

## National Health Library & Knowledge Service annual report 2019

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

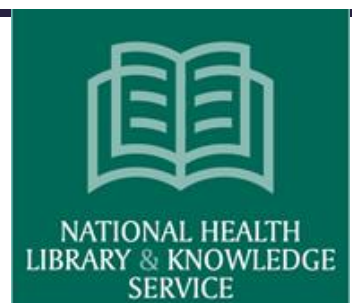


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# REFLECTIONS

## Strategic Highlights

2019 saw the beginning of the implementation of our five-year strategy [\*“Turning Knowledge Into Action: enabling care, improving health 2018 – 2023.”\*](#) It was a productive and positive year for both our service and our staff. Highlights include long-overdue renovations to some of our physical hospital libraries, making the working and learning environments more welcoming and suitable for use. Librarians working in the HSE are employed at administrative Grade VI level, aligning to the [Standards for Irish health libraries](#) for the first time since their publication in 2005. A Steering Group overseeing the implementation of our strategy was set up in June, and had three successful meetings ensuring overall alignment of our service with the priorities of our organisation. The integrated library management system was successfully implemented, with all collections visible to all staff on our online catalogue and available to borrow from any library. We celebrated 10 years of [Lenus the Irish Health Repository](#) – now an established authoritative resource for everyone working in the Irish health system.



Aoife Lawton, National Health Services Librarian

## Financial Highlights

Centralisation of budgets with cooperation from CHOs, Hospital Groups, Mental Health and other areas has enabled our service to bring cost efficiencies in the services we provide. We have strategic resource partners in place, including the National Doctors Training and Planning, National Cancer Control Programme, National Ambulance Service and National Quality Improvement Division which has enabled us to expand the reach of ehealth library resources for all of our staff, including some Section 38 agencies in 2020. This partnership has led to better value for money for the taxpayer and better access to evidence-based resources for frontline staff.

## Operational Highlights

Thanks to the talented and dedicated staff working in our service, we now have six national virtual teams in place: Knowledge Broker, Information Skills, Digital Knowledge, Estates, Procurement and Evidence. Each team is aligned with the vision outlined in our strategy and

all have assigned leads. The teams have been working together throughout the year, putting in place the stepping stones to turn knowledge into action for now and the future.

***User feedback in our recent survey shows the value of our service to end users:***

***“I have always found the library service to be both efficient and effective. Thank you.”***

***“It is a valuable service in my continuous professional development and helping me to help service users.”***

## Looking Ahead

In December 2019, the [HSE Action Plan for Health and Social Care Research](#) was launched. The NHLKS is an integral part of the newly formed Research and Evidence function and we will be working together to help to make the Action Plan a reality.

Our priority for the year ahead will be to focus on our core deliverable in the HSE National Service Plan 2020:

