

NEW ROLE FOR LIBRARY IN HEALTH ACCREDITATION

Ballarat Health Services (BHS) Library has just completed an eight month collaborative project working closely with the Service's Pharmacy Department and the Standard 4: Medication Safety Committee to enable completion of the hospital accreditation process.

Currently, hospital accreditation requires compliance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards brought into effect in 2012 by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. These standards provide a quality assurance mechanism testing whether relevant systems are in place to ensure minimum standards of safety and quality are met, as well as a quality improvement mechanism allowing health service organisations to realise developmental goals.

THE LIBRARY NOW PLAYS A FORMAL, RECOGNISED ROLE IN THE NEW ACCREDITATION PROCESS, SINCE IT NOW OPENLY CARRIES THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ENSURING ONGOING CURRENCY OF RESOURCES.

Interestingly, previous versions of the standards made reference to library involvement but this was omitted in the revised standards, even though the requirements clearly called for a set of skills and resources we, the in-house library, could provide. The Pharmacy Department and the Standard 4: Medication Safety Committee brought a level of authority to the process that the hospital library did not possess on its own.

BHS Library initiated involvement by responding to an expressed need by the Pharmacy Department to carry out a collaborative review of drugs resources within all departments, as required in Section 4.9 of the *Safety and Quality Improvement Guide Standard 4: Medication Safety*, which states hospitals need to 'ensure that current and accurate medicines information and decision support tools are readily available to the clinical workforce when making clinical decisions related to medicines use'.

At the coalface this meant visiting acute, sub-acute, residential and mental health facilities across the region, removing superseded editions and providing either hard copy replacements of the current edition, or advising on where to go for reliable, regularly updated, online access to standard medicines information in all clinical areas where medicines are prescribed, dispensed or administered.

An audit was carried out across BHS to remove outdated material, resulting in the removal of 651 superseded and out of date publications.

Library staff used this opportunity to carry the collaboration beyond accreditation requirements. For example, one of the requirements involved promoting the use of information

sources and decision support tools using communication strategies such as newsletters, presentations, in-service education sessions, awareness campaigns and desktop icons. This is what libraries do anyway, but in this instance we took enthusiastic advantage of the opportunity to advertise library resources and expertise out in the field.

Members of the library staff demonstrated adding MIMs icons to desktops or *Australian Medicines Handbook* links to internet bookmarks, and how to locate and search the library's subscription online drug databases and other useful databases. We also alerted clients to drug information related articles and resources highlighted in our fortnightly *Current Awareness Bulletin*, including demonstrating how these can be accessed in the library, from the desk or from home.

Finally, though the standard focused on medication as a whole it also listed specific drug publications and resources the library currently sources, supplies and makes accessible. As these publications are specific to the new standards it means the library now plays a formal, recognised role in the new accreditation process, since we now openly carry the responsibility of ensuring ongoing currency of these resources.

In conjunction with the Standard 4: Medication Safety Committee, the drug resources audit led to the development of a Decision Support Tools Protocol to ensure that BHS drug resources remain current into subsequent years. The library will play a key part in ensuring this protocol is followed.

This project has resulted in more than a significant ongoing improvement and tightening of procedures. It has increased confidence in and awareness of the library role and its resources in drug information resources specifically, and the parent organisation generally.

For the library, the project was a significant step toward attracting opportunities for future collaboration with other medical departments and individuals beyond traditional library service.

RHONDA COTSELL AALIA
Librarian
Library, Ballarat Health Services
rhondaco@bhs.org.au