public health concepts are not reflected in MeSH. An onsite visit from a specialist from NLM's MeSH Division laid the groundwork for developing a model to identify public health gaps in the terminology. A University of Utah public health master's degree student, following advice from a working group of public health professionals and librarians, developed a methodology and is finalizing a report on the process to identify and document the need for new headings. A small number of subject headings have been identified and reported to NLM's MeSH Division for inclusion in the 2003 MeSH update. A summary of the project was presented to the Partners in Public Health Steering Group meeting held at NLM in March 2002.

Contacts are also being established with other state health departments. The liaisons in Nebraska met with the Division of Family Health of the Nebraska Health and Human Services and provided a training session for the staff.

Ms. McCloskey was invited to a meeting of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) librarians to speak on information access issues faced by public health professionals in Utah.

### **Inner City and Special Populations Outreach**

For the first time an inter-regional meeting was held to decide how to work together to address health information needs of Native Americans in the Four Corners area. The Tribal Connections Four Corners meeting gathered representatives from RML's 4, 5, 6, and 7 and Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico Resource Libraries. The meeting was held in Salt Lake City on April 19, 2002 and resulted in an action plan. Communication among the partners will continue through a monthly teleconference.

The Inner City Liaison made great strides in reaching Omaha public school African American students. Working with Creighton University's Health Careers

Opportunities Program (HCOP) and Health Professional Partnership Initiative (HPPI) he contributed the health information portion to joint presentations and programs. Contacts from the two programs also got him into several schools where he introduced students to MEDLINEplus. Contact was made with the Office of the Superintendent of Education in Kansas City, KS to determine the reception of duplicating health information outreach to minority students in that city. For Minority Health Month, April 2002, the liaison presented a program on NLM services and minority outreach programs for faculty and staff at Creighton University and, with the Education Liaison, exhibited minority health resources at St. Joseph Hospital.

Youth Without Borders, a Salt Lake City organization, solicited the RML's help in producing five videos in Spanish to be used with a community program to address community health issues. One video on family communications has been completed and another is under way for adults on the negative aspects of tobacco smoking. A presentation on the Youth Without Borders project was given at the Utah Public Health Association meeting.

### **Technology Awareness and Integration**

The RML funded a proposal, Virtual Reference Cooperative Pilot, submitted by Sandi Parker, from Denison Memorial Library at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center for a pilot project introducing virtual reference in the region using 247 Reference, Inc. Ms. Parker introduced the project to Resource Library staff at the Tri-Chapter meeting and to the Regional Advisory Board during its first meeting. In addition to soliciting questions from affiliated faculty, staff, and students, health sciences librarians in Colorado were invited to link in and give the web based reference service a try. The Colorado librarians indicated that the virtual reference service could assist them in answering questions from resources beyond the scope of their collections. In March the J. Otto Lottes Health Sciences Library at the University of Missouri, Columbia joined and extended the virtual reference desk time to four hours in the afternoon.

The RML promoted the web broadcasts of the University of Utah's weekly medical informatics symposium.

The Access Grid is a broad band Internet videoconferencing system geared for group to group rather than one on one interactions. The RML saw the Access Grid as a way for technology to provide meeting and distance education among librarians at a time when there is limited funds and limited time to travel to workshops and conferences. There are three nodes in the region (Utah, Kansas, Colorado) two of which are available for RML to use. We explored the possibility of establishing a node at each of the resource libraries but due local conditions was not able to get everyone's buy in. This project has been put on hold.

## **Education**

RML liaison proposals were accepted to teach three of the seven CE to be taught at Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association meeting in October 2002. There will be sessions on consumer health information, DOCLINE, and using PDA's. Resource library staff have been approached to team teach the DOCLINE class.

Training modules were created to introduce MEDLINEplus to public librarians, health resources to junior and high school students, PubMed to health professionals and public librarians.

Negotiations continue with NetLibrary to make available a collection of electronic texts on management and technology for Network librarians. The process was interrupted when NetLibrary merged with OCLC.

## **Exhibits and Presentations at Meetings**

The RML represented NLM at four national meetings: American Dental Association, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the ALA MidWinter Meeting and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. With the assistance of the National Network Office we were able to be part of the program and had the privilege of being one of the first to present NIHSeniorHealth to an audience of people who work in the field of aging and hearing their excitement about this resource. Two representative from the region assisted NLM at the Public Library Association Meeting and Ms. Weldon prepared a MEDLINEplus Powerpoint presentation that was used for group sessions in the booth.

Liaisons exhibited or presented at the Kansas and Nebraska state library association meetings. We also exhibited at the following local meetings: Utah Nurses Association, the Tri-Chapter meeting, the Utah Public Health Association (UPHA), Association for Utah Community Health, Utah Health Occupation Students, Colorado Education & Media Association, Colorado Health Occupations Student Association, Healthy Nations Conference.