



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



The HIFA LIS Project: Exploring the role of libraries in times of crisis

Caroline De Brún, Knowledge and Evidence Specialist, Public Health England

Neil Pakenham-Walsh – Co-ordinator of the HIFA (Health Information For All) campaign and co-director of the Global Healthcare Information Network

Agenda

- Background
- Partners
- Evidence briefing highlights
- Thematic discussion
- Project outputs

Partners

Key partners:

- Healthcare Information For All
- Evidence Aid
- Public Health England

Additional working group members:

National Library of Medicine, AHILA (Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa), World Health Organization, Partnerships in Health Information, Makerere University, Uganda, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, University of Cambridge, England, National Health Service, Ireland, San Jose State University, California, Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance.

Project background

- Set up in March 2017 between HIFA (Healthcare Information For All) and Public Health England
- Evidence Aid joined the project in April 2017
- Working group – May 2017
- Evidence briefing – June 2017
- EAHIL – June 2017
- IFLA – August 2017

Evidence briefing

What is the evidence around knowledge and library service provision and knowledge management to support global health, and disaster and emergency preparedness*?

** natural disasters include tsunamis, storms, floods, earthquakes, etc. and man-made disasters include off-shore oil drilling, wars, civil unrest, terrorism, etc. Outbreaks refer to disease outbreaks, pandemics, infections, etc.*

Results and themes

6 databases - 130 results of which 68 highly relevant and organised in to the following themes:

1. Access to information
2. Knowledge management
3. Existing programmes/resources
4. Roles:
 - health librarians
 - knowledge brokers
 - libraries
 - public libraries
5. Potential and implied roles
6. Social media

Key messages

- Charging station, Internet connection point, warming centre, meeting point, communication channel, pre-departure training provider
- New roles - Global Health Informationist/Disaster Information Specialists
- Access to timely, accurate, and quality health information for disaster teams is essential.
- There is a digital divide with regards to access to this content
- Knowledge management tools are available to support global health
- Knowledge brokers (KB) can support data sharing
- Social media can be used for information dissemination, disease surveillance, communicating with the general public
- Awareness of local context, such as cultural sensitivities, fears, insecurities, and inequity in literacy levels is needed

Thematic discussion 1

Librarian activity in areas of crisis and disaster

1. What do we know about the availability and use of reliable information for global health emergencies, disasters and disease outbreaks?
2. Do you (or your organisation) have any real-life experience in dealing with an emergency/disaster/outbreak? Were you able to access/provide the information needed? What were the challenges and lessons learned?

Thematic discussion 1: Results

Librarian activity in areas of crisis and disaster

78 messages from 19 contributors in 9 countries (Ethiopia, Germany, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Tanzania, UK, USA, Zambia).

- Building Bridges forum – network for sharing knowledge between researchers, policy-makers, librarians, and journalists.
- Knowledge is the only weapon that health systems have, with major new epidemic outbreaks.
- There is a huge gap between what is needed and what is available, with each player, not having the capacity to deliver to their potential.

Thematic discussion 2

Evidence-informed humanitarian action (preparedness and response) - Humanitarian Evidence Week

1. What do we mean by evidence-informed humanitarian action (preparedness and response)?
2. What kind of evidence do humanitarians need, and why?
3. Call for examples and case studies: Where has evidence been lacking and what has been the result? Where has evidence made a difference?
4. How can humanitarians access and use evidence more effectively?
5. How can humanitarians and information professionals work together more effectively?

Thematic discussion 2: Results

Evidence-informed humanitarian action (preparedness and response)

104 messages from 22 contributors in 11 countries (Bangladesh, Iceland, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Sudan, Switzerland, Uganda, UK, USA, Zimbabwe).

- There is not an agreed definition of ‘evidence-informed humanitarian action’.
- Possibly EBM model: Pillar 1 – cumulative evidence, Pillar 2 – professional experience, Pillar 3 – societal values
- Another option: Knowledge-based practice
- A number of examples and case studies were also discussed

Project outputs

- Project page
<http://www.hifa.org/projects/library-and-information-services>
- Evidence briefing
- List of grey literature information sources
- Reports of thematic discussions:
 - librarian activity in areas of crisis and disaster
 - evidence-informed humanitarian action (preparedness and response)

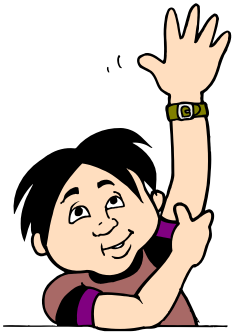
Next steps

The project has now ended, but HIFA will continue the working group.

Launch of the Evidence for Global and Disaster Health Special Interest Group at International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia:

- 23rd August 2018 – Satellite meeting with presentations, workshops, and reception
- 28th August 2018 – First meeting

More information here: <https://www.ifla.org/about-e4gdh-special-interest-group>



Any questions?

Caroline De Brún, DipLIS, PhD

Knowledge and Evidence Specialist
Public Health England

Caroline.Debrun@phe.gov.uk

Neil Pakenham-Walsh

Co-ordinator of the HIFA (Healthcare Information For All) campaign and co-director of the Global Healthcare Information Network

neil@hifa.org