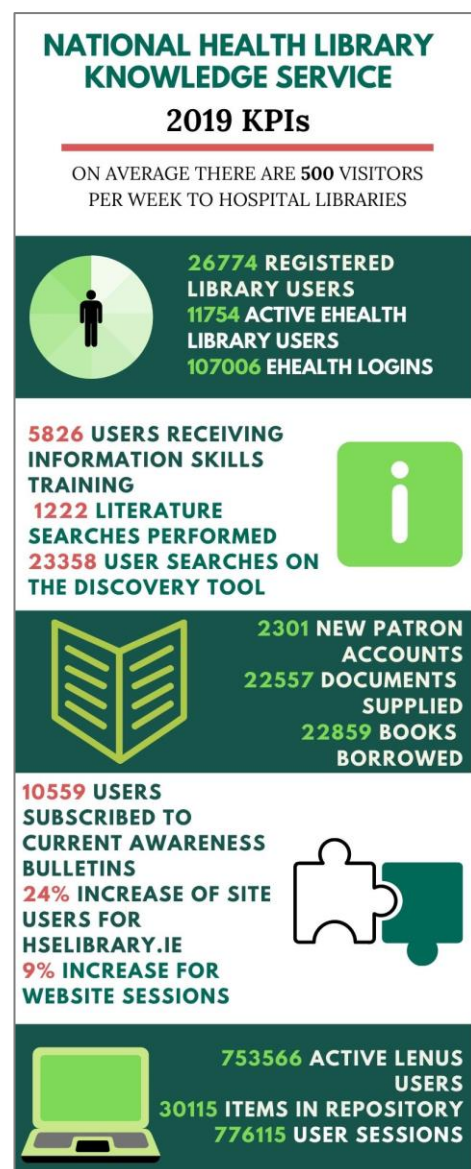
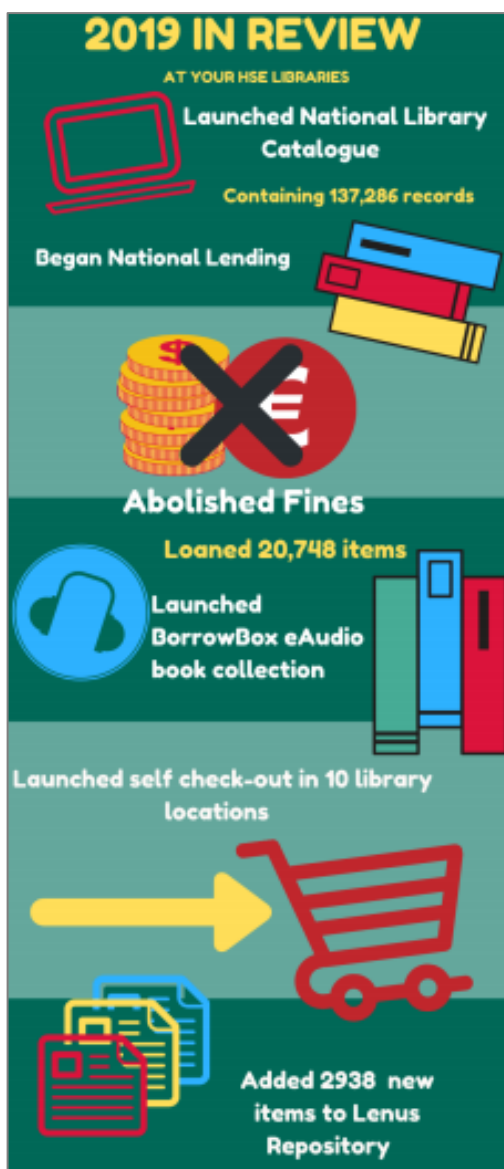
***“Ensure that in 2020 all staff working in hospital and community settings have free online access to eHealth Library services”***

To this end, we will continue to work with our resource partners to make this aspiration a reality for everyone working in the public health services. An important development due in 2020 is the establishment of a National Office for Policies, Procedures, Protocols and Guidelines which will report into the National Library Service.

