



Library Services – Northern Territory Department of Health

*Sean Petrie – Health Services Regional Librarian,
Alice Springs Health Library*

The Northern Territory’s Department of Health (DoH) provides an extensive suite of services that support the health and wellbeing of Territorians. This includes provision of acute care services provided through the Department’s five public hospitals and delivery of a range of community based services covering areas such as; aged and disability programs, mental health services, oral health, hearing health, cancer screening services, women’s health, and more. This all takes place in a complex environment characterised by extreme distance and physical isolation. Ensuring that client access to information isn’t inhibited by geography is a key role for Library staff.

In addition to providing the sorts of resources and services traditionally offered by health libraries – access to comprehensive print and electronic resources, document delivery, reference services, etc – the Library is also extending its role in a number of new and exciting areas. This includes its work in supporting the Department’s Clinical Guideline Program and the realignment of its services and facilities to support the Department’s goal of becoming a ‘Learning Organisation’.

Clinical guidelines

A major function of the library is to support the development and use of evidence based clinical guidelines. It does this by:

- delivering training on how to write evidence based guidelines
- providing research assistance and literature searches for finding evidence
- managing PROMPT, the Department’s web-based document management system which provides organisation wide access to approved clinical policies, procedures and guidelines

Two Guideline Librarian positions have been created to support the program while the Guidelines team is housed in the library.

eLearning

The Library is also playing a key role in supporting the Department’s eLearning Project, a key plank of its ‘Learning Organisation’ strategy, by developing the eLearning Library. The eLearning Library provides:

- a central, interactive, flexible ‘teaching and learning’/meeting space
- an interactive SmartBoard, projectors and associated technology
- WiFi access, copying and printing facilities, borrowable laptops
- 3 group training/computer lab facilities with secure access for after-hours use.

The Library has also established a specialised position, the eLearning Librarian, to support staff in their eLearning endeavours. The position supports and facilitates eLearning by linking the library’s resources with online courses, providing advice on copyright, and training departmental staff on the use of eLearning tools as well as information literacy and eLearning training modules.

Membership

Full library membership is available, upon application, to all NT Department of Health and NT Department of Children and Families staff. Special membership categories have been created for other practising health professionals in the NT who either lack alternative access to library services or who are employed by organisations with an MOU with the Library. Members of this latter group also have access to a comprehensive collection of leading, online information resources through the Library’s eLibrary4hp portal.

Web address

Visit the Library’s website to find out more about its services, resources and opening hours. Contact details for individual branches are listed below.

<http://www.health.nt.gov.au/Library/index.aspx>

Branch	Address and contact details
Darwin Health Library	Ground Floor, Building 4, Royal Darwin Hospital, Tiwi Ph: (08) 8922 8961 Email: LibraryRDH.ths@nt.gov.au
Katherine Health Library	Ground Floor Katherine Hospital Ph: (08) 89739036
Alice Springs Health Library	Liebig Building, Alice Springs Hospital Ph: (08) 8951 7966
Tennant Creek Health Library	Please contact the Alice Springs Library
East Arnhem	Level 1, District Office Gove District Hospital Ph: (08) 89870262