

Report from the Public Health Information Group's virtual meeting 6th July 2021

Tomas Allen (a), Ana-Belen Escriva (b), Mala Mann (c) and Katri Larmo (d)

(a) WHO HQ Library, Geneva, Switzerland,
allent@who.int

(b) European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Solna,
Sweden, ana-belen.escriva@ecdc.europa.eu

(c) Specialist Unit for Review Evidence, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK,
mannmk@cf.ac.uk

(d) Terkko - Medical Campus Library, Helsinki University Library, Finland,
katri.larmo@helsinki.fi

Public Health Information Group (PHIG, <http://eahil.eu/sig-2/public-health-information-group/>) met on 6th July via Zoom. Including the PHIG secretary and co-chairs there were 25 in attendance.

In the light of the challenges faced by librarians and information professionals we decided to share experiences on the challenges we faced and what solutions we found regards to our working practices. The themes described below were discussed.

Digitalization

There was digitalization prior to the pandemic, but the pace and volume of digitalization has been even more rapid. This includes developments such as document delivery, user education and active use of online collaboration tools.

Supporting systematic reviews

Since the pandemic there has been an increase in the need for systematic review support and specifically carry out literature searches.

We discussed the importance finding the balance between what's reasonable within the available time and the purpose of the work (e.g., a student doing master thesis vs. a research group doing a meta-analysis). It is important the service user to know and understand that help is available. At times a consultation session is enough, with guidance on how to carry out a search. In other circumstances, it is better that the information professional carries out the literature search. During this discussion one attendee mentioned useful database: TRID, an integrated database that combines the records from TRB's Transportation Research Information Services (TRIS) Database and the OECD's Joint Transport Research Centre's International Transport Research Documentation (ITRD) Database. TRID provides access to more than 1.3 million records of transportation research worldwide: <https://trid.trb.org/>

Online teaching

We shared ideas on how to keep participants engaged and interested during online teaching sessions. One idea was to record the "lecture part" of the teaching and on live sessions do the hands-on practical

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information retrieval tasks. Also, to give a practical hands-on exercise to do in break out rooms to encourage participation. An image from @EthicsInBricks was mentioned that could be used when teaching to get participants to keep their videos on, to strengthen the interaction in the group.

<https://twitter.com/EthicsInBricks/status/1399396527030915081/photo/1> None of us like to stare at blank screens.

Collaboration tools, communication, and professional support

We discussed the merits of collaboration tools as well as their flaws (Teams, wikis, Zoom, chat). Some tools work well with smaller teams, but not so well with big groups. Overall, we agreed it is useful to a wide-ranging tool at our disposal.

We finished the meeting discussing the possibility of PHIG collaboration and establishing a project program, e.g., to help teaching the complex search strategies, to have a list of specialist resources / or a wiki specific for research on public health.

The minutes of the meeting can be read on our SlideShare: <https://www.slideshare.net/EAHILPHIG/eahil-istanbul-2021-online-public-health-information-group-meeting>