



## Libraries in Hospices Network: collaborating to improve services

**Debbie Hagon**

In 2016 the first ever survey was conducted to capture an accurate picture of the provision of library services in UK hospices. The survey results suggested that many on-site libraries face resources challenges but there is potential to develop services through networking and collaboration. It also demonstrated a real enthusiasm to work together to develop library capacity for the benefit of hospice care across the UK. The results of this survey were presented at the Hospice UK 2016 conference.

The aims of the Libraries in Hospices Network are to:

- Provide a point of contact for advice, support and information to all library and information staff and volunteers in similar roles across the UK
- Develop ways of working together to share good practice, resources and expertise
- Promote the use of library and information services within hospice and palliative care organisations.

Here we describe some of the ways in which we are improving communication, sharing information and supporting not only librarians working in hospices, but the many volunteers who provide library services and those staff who have an information role alongside their primary role.

### Email List

We have set up an email discussion list with the help of the administrators of Library Services mailing lists. This will enable us to ask questions, share information more efficiently and be a means of ongoing communication

### Regular meetings

The informal Libraries in Hospices group has for many years met once a year at St Christopher's Hospice in South East London.

Now we are formalising the group a little more, the aim is to continue meeting annually. To help everyone providing information services in hospices and palliative care organisations this day will typically include:

- learning opportunities
- a chance to share experiences
- expert speakers to talk about topics of interest to hospice and end of life care staff

We will also make use of video/telephone conferencing to have additional contact throughout the year.

### Professional Associations

- We are now listed on the 'Professional Networks and Associations' page of Hospice UK. This will further promote the group and hopefully attract others to join us, extending support and engagement to as many hospices as possible.
- We are also looking into being a special interest group of the National Association of Palliative Care Educators (NAPCE), an organisation whose aims of support and information sharing we share. Initial approaches have been received positively.



### Library Management System

The librarian at EACH is in discussion with Access-IT for the EACH LMS to be used as a platform to host the resources of other hospice libraries. This has the potential to provide an affordable system to services that would not otherwise be able to purchase one.

### Joint Purchasing

The librarian at Princess Alice Hospice is leading work investigating the feasibility of joint purchasing of journals. She's hoping to persuade the publishers to offer pricing arrangements that reflect the small size of the organisations relative to the big NHS Trusts! National purchasing through Hospice UK is also being explored. Responses from the publishers to date have not been too encouraging although there are a couple of titles that may prove to be viable.



Arthur Rank Hospice Library

### Current Awareness Service for Health

The librarians at EACH and ARHC contribute to the Children and Young People and the Adult Palliative and End of Life Care topics respectively on the CASH website.