

Health Libraries Australia Report for EAHIL

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Australian Awards Foster Research and Digital Innovation

Health Libraries Australia (HLA) is one of the many special interest groups of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). HLA is responsible for representing librarians and information professionals working in all health sectors in Australia. A major focus of HLA is to promote and support research and service improvement projects undertaken by health librarians. There are many ways in which this objective is achieved and two of them are described in this report: the Health Libraries Australia/MedicalDirector Digital Health Innovation Award and the Health Libraries Australia / Anne Harrison Award.

Health Libraries Australia/MedicalDirector Digital Health Innovation Award

The Health Libraries Australia/MedicalDirector Digital Health Innovation Award has been offered annually since 2009 with the aim of encouraging and showcasing innovative projects which, through the use of health informatics or web technologies, contribute to or support improved health outcomes, with a focus on practical outcomes.

The objective is to provide funding for a new project or to reward a completed project (with the prize money to be spent on continuing education related to the project).

The award is administered by HLA and it is sponsored by MedicalDirector, an Australian medical software and information provider, managing all aspects of medical content delivery including subscription management, ePublishing services and remote access options (1).

To be eligible to apply for the award an applicant must be a current member of ALIA. In the case of an all professional team application, one team member, with the exception of the team leader, may come under the organisation's ALIA institutional membership. Non-professional applicants must work in a library with ALIA institutional membership

Members of the HLA executive, award administrators and employees of MedicalDirector are ineligible.

The selection criteria are spelled out on the HLA website (2). These include:

- contribution to, and enhancement of, the health library/information profession/industry;
- outstanding project work, whether by an individual or a team;

- collaboratively working within or between organisations;
- originality/innovation regarding services or solutions;
- excellence/innovation in terms of best practice.

The application form is also available from the HLA website (2).

The prize includes \$3,000 AUD, one return flight to the award giving ceremony, one night's free accommodation and one free admission to the HLA Professional Development Day, where the award is presented.

The award administrators include two members of the HLA executive and a member of MedicalDirector management. These administrators vote to select a winner and this decision is then ratified by the HLA executive.

The winner is announced in the next edition of the *HLA News* and the abstract of the winning project is published on the HLA website (2).

Approximately one year after receiving the award, the winner is expected to write a report to be published in the *HLA News*, giving details of the progress of the innovation and /or how the funds were spent.

There are many fine projects that have been supported by this award over the years. The winners for 2017 were Helen Skoglund and Cecily Gilbert for their project "Information Prescription program at Barwon Health: A digital health literacy initiative for patients in Intensive Care Unit (ICU)" (Figure 1).



Fig. 1. Helen Skoglund and Cecily Gilbert receiving their 2017 Health Libraries Australia/MedicalDirector Digital Health Innovation Award.

NEWS FROM HLA

This Pilot program focusses on Barwon Health's ICU patients' information needs. ICU physicians submit an online information prescription referral and librarians will then consult with the physician and /or patient in order to search relevant sources, collate results with full-text links, prepare a plain language summary and deliver tailored results (3).

Health Libraries Australia / Anne Harrison Award

The Anne Harrison Award was established in 1987. Miss Anne Harrison (1923-1993) was librarian-in-charge of the Brownless Medical Library at the University of Melbourne (1949-1983). She helped pioneer the introduction of Medline into Australia and was a founder of the Australian Medical Librarians Group in the early 1970s.

Anne's generous bequest is wisely invested and the accrued interest funds the biennial award, with occasional supplementation from other sources. In recent years, a sum of \$5,000 has been awarded.

The aim of the award is to encourage research that will increase the understanding of health librarianship in Australia, or will explore the potential for the further development of health librarianship in Australia. Other approvable projects are those which enrich the knowledge and skills of Australian health librarians by supporting an approved course of study or study tour, or a publication in the field of Australian health librarianship, or continuing education courses, including meeting the expenses of an overseas speaker.

The award is administered by a Secretary and two other members of the Executive. The money is managed

by ALIA, as advised by the HLA Treasurer. Applicants are not obliged to be ALIA members. Each application is separately assessed by the administrators against fixed criteria. The results are moderated to identify the winner, following which the endorsement of the HLA Executive is then sought. Annual reports are published in HLA News or elsewhere, or presented at a health librarians' event. Anne Harrison's family members are notified each time the award is made, and they are invited to be present at the event.

The winners in 2016 were Raechel Damarell and associates for their project, "A systematic review of topic-based search filters and the development of a critical appraisal instrument for assessing their quality" (Figure 2).



Fig. 2. *The 2016 Health Libraries Australia / Anne Harrison Award winners receiving their award at the HLA Professional Development day.*

Previous awards supported the development of an online course for the Essentials of Health Librarianship and another course for searching PubMed, a census of library practitioners, and a directory of electronic health sciences journals.

In 2018, a list of “research hot topics” or questions without answers was offered to potential applicants. Information about all winning projects is available on the Anne Harrison Award website, along with the conditions and assessment criteria (4).

REFERENCES

1. MedicalDirector [Internet]. Health Communications Network; [cited 2018 March 9]. Available from: <http://medicaldirector.com/>
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4. Anne Harrison award [Internet]. Australian Library and Information Association; [cited 2018 March 9]. Available from: <https://www.alia.org.au/about-alia/awards-and-grants/352/anne-harrison-award>