



HSLG Annual Report for the year
2004 -2005

1. Committee Membership and Representation

a. Officers

- Bernard Barrett (Chairperson) Information Scientist, Mental Health Directorate, HSE Mid-Western Area
- Rosarii Buttimer (Treasurer and committee member until June 2005) Librarian, University College Cork
- Louise Farragher (Communications Officer) Information Specialist, National Documentation Centre on Drug Use, Health Research Board
- Sue Faulkner (appointed Interim Treasurer in June 2005) (Editor, HINT) Librarian, Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary Services
- Ciara McCaffrey (Cochrane Library Liaison Officer) Librarian, College of Science, University of Limerick
- Marie McClarnon (International Liaison Officer & Deputy Chairperson) Librarian, Health Protection Surveillance Centre
- David Mockler (Secretary) Medical Librarian, Trinity College Dublin

b. Committee Members

- Pat Doherty. (Resigned April 2005) College Librarian, Institute of Technology, Tralee. Pat was co-opted onto the committee to represent libraries in Institutes of Technologies, given the substantial role they now occupy in nursing education.
- Brian Galvin. Senior Information Specialist, National Documentation Centre on Drug Use, Health Research Board
- Muriel Haire. Librarian/N2N Administrator, Irish Nurses Organisation
- Jean Harrison. Regional Librarian, HSE North Eastern Area
- Aoife Lawton. Systems Librarian, HSE Shared Services Eastern Region
- Fiona McCarthy. (Resigned June 2005) Medical Librarian, Academic Centre, Connolly Memorial Hospital
- Anne M O'Byrne. Head Librarian, Dublin Dental School and Hospital
- Donal O'Sullivan, Assistant Librarian, Institute of Technology, Tralee. (Appointed to replace Pat Doherty)
- Dympna Sheils. Librarian, Cavan/Monaghan Hospital Services, HSE North Eastern Area
- Penny Wiggle. Reader Services Librarian, The Adelaide and Meath Hospital, inc. the National Children's Hospital, Tallaght

2. Working Groups, Leaders and Membership

a. Continuing Professional Development Working Group

- i. Aoife Lawton. (Leader) Systems Librarian, HSE Shared Services Eastern Region
- ii. Fiona McCarthy. (resigned) Medical Librarian, Connolly Memorial Hospital
- iii. Caroline Pfeifer. Librarian, Irish Hospice Foundation
- iv. Kathryn Smith. Subject Librarian, Hamilton Library, Trinity College
- v. Joanne Callinan. Senior library Assistant, St Vincent's Centre

b. Website Working Group

- i. Brian Galvin. (Leader) Senior Information Specialist, HRB
- ii. Louise Farragher. Information Specialist, HRB
- iii. Amanda Halpin. Nursing & Education Librarian, Dublin City University
- iv. James Molloy. Librarian, Beaumont Hospital

c. Standards Working Group

- i. Niamh Lucey. (Leader) Librarian, St Vincents Hospital, Elm Park
- ii. Muriel Haire. Librarian/N2N Administrator, Irish Nurses Organisation
- iii. Maire McLarnon. Librarian, Health Protection Surveillance Centre
- iv. Anne O'Byrne. Head Librarian, Dublin Dental School and Hospital

3. Attendance at meetings:

The committee met five times in venues hosted by committee members in Dublin (2), Limerick (1), Kilkenny (1) and Cork (1). The Committee also attended one workshop facilitated by Shane Godbolt in Kilkenny. Many thanks to the Library staff of TCD, HRB, UCC, HSE Mid Western Area, HSE South Eastern Area for the use of their facilities for Committee meetings. Attendance was as follows:

Bernard Barrett 5/5	Ciara McCaffrey 4/5
Rosarii Buttimer 2/3	Fiona McCarthy 2/3
Pat Doherty 1/4	Maire McClarnon 5/5
Louise Farragher 4/5	David Mockler 4/5
Sue Faulkner 5/5	Ann M O'Byrne 3/5
Brian Galvin 5/5	Donal O'Sullivan 0/1
Muriel Haire 3/5	Dympna Sheils 1/5
Jean Harrison 2/5	Penny Wiggle 2/5
Aoife Lawton 4/5	

4. Chairperson's Report

Looking back through the minutes of committee meetings for this last year, it can seem a little difficult to know where to begin – so much has been achieved, and the reports from my fellow committee officers on the following pages, pay ample testimony to this.

