

## Hampshire Healthcare Library Service (H HLS) Annual Report 2020/2021

**Introduction:** It will not have escaped anyone's notice that this has been a most unusual year. We began, (in April 2020) with library staff grappling with the intricacies of providing a library service from home, whether that was working from the dining table, a dedicated desk, personal computers or work laptops. It should also be noted that a skeleton on-site service was provided at various points throughout the pandemic where possible.

There were various teething problems as access to emails, networks, and shared files were set up with a few workarounds in place. I am very grateful to the H HLS library team who have, nevertheless, managed to maintain a quality library service in the face of quite severe odds. While we were unable to access our workplaces and so could not even lend books by post, we were still able to provide access to knowledge and information.

**Statistics:** As libraries were initially unstaffed, it comes as no surprise that our book loans have dropped by nearly 50%. However, it is assumed that NHS staff were either working from home or extremely busy supporting COVID-19 care and so demand for our books decreased.

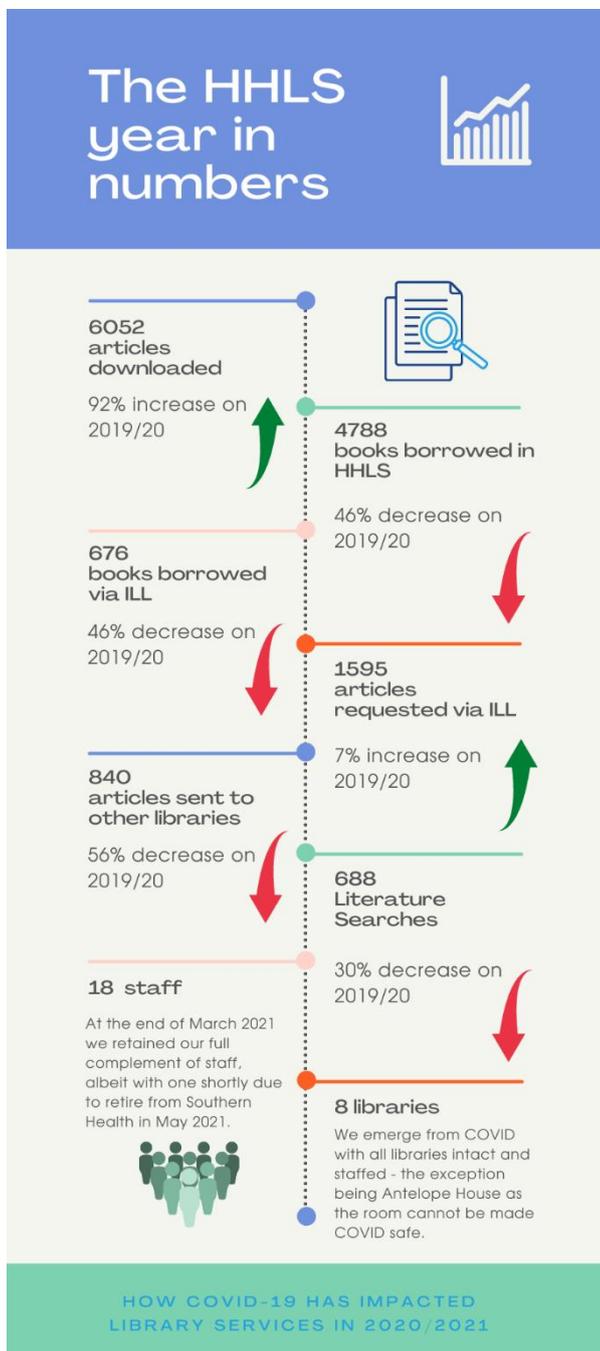
What is surprising is that the number of articles downloaded for our NHS colleagues has almost doubled with a 92% increase on the previous year. Without analysing the content of what was requested, it is possible that this is due to COVID-19 related information queries.

In addition to this, we also provided semi-regular bulletins covering the COVID-19 evidence base whether it came to providing knowledge on guidelines, published literature in general or offering a focus on mental health effects of the pandemic, supporting paediatric and neonatal care, and covering rehabilitation post-COVID.

Literature searches have also decreased, this will reflect the fact that MDTs and other meetings, where library staff pick up searches, were not taking place. This neatly demonstrates that our presence at such meetings is beneficial and has an impact on patient care.

Where literature searching has continued we have searched for topics such as:

- PPE for aerosol generating procedures
- Teamwork in cardiac arrest
- Teriparatide for prevention of fractures
- Covid-19 rehabilitation in the frail elderly
- Health and wellbeing of the nursing workforce
- Decompression/debriefing post-pandemic for NHS staff
- Reverse mentoring



In particular it is worth noting that one of the year's literature searches was delivered, at very short notice, by the library team to provide up to date evidence and knowledge on sepsis as requested by the UK Lead for Sepsis for the Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons.

**Library moves:** Covid-19 notwithstanding, during the summer of 2020 the library team also achieved a successful move of the Winchester library from the education centre on the hospital campus to the Martial Rose Library on the university library where they are now co-located with the university library. Particular thanks go to Nat Gabe and the Winchester library team who were also well supported by the rest of the library team.

In the autumn of 2020, due to imminent demolition, the library at Andover was also relocated and now resides in a brighter, larger space that will offer a welcoming space to study or to take a break.

**Embracing technology:** Despite initial teething troubles, we have taken advantage of technologies where helpful, and also purchased new webcams and laptops. By using Slack as a central communication tool for library staff we have stayed in touch with each other. Library training for our users has been carried out using various online methods via Zoom or MSTeams although there has been a preference for face to face training where possible. Newly created FAQs were added to the library website for the benefit of our library users, in addition to which, we have installed a chat function to enable direct conversation with our website users.

In addition, a new library management system (V-Smart) was rolled out across the region at the beginning of 2020 and this has not been without its teething problems. Although the HHLS library team have, as usual, risen to the challenge and continued to provide excellent service.

**Other highlights:** We ran a highly successful RCT (Randomised Coffee Trial) in conjunction with the Quality Improvement team which was appreciated by over 100 participants. We have welcomed two new members of staff at our Winchester library who have risen to the challenge of settling into a new job during pandemic conditions.

**Income generation:** The library service continues to income generate through various SLAs (Service Level Agreements), i.e. for library provision to local Public Health teams, and for OpenAthens/Link Resolver regional work for the South East, Thames Valley and Wessex. We have also completed our second year of providing a document supply service to HSIB (Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch) where we have assisted in supplying articles to support investigations.

**Returning to normal!** Where possible the library team have staffed the libraries after the first lockdown in 2020, particularly within Hampshire Hospitals where footfall is higher. In Southern Health the dispersal of NHS staff is significantly different, nevertheless library staff have continued to visit libraries in order to post out books to our distant readers.

We will continue to offer a blended physical and virtual presence in order to provide a quality library service to our library users across Southern Health and Hampshire Hospitals and look forward to seeing how 2021/22 shapes up.

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