

CILIP Health Libraries Group Conference 2016
15th - 16th September 2016
Scarborough Spa, Scarborough
#HLG2016

Rather than listing each session that I attended and just reproducing key points from the slides, I'm following key headings that I've seen being used by colleagues awarded bursaries.

All presentations from the conference can be found at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/health-libraries-group/events-conferences-seminars/hlg-conference-2016>

The most useful thing that I learnt was

The session by Steve Glover about using twitter, and about how his service uses twitter as a key marketing tool. Key points were about enhancing reputation, making closer relationships with key staff and key opinion leaders, use photos to drastically increase hits, and think about the time when staff look at twitter (on way to / from work, maybe in the evening). Steve and his team use stuffed toys quite a lot when tweeting I'm not sure that I'm there yet!

My conference highlight ...

For me, there was no one overall conference highlight. I've identified the key sessions for me below and I think key themes for me would be evidence to the boardroom (and being able to demonstrate to the powers that be the impact and importance of our services) and evidence to the bedside (and not forgetting that our work is to improve patient outcomes, rather than just getting embroiled in the day to day minutiae of service delivery.)

One thing I will be changing at work following attendance at this conference will be ...

I'd been to a workshop about the impact toolkit prior to the conference, but attending the session at HLG reinforced the message, and has definitely inspired me to "do something" about impact. Measuring impact is an area of weakness currently for my service and I now feel more confident in using the toolkit to address this.

The presentation that really struck me was ...

The presentation by Nick Poole really inspired me about the importance of information in wider society as a whole, and the role of CILIP in advocating for this. I would confess to not being CILIP's greatest fan in the past, but whether it was just Nick's speaking style or the CILIP message, I found his session really engaging. I've certainly been more of an advocate for libraries in their broadest sense since the conference.

The workshop I found most useful was ...

The session on metrics by Alan Fricker really got me thinking. How are we doing as a service and how do we compare? And if we make changes to how we do something, does it make a difference to the end user?

Alan used a crafty acronym to describe a good metric:-

- M - needs to be meaningful for the organisation and not just for the library

- A - needs to be actionable. Can we change it? Can we measure what matters? Investigate something, don't just assume
- R - needs to be reproducible
- C - needs to be comparable

As part of the workshop, we had to try to come up with some "good" metrics, and it was interesting just how difficult this really was. It's easy to count something, but is it meaningful?

I would recommend attending the HLG conference because ...

The HLG conference is great for the variety of talks which all have so much direct relevance to the workplace. As there were so many delegates attending from Leeds, we tried to cover as many workshops as possible, and by making those choices, probably forced ourselves to really focus on our own individual priorities. HLG is also a great chance to meet suppliers, network, and just generally immerse yourself in "all things health libraries". I'm fortunate to have been able to attend several times over the years, and always come away inspired.

The most engaging speaker was ...

I (and probably many others) found the most engaging session to be the Bishop and Le Fanu Memorial Lecture by Gareth Allen, from Woburn Coaching, entitled "PT your brain - the benefits of exercise on mental health". Here was someone who had tried to take their own life as a 17 year old, suffered terribly with depression, and had managed to overcome their illness, and now actively (literally) works with patients to improve their mental health. An excellent orator, he didn't profess to have "the answer" to mental health issues, and wasn't claiming that exercise was the cure all, but he was certainly inspirational in the stories that he told.

Along with the talk by Lynn Daniel (from the Expert Patient Programme) earlier on day 2, for me it was a real reminder about why we do our jobs. We don't see patients on a day to day basis, but it is the patient that is at the heart of all that we do.

I felt that the key theme of the conference was ...

Knowledge for Healthcare was the constant running through the conference. There has been so much published from KfH over the last 12 months of so, it was good to have it brought together under one roof.

The conference venue ...

Despite loving the seaside, I'd never been to Scarborough before, so was particularly taken with the venue. Day one was so foggy though, I had to go for a walk along the seafront after the sessions finished to check out the theory that there really was a harbour there! The venue itself (Scarborough Spa) was perfect for a conference - so great not to be stuck in the bowels of a hotel somewhere, although it did keep us on our toes trying to find all the different rooms which were spread over quite a distance. A definite plus was that group map reading was a great way of networking as we explored together and it was great for the step counters amongst us too!

Helen Swales
December 2016