As a group, we are conscious of the critical role we all play in the health services within our country. We are the people and the place (whether it's physical or electronic) that provide access to information, knowledge and evidence, which then becomes part of health care practice. We are also the people that train the evidence users, and as often as not interpret the evidence that becomes health care practice.

While we can be justifiably proud of what we do, it is ironic, frustrating and a matter of very serious concern, that the importance of our role is for the most part not

sufficiently recognised. At a time of reform, which is supposed to promote a world class health service, some of us are even beginning to suffer staff cuts. In addition to this, the physical place we call library, in many instances, cannot find full expression where it is sidelined into often unsuitable accommodation.

This is the year in which the Health Sciences Libraries Group, building as well on initiatives from previous years, has begun to put in place the first steps towards promoting positive change, which will in the long term be for the benefit of us all.

This change involves us all - it can only be effective if we work as a group – that means all of us – not just the committee.

As a group we now have a professionally designed logo and an agreed mission statement, which are two of the basic tools needed to help us achieve more visibility and recognition for ourselves.

We have also commenced a strategic planning process, which has seen many of you, discussing an agreed set of goals and targets (objectives) for each of those goals. This means that we can all have a clear idea of what needs to be done, and the beginnings of a plan for how we get it, over the three year lifespan of the plan.

We will also immediately after the AGM see the launch of the second edition of the Standards for Irish Health Care Libraries and Information Services, which describes the environment necessary for the work we do.

If we are to work together, then we need to communicate easily and frequently. We now have a fully functional e-mail discussion list and an extremely well designed and interactive web site, both of which facilitate this.

We also have a well established Annual Conference, which enables us to come together and network among each other.

As helpful as these are, they will only be effective if we acknowledge that we ourselves need to be the primary agent of change. It follows from this that we also need to understand the nature of change. Change is not simply getting what we want. Change involves learning, compromise and growth on a number of different planes, both for ourselves, others, and the institutions in which we work.

It is difficult for us to work with, and even be treated as fellow health care professionals, if we do not possess at least some understanding of the skills and knowledge, which are common currency among those we work with. How many of us know what is involved in critical appraisal or in classifying levels of evidence? Were we ever trained in marketing skills and understanding the psychology, of those we mistakenly call users? Can we clearly differentiate information management from knowledge management? If we want to change others, we need to be prepared to accept change ourselves. A pre-condition for change is learning and knowledge, and that is why the committee is attaching so much importance to Continuing Professional Development.

There are unlikely to be any miracle cures or overnight success (although we won't run away from it, should the opportunity present itself!). If we really do want to change things for the better, right across the board, we will all have to be involved.

We should expect that it will take time to change things, but over this last year, we have together put down a set of solid foundations, which will enable growth and change to take place.

As Chairperson, I would like to thank you for your support over the course of the last year, and urge as many of you as possible to continue working with us all for change. In particular, I would like to especially thank the committee officers, who probably despair when they hear my voice at the end of the phone! As chairperson, I could wish for no better group of people to work with.

5. Executive Board Members Report

The Executive Board of the Library Association of Ireland meets ten times a year. Most meetings are held in Dublin, with at least one a year in a non-Dublin location!

All members of the LAI are eligible for election to the Executive Board, and in the last year, the Health Sciences sector has been represented by Bernard Barrett (HSLG Chairperson) and Maire McClarnon (HSLG Vice Chairperson and International Liaison Officer).