**Aoife Lawton, National Health Service Librarian, January 2020.**

# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

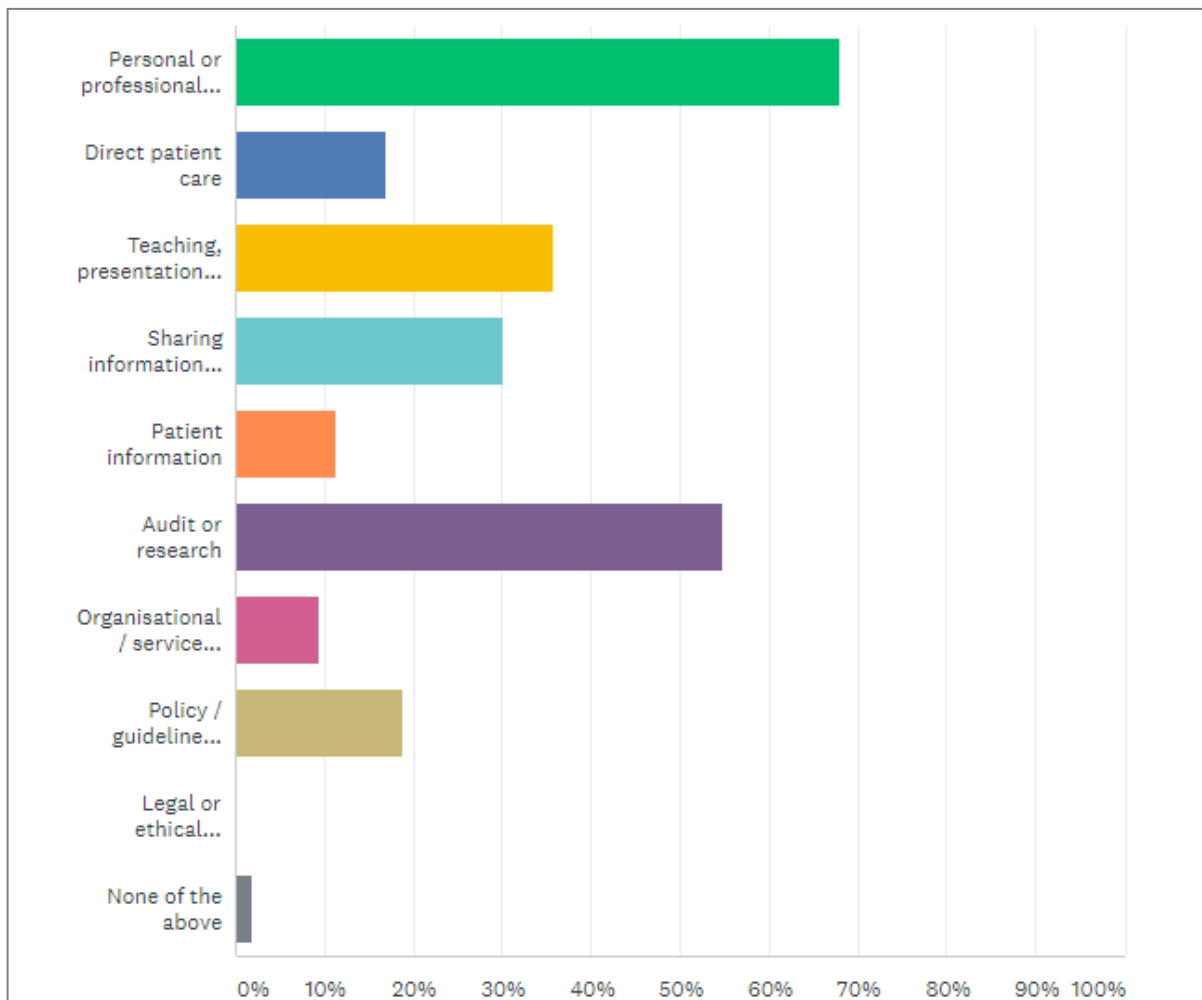
Our key statistics for 2019 show that the demand for specialist library and knowledge services is expanding. Trends indicate that access to online resources and to online questions answered by library staff is also increasing. There is also a recognised need for our physical libraries as key knowledge spaces for staff to use, both for research and practice in the clinical setting.



## QUALITY EVALUATION OF LIBRARY TRAINING

In 2019 the Information Skills team compiled a survey which was sent to all users who attended training delivered by library staff during the last quarter of the year. 172 surveys were sent out and 54 responses were received, indicating a response rate of 31%. 63% were hospital based with over 18% being community based.

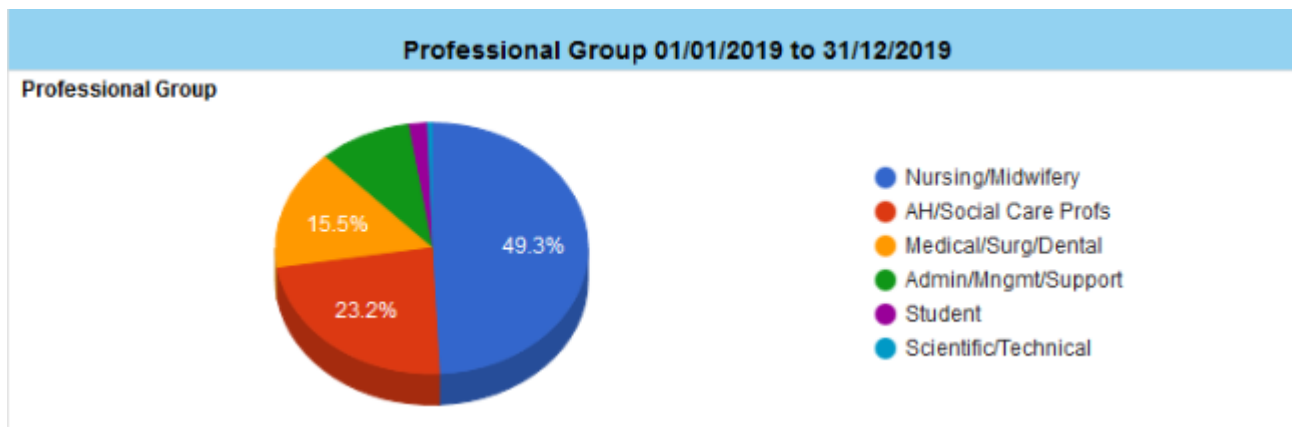
**How have you applied the skills you have learned from the training?**



