EDITORIAL

Artificial intelligence in libraries: literacy, policy and evaluation

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Dear colleagues,

For the third year running, the *Journal of EAHIL* devotes its June number to artificial intelligence. The series began in June 2024, when Michelle Wake introduced a thematic issue (Vol. 20, No. 2) gathering six articles on the challenges, limitations and opportunities of AI for libraries and the wider profession. A year later, in June 2025 (Vol. 21, No. 2), I had the pleasure of presenting a second such issue, with contributions from Finland, the Netherlands, Italy and the United Kingdom. These examined practitioners' attitudes towards AI, its impact on literature searching and health information retrieval, and the AI literacy and training that information professionals increasingly need, while consistently emphasising human oversight, the critical evaluation of AI outputs, and ethical concerns such as bias, transparency and data privacy. What began as a timely response to a fast-moving technology has, in effect, become a regular feature of the journal, one the present issue is glad to continue.

Our readers' keen interest in the topic is plain from the figures: in the journal's bibliometric report for 2025, compiled by Rebecca Wojturska, seven of the ten most downloaded *JEAHIL* articles were about AI. They were led by Shampa Sen's scoping review of AI in health and medical libraries (1,785 downloads), with Veronica Parisi and Anthea Sutton's evidence summary on ChatGPT for systematic literature searches, Andrew Cox's article on AI and health information literacy, Tuulevi Ovaska's survey of Finnish health librarians' views on AI, and Sjoukje van der Werf's workshop perspective on AI in literature searching also among them. And in both 2024 and 2025, the most downloaded issue of the year was the June AI thematic one. AI is clearly a subject our medical library community wants to read about, reflect upon and, increasingly, act upon.

Yet, for all its current prominence, AI is no newcomer. EAHIL and its journal have been following the technologies behind it, and reflecting on their consequences for our work, for far longer than the generative-AI era might suggest. As early as the 2015 EAHIL Workshop in Edinburgh, a hands-on session explored the use of text mining and machine learning, including automatic classification trained on human screening decisions, to assist with citation screening for systematic reviews; the discussion was described in this journal that same year by Claire Stansfield, Alison O'Mara-Eves and James Thomas in their report Reducing systematic review workload using text mining: opportunities and pitfalls (Vol. 11, No. 3). Years before ChatGPT, then, health librarians were already weighing the benefits and risks of automating evidence synthesis. Claire

Stansfield, a contributor to that early workshop, returns as an author in the present issue, an indication that the profession's engagement with AI is long-standing rather than recent.

Taken together, the four contributions gathered in this June thematic issue, from the United Kingdom and Poland, show a profession that, having first defined and debated what AI is, now turns to the practical work of using it well: building literacy among staff and students, guiding institutional policy, and bringing rigorous, critical and ethical evaluation to the AI tools it adopts.

In Empowering our communities, Angela Young (University College London) describes how her department, Library, Culture, Collections and Open Science, is supporting AI literacy across its community, pairing guidance, training and staff development with an emerging framework for evaluating AI tools, all underpinned by a departmental AI strategy.

Anna Richards, Ishbel Leggat and Robert O'Brien (University of Edinburgh) apply Gibbs' Reflective Cycle in Development of AI literacy support within a small academic library team, reflecting candidly on three years of building such support and weighing early successes (strong engagement and a heavily used LibGuide) against the persistent challenges of keeping materials current, securing recognition of AI literacy as part of the library's professional remit, and sustaining the work within existing workloads.

In Policies of selected Polish universities regarding the use of AI and the potential role of libraries in their implementation, Iwona Kosowska (Jagiellonian University Medical College, Kraków) examines what these institutional policies, set against five international comparators, permit and require, particularly around the disclosure of AI use and the preservation of academic integrity, and argues that libraries are well placed to provide information, raise awareness and deliver AI literacy training as the policies are put into practice.

Finally, in Reflections on evaluating the utility of an LLM for keywording health research, Claire Stansfield and Ailbhe Finnerty Mutlu (EPPI Centre, University College London) assess how well a large language model can apply predefined keywords to health-research records, in a living repository of HPV-vaccine research and in two registers of health-promotion effectiveness, distilling their experience into five practical considerations: cyclical prompt development, data quality and availability, performance benchmarks and expectations, task complexity, and the workflows and tools that make such evaluation possible.

I am grateful to the authors for sharing their experience so generously, and I hope you find as much here to reflect on as I have.