The Executive Board is elected (or depending on the number of nominations) declared at the LAI's Annual General Meeting in March of each year. Elections to the position of President, Vice Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer take place at the subsequent first meeting of the board.

While there are often matters for substantial discussion, most meetings of the board follow a standard pattern, one feature of which is the opportunity for each sector to share information on what it is doing, and to learn from each other. The HSLG has benefited substantially from this, through having two members present at board meetings, and is respected and admired by the LAI for the way in which it raises the profile of the profession within our sector.

We have also been extremely pleased with the assistance and advice which has so readily been offered us by fellow board members, when required.

The LAI is a small organization when compared to others such as CILIP and those which are sector specific such as the Medical Library Association. It has not had full time paid officers and relies heavily on voluntary efforts, as does our own group and committee.

Despite the strictures placed upon it by the lack of resources, both human and financial, the LAI is doing all it can to be responsive to its members and to develop itself as an organization. One of the most visible ways in which it has recently done through this is through the appointment of a Development Officer, and initiatives such as Library Ireland Week, which we know that some members of our sector took part in. Most of these developments stem from a review of the LAI that was completed about eighteen months ago, and which is now being discussed and implemented in a phased way.

It is important that we support our professional organization. While it may not always be obvious, it does work hard on our behalf. If we wish it to become even more effective, it is essential that we become involved - this is the only way in which change can occur.

We look forward to continuing to represent the sector and of course always appreciate constructive feedback, questions etc that we can take to Executive Board meetings.

Bernard Barrett
Maire McClarnon
HSLG / LAI Executive Board Members

6. Report from Committee Officers

a. International Liaison Officer, Maire McClarnon

The International Liaison Officer (ILO) has been developing links and contact persons with international bodies such as:

- American Library Association
- Canadian Library Association
- European Association for Health Information and Libraries Association (EAHIL)
- International Congress on Medical Librarianship (ICML).

In the last year, the ILO has distributed to the Committee a list of conferences and their content and a brief outline of the various associations and their organisation. The group was advised that strong links be maintained with the Health Libraries Group (UK) as there are areas of common interest and that it might be possible in the future to include Northern Irish librarians in our training initiatives. We should also develop string links with EAHIL, because of its European focus. The development of such a relationship would be advantageous. It was noted that Committee Member Muriel Haire is a member of EAHIL council and has made a proposal to host the EAHIL Workshop in 2009. The matter will be discussed further by the incoming committee 2005-2006.

b. Communications Officer, Louise Farragher

2004-2005 has been a busy year for communications. The milestones during the year were:

- Logo

The successful commissioning of a HSLG logo, after discussion and work with the Committee and drawing inc design company has been a great achievement for the HSLG group as a whole. Although the HSLG represents a relatively small group of health librarians compared to our larger counterparts in the UK, USA and Canada, we are developing and defining for ourselves a professional image and presence that can easily match our international and national colleagues. The project also produced a set of 'corporate colours' (Navy blue and gold/yellow) which will be of use on the HSLG website, and in HSLG publications / stationery.

- Mailing List

The Mailing list was transferred from the old Topica.com service to a new, more stable service called Mailman. Mailman is free software for managing electronic mail discussion and e-newsletter lists. Mailman is integrated with the web, making it easy for users to manage their accounts and for list owners to administer their lists. Mailman supports built-in archiving, automatic bounce processing, content filtering, digest delivery, and spam filters. The mailing list is being received successfully by users who had previously been unable to receive the 'Topica' list. While the transition has, for the most part been successful, there have been ongoing problems regarding the use of attachments. The problem lies less with the list software and more in the fact that we all use very different types of email systems with security systems varying from the

very strict to the very lax. It is likely that in the future, all attachments will have to be sent to the Communications Officer, who will then redistribute attachments to the list.