68% of respondents applied the skills for 'Personal or professional development', 55% for 'Audit or research' and 36% for 'Teaching, presentations or publication'. 89% of respondents answered that the training received 'Contributed to personal or professional development', 33% 'Contributed to more informed decision making' and 31% 'Facilitated collaborative working'. Open ended responses were analysed for feedback which indicated a 98% positivity rating.

# RESEARCH REQUEST SERVICE

The Research Request Service is available online at <http://www.hselibrary.ie>. Anyone working in the HSE may submit an online research request; the request is picked up by library staff who carry out a comprehensive literature search. Results are emailed to the requestor, and an ongoing dialogue ensures that searches are tailored and targeted for maximum impact. This has been up and running as a national service since 2017 and is available to all staff in all areas. It is a value-added service, saving healthcare professionals' valuable time by tapping into the skills of library staff who are experts at searching. It is most popular with Nursing and Midwifery staff (49.3%), followed by Allied Health/Health and Social Care Professionals (23.2%). In 2019, there were 1,222 requests fulfilled by our service, an increase of 7% since 2018.



## EVIDENCE TEAM SURVEY

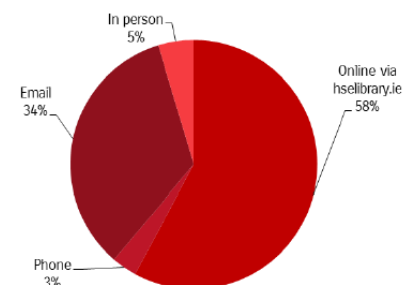
The Evidence team coordinates the delivery of literature searches and summaries for HSE staff, enabling evidence-informed decisions at the point of need. The team carried out a survey in November 2019 to find out what users wanted from this service. Key findings were that:

- the majority of users find online access the most convenient for requesting a search (58%)
- the majority of users of this service work in acute hospitals (45%) followed by community services (38%)
- Users expressed great appreciation for the work of library staff particularly in relation to this service
- The library service needs to work on the following areas: promotion, access and training.

### Q6 COMMUNICATION

***"WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU WHEN SUBMITTING A LITERATURE SEARCH?"***

Total number of respondents who answered this question: 1,914.



The vast majority of respondents expressed a preference for submitting literature searches either online or via email.

## The work of the virtual teams in 2019: a snapshot

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|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Digital Knowledge Team</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All library catalogues were merged into a single HSE system searchable nationwide.</li> <li>Library fines were abolished and nationwide loans initiated.</li> <li>The national library book collection was RFID tagged and self-issue systems were enabled in 10 sites.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Evidence Team</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carried out an extensive user survey.</li> <li>A one-day workshop led by Dr Karl Heneghan of the Centre for Evidence Based Medicine in Oxford was invaluable in informing the ongoing work of the Team.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Knowledge Broker Team</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with priority programs in the HSE are being established to provide knowledge brokering services.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Procurement Team</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centralisation of budgets and partnerships with other HSE divisions have led to greater VFM and improved equity of access for health care staff.</li> <li>Subscription agreements and national tenders for the supply of a suite of nationally accessible databases and resources for 2020 were successfully completed.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Estates Team</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major refurbishments of library facilities have taken place in Galway, Cavan, Cork and Donegal in 2019.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Information Skills Team</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An audit of existing training offered by our service was undertaken.</li> <li>An analysis of this will lead to a streamlined training programme for staff in 2020.</li> </ul>  |

In a further indication of the Research Division's commitment to upgrading research facilities within the HSE, new librarians have been recruited in Cork, Kerry and Louth. This investment in expertise, and the organizational changes accompanying it, will enable the NHLKS to provide the professional support essential to a knowledge-driven health service in 2020.