

'Charting the Information Future'

NSW Health and OPAL Libraries Forum, 28–29 November 2005

For the past two years NSW Health Librarians have met for at a two-day forum to share information, pass on innovative ideas and network. This year, combined with the NSW OPALS, 96 delegates met to impart and discuss information and ideas that would help us navigate our courses in and for our organisations. The forum was opened by the chief executive of Western Sydney Area Health Service, Professor Boyages, who spoke of the need for knowledge management in health and the role libraries might play.

We had selected speakers we hoped would be of interest to both one-person



Planning Committee members at the Registration Desk: Nicky Hayward-Wright, Rolf Schafer, Barbara Gifford, Jacqueline Smith and Kathleen McMillan

and health libraries: not an easy task, as we had such a great variety of delegates – from government departments, pharmaceutical companies, university medical libraries and health organisations. Elizabeth Swan from Information Edge started the first day, encouraging us to 'fine-tune' our management skills and demonstrate our value within our organisations. The Knowledge Management Standard, NSW State Library consumer health service, partnerships, motivation, coaching and marketing were discussed in other sessions.

A trade fair gave delegates time to speak to vendors while balancing large quantities of food and drink! Generous sponsors allowed this forum to be offered at a 'bargain' rate and the presenters gave their time free, which meant that even libraries with the tightest budget could attend. Eighty-two delegates and vendors attended the Gala Dinner, an evening of good food, wine and company, with the addition of lucky number prizes.



Delegates learning to 'relax' during a session

The Forum Planning Committee's eight hard-working members gave so much of their time and energy, juggling their full-time work loads, to make the 2005 Forum such a success.

There is a need for a national Health and Specials Conference to discuss the big-picture issues and to challenge us professionally; however there is also a place for state-level forums. They bring together city and rural colleagues to exchange knowledge, network and have a 'jolly good time'.

Jacqueline Smith, co-ordinator, Planning Committee, Health & OPAL Libraries of NSW Forum — 2005

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