- Website

Work was completed by the Web Site Working Group on the set up and installation of the website, and time was given to training and learning the system. We hope to use the website as another tool of communication in the coming year. The website provides the means for forums and discussion rooms, polls, joint projects and a limited directory of members. It also provides interesting and useful features such as the news aggregator and page counting option. Maintenance of the site will be an ongoing project for both the Web Site Working Group and the Communications officer. Response to the website has been overwhelmingly positive.

- HINT

The Communications Officer has passed the role of Editor to Sue Faulkner and a future team of editors, due to ongoing work pressures. The Communications Officer will stay on board to support work on the HTML layout of HINT, distribution via the website and mailing list and any other technical issues that may arise.

c. Cochrane Library Liaison Officer, Ciara McCaffrey

The Cochrane Library liaison officer represents the HSLG on the All Ireland Cochrane Training Group, which consists of a representative from the UK Cochrane Centre, the Health Research Board, the Northern Ireland R & D Office, and representatives from the healthcare professions (midwife, dentist, nurse, etc.).

The purpose of this group is to consider all issues relating to promotion and training of Cochrane throughout Ireland. My participation in this group in 2004-05 required me to draft training specifications to meet the Cochrane training needs of Irish health science librarians. The one-day training course for librarians which I provided twice over the year incorporates these specifications. In addition, as part of this group and at the request of the HRB, I have provided demonstrations of how to search the Cochrane library at non-librarian events aimed at promoting Cochrane to the Irish healthcare sector.

This year I requested volunteers to participate in these promotional events, and received a very positive response from many librarians, for which I extend my sincere thanks. The panel of trainers currently willing and able to give Cochrane Library demonstrations are:

- Ciara McCaffrey
- Niamh Lucey
- Grainne McCabe
- Brid McGrath

These training events, aimed at all healthcare professions, provide an excellent opportunity for the HSLG to achieve one of its strategic objectives, that of promoting the role and work of health science librarians outside of our profession.

Other activities as Cochrane Library Liaison Officer have included attending training for librarians supporting systematic reviewers in the University of York in February 2005, giving guidance to individual health science librarians with queries relating to Cochrane, sharing my training materials, slides, handouts, exercises, etc. with anyone who requests them and submitting an article on the Cochrane Library to the next issue of HINT.

However, the majority of my time has been spent in training and promotion, particularly due to the change of interface for the Cochrane Library, from the Update Software interface to the Wiley InterScience interface, in January 2005. The following is a list of events in which I provided training/promotion of the Cochrane Library, on behalf of the HSLG. It is my hope that in 2005-2006 the other people on the panel of Cochrane Library trainers will be able to participate in these types of events if and when they arise.

Full day training for librarians:

- 26 Nov 2004, St. James's Hospital, Dublin
- 29 April 2005, St. James's Hospital, Dublin

Cochrane Collaboration in Ireland:

- 3rd Feb 2005, DCU LAI/CILIP Northern Ireland Annual Conference
- 21 April 2005, Derry Programme for Action for Children (PAC)
- 16 June 2005, Dublin Introduction to Cochrane
- 26 Aug 2005, National College of Ireland, Dublin

d. Treasurer's report

Income versus Expenditure, from 1st November 2004 to 1st Sept. 2005

Income	Total
	€
Conference 2004	12,360.00
CPD	3050.00
Journal Listing 2005	800.00
Total Income	16,210.00

Expenditure	€
Bank Charges	19.71
Conference 2004	10,925.00
CPD	1756.48
Website	2869.25
Strategic Planning Training	282.80
Total Expenditure	15,853.34

*Sue Faulkner, Acting Treasurer
HSLG
20 Sept. 2005*

7. Reports from Working Groups

a. Continuing Professional Development

i. Role of committee post

The role of group leader of the CPD group following on from last year was to continue to provide a minimum of 6 training events during 2005 and to run courses which corresponded to courses requested from the survey results of 2004 & requests from the group.

ii. Achievements of the last 12 months / Action points

Our achievements in 2005 include:

