

## Deb Ward's Remarks at HSL Anniversary Symposium, September 28, 2011

The background described here today drove my interest in coming to Mizzou. When my predecessor, Dean Schmidt, retired, the IAIMS planning was proceeding, and right before I came, the implementation grant was funded. I was so excited to be coming here to work with Joyce and so many others who wanted to see computer technology advance health care practices. The dream is yet to be fully realized, and has now broadened into the wider vision of the Clinical and Translational Science Awards, with a great deal of work that still needs to be done.

Dr. Lindberg has continued to demonstrate that librarians have a rightful place in this information construct. We make a difference at the local level, with the NLM providing useful tools for us. We know that in the future, bright and tenacious librarians will continue to play an active role in bridging gaps between information and those who seek it.

Don Lindberg went to NLM as the right person at the right time. Over the years, the National Library of Medicine has provided leadership that has shaped the foundations of medical library practice. MEDLINE lead the way in bibliographic searching and retrieval. Later, the DOCLINE system revolutionized interlibrary loan, speeding up document delivery so that articles in other libraries can be retrieved in a few hours.

Years later, PubMed placed a powerful search tool in the hands of anyone who wants to access biomedical journals. Then came the creation of MedlinePlus, that placed free and reliable health information in the hands of patients. These are a just a few of the most outstanding examples of the many ways in which NLM makes a difference in the lives of health sciences librarians and their clients everywhere.

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine in its eight regions, the NLM grants opportunities, combined with the NLM informatics training programs provide a structure for innovation in health care information support that is unmatched in the world. We at HSL are thankful beneficiaries of the work of Dr. Lindberg and others at NLM who have made a tremendous difference in the quality of health information to support health care in the U.S. and around the world. I'd like to point out that it was a grant from NLM that seeded the development of the MAHEC Digital Library, still used by Missouri health professionals today.

Presently, the HSL is staffed by 10 Librarians and 12 other staff. We maintain a robust web site, visited over 240,000 times last year, offer clinical medical librarian services to two departments, provide 103 hours per week of on-site access, and answer over 11,000 questions per year. Our librarians last year provided instruction to over 1,600 students, and we see an increase in that number every year. Interlibrary loan received over 10,000 articles for faculty from other libraries. Our reference librarians are engaged in collaborative research projects – currently with Schools of Medicine and Nursing, and we partner with the School of Health

Professions on the Literature in Health Care program, which is a discussion group on health-related stories that allow health professionals across the spectrum of the disciplines to discuss the human aspects of illness and health services delivery. To support us all, the Technical Services Department selects and organizes our content, making the rest of us look good.

As for the future, we here at the HSL look forward to further development of new services driven by mobile technology and other innovations. We will continue to develop our clinical information services in which librarians tailor their work to the needs of busy clinicians. We would like to add at least one position to help us achieve this. And, in yet another direction, we would like to develop a model for bioinformationist services to support genetics research.

As we move into our brave new future, we recognize that some of the greatest obstacles to the free flow of information are cultural and economic, not technical. Examples are attitudes that deny the increasing complexity of the information landscape, the idea that information is a competitive edge best used when hoarded, the cultural norm of viewing ownership of information as a high-priced commodity reserved for the few, and the notion that information-related skills are simple and intuitive, not requiring instruction.

Add to these cultural biases the economic barriers implicit in a publishing system that is experimenting with new cost models in a digital age. And – academic libraries in general are still finding their way to achieve the promise of open access to scholarly output. These are but a few of the issues that librarians push against as we strive to infuse our health centers with strategically important knowledge. In the years to come, we will need to take on these difficult topics together if we are to achieve an information system that is both affordable and diffuse.

So - If we can look at the emergence of information into health care over the long-term, it is evident that we have been at this for a relatively short time. The health information professions -- librarianship and informatics -- are relatively newly birthed. They are still seeking to become part of the fabric of long-standing traditions that hark back over the centuries. As partners with many of you here today, I know you share the dream for building a strong information infrastructure and culture that will support our institutions well. Our challenge is to plan together, and give voice to the many ways in which libraries bring value to our institutions, demonstrating that we can provide a long-term and substantial return on investment.

We look towards a future in which our library and information assets are a shared and treasured resource of free-flowing knowledge, operating seamlessly in an efficient patient care system. We believe that collaborations with the Tiger Institute can help us achieve this.

Your work, Dr. Lindberg, has provided a role model for us as you push the information agenda at the national legislative and organizational levels, propelling us forward. In doing so, you have become our national treasure. I congratulate you on the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NLM this year, and on your outstanding contributions to it. And I look forward to the years ahead!

Your work, Dr. Lindberg, has deeply touched my own. As a former outreach librarian travelling the back-roads of Eastern Kentucky and West Texas before the term outreach was even coined, I want to thank you for the many ways in which your creativity and intellect has shaped my practice of medical librarianship throughout my career.

I mentioned the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. This important organization is one that we rely on for service delivery and networking in so many ways. I had the wonderful opportunity to serve as a member of the NN/LM staff back in the early nineties at the University of Nebraska, and I treasure my current role as a resource library director in the network, with a subcontract for service to the state of Missouri.

It is now my pleasure to introduce to you the director of the National Network in the Midcontinental Region. Jean Shipman is the Director of the Spencer Eccles Health Sciences Library at the University of Utah, our regional headquarters. She is a former president of the Medical Library Association and an active member of the American Association of Health Sciences Libraries. This afternoon at 2:00 PM, she will lead a discussion on the future of health sciences libraries in the dean's conference room, and you are welcome to attend.

And now, please welcome Jean Shipman.

Presentation to Dr. Lindberg:

For your solid support of medical libraries, your continuing role in bringing together the fields of medical librarianship and medical informatics, and your continual innovation to strengthen them, we thank you and congratulate you today.

I'd like to read the certificate that we will place in the library to commemorate your accomplishments. (Remove drape and read the certificate.)