5 courses were held throughout the year including:

1. Cochrane Library for Health Science Libraries (12 attendees)
2. Project Management (9 attendees)
3. Introduction to HTML (20 attendees)
4. Financial Management (8 attendees)
5. Finding the Evidence (to be held in November)

Course evaluation forms were collected after each course and the feedback is used to inform future courses. The survey results were made available on the HSLG website together with a professional development plan template under a new 'resources' section.

iii. Benefits for the group

The courses were run by both internal and external trainers. An internal trainer refers to a member of our own profession. This is beneficial both to the trainer - from a personal development perspective - and to the trainees as the courses are put into a local relevant context. Because the training is specifically held for people working in the Health Science sector each course is a great opportunity to share ideas, network and gain insight into each other's work. Some courses were attended by non-library staff which reflects the multidisciplinary environment in which we now work. All courses were provided at the lowest possible cost to ensure equity of access to training.

iv. Areas of concern

One concern is that the numbers of the CPDWG dwindled rapidly during the summer with 3 members leaving and remaining members unavailable to assist. If the training is to improve and develop and branch out into other areas of CPD e.g. study days, shadow learning, exchange programmes, online learning then the group needs more support from the HSLG membership. The lack of participation and availability of volunteers to this group has had a knock-on effect on the strategic planning of the HSLG. One of the agreed objectives was to 'Develop a Continuing Professional Development Programme'; this is an ongoing area of concern.

- v. Learning points for the group
Much time is needed to properly co-ordinate the management & marketing of training courses. This is heavily reliant on members being allowed to devote time to the running of courses.

b. Website Working Group

At the 2004 AGM the Website Working Group (WSWG) reported that its terms of reference had been fulfilled. A report on the findings of the research undertaken by the WSWG was presented and recommendations made regarding the development of the HSLG's web presence. The WSWG recommended that HSLG should develop its own web site and that an open source content management system (CMS) was the most appropriate tool for this. Over a number of meetings the group considered several CMS options and in November commissioned a consultant to examine these options and recommend the most appropriate one for the HSLG's needs. Following acceptance by the committee of the WSWG's recommendations, the consultant was commissioned to work on the development of the website using the Drupal CMS.

The purpose of the WSWG changed from advising the committee to establishing and maintaining a web site, and the terms of reference of the group were changed to reflect this. In early 2005 members of the WSWG worked with the consultant to develop a website which would fulfil the requirements as outlined in its report. The WSWG registered the domain name www.hslg.ie and in June members of the WSWG presented the website to the committee. The website was launched in early July. A number of invitations were sent out to the general membership to join the WSWG and the group will meet again shortly after the 2005 AGM.

c. Standards Working Group

This year the group has been largely concerned with publishing and launching the second edition of Standards for Irish healthcare library and information services. Following unanimous acceptance at the LAI Annual General Meeting in Cork in April 2005, a Standards Working Group was organised, with its own terms of reference. The group set about retaining a design company to create a professional finished document and the contract went to Red Dog Design Consultants whose clients include An Comhairle Leabharlanna and the Health Research Board.

A huge effort went into organising the launch of the Standards which will take place on Thursday 22 September 2005 in the Dublin Dental School and Hospital following the HSLG Annual General Meeting. Ruth Flanagan, president of the Library Association of Ireland, has been invited to launch the document, and the HSLG membership has been strongly encouraged to use the document.

The terms for a new Standards Working Group were ratified by the Committee during the year. Among the tasks of the new group will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the second edition of the Standards and to advise on the rate of frequency for further updates.

8. HINT

There will be at least two issues of the HINT: Health, Information, News and Thinking newsletter for 2005. The publication has become entirely electronic, and distribution is through the HSLG mailing list and website. Sue Faulkner has taken over as head of the editorial team with Louise Farragher continuing to compile and distribute the newsletter.

9. Policies and Procedures

In response to queries at the last year's AGM, the draft Procedures document was re-circulated, via the mailing list, to Group members for comment. The LAI agreed to ballot paid up personal members on acceptance. An announcement of the ballot will be placed in HINT and the ballot is to be carried out under the auspices of the LAI to ensure impartiality. The Committee noted that the LAI Executive Board is interested in using the draft document as a template for other LAI Groups/Panels and is fully supportive of the process.

10. HSLG Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008

Work has continued over the year on developing the HSLG Strategic Plan.

As you will know, from last year's conference, the planning process offers us all the opportunity to agree a set of goals (statements of where we want to be in three years time) and the objectives (the actions which we will take to make those goals a reality).

The planning process is not simply about an abstract set of ideas. It is a people-centred process, which has involved us all. When we are short staffed and running one-person libraries, the future, when one is confronted with the challenges of the present, can seem remote and unreal. To plan for the future does involve extra work on top of our jobs, but it gives each of us the opportunity to shape the future - of our profession as a whole, and as a consequence, the places where we work.

At last years conference, each of us worked in groups to help produce seven goals. The ideas and feedback from these groups was invaluable. The planning process has continued throughout the course of this year, with committee members working with each of you, to devise SMART objectives.

With these more or less completed, a lot of the hard work is out of the way. Some refinements still need to be made, to ensure that what we seek is realistically attainable, or to ensure we are clear about how to pursue these objectives, and these will be ironed out over the next few months. The plan should then be able to become operational with the commencement of our annual conference in February 2006.

It has taken us all longer than we thought to work together on this. This is not surprising. It is the first time that we have done this, and taken the first steps to thinking and planning together as a group. It's a learning exercise where there are no right or wrong answers - all that matters is that we do learn and move forward together.

The next steps in the process, between now and the conference are;

1. Implementation planning: ensuring that there is a clear, costed and timed action plan for each objective

2. Evaluation: ensuring that we learn from what we do - recognising and giving acknowledgement to what has worked, and learning from what did not.

Thanks to all of you have responded so far with your time and your ideas.

11. HSLG Annual Conference, February 2006

The HSLG annual conference is to be held at a new time and in a new venue in 2006. The conference will be held in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny on 23-24 February 2006. The working title for the conference is: 'Thinking the Unthinkable'

Our 2006 conference attempts to build on the themes and territory explored in our previous conferences. We've attempted to discern what new roles it might be necessary for us to adopt and have begun a process of strategic planning to help us agree and attain a set of jointly agreed goals and objectives. Underpinning all of this has to be the ability to reflect, think critically and dare to think the unthinkable about the future of our profession.

This year's conference will bring together a number of different speakers and insights, all of whom will be seeking to challenge us to look forwards, and to suggest skills and scenarios we must begin to strategise around.

Further details will be posted on the HSLG website in the coming months.

12. HLG (UK) Annual Conference 2006

The HSLG Chairman has received an invitation from the HLG to participate in their next conference, provisionally titled "Informed and Interactive," to be held on 10th-12th July 2006, in the Devonshire Park Conference Centre, Eastbourne, East Sussex. The Committee approved the proposal from the Chairman to commit to two speakers and two breakout sessions at the conference.

13. HLG Online Membership Directory of Health Library Services

Following the joint conference of the HSLG/HLG in 2004, the chair of the HLG informed the HSLG of its intention to update the Directory of Health Library Services in the United Kingdom and Ireland and expressed the wish that the HSLG would join it in this endeavour. The Royal College of Nursing and the HLG are collaborating on this project and throughout 2005 have been making preparations for the creation of an online directory. The committee of the HSLG agreed that it should examine whether it was appropriate for the group to become involved in this project and in June a representative of the committee met with Julie Ryder of the HLG to discuss possible cooperation. The committee accepted the recommendation of its representative that it would be appropriate for the HSLG to contribute to the development of the directory. The committee will discuss its potential role in completing the Irish section of the directory later in the year.