



[Health Information](#) | [Librarian & Health Educator Resources](#) | [Projects](#) | [About Us](#) | [Announcements](#) | [Search](#)

[Greater Midwest Region](#)

[Regional Advisory Council](#) : [Committee Rosters](#) | [Reports and Minutes](#)

RAC Board Meeting December 7, 2001

Library of the Health Sciences
University of Illinois at Chicago
9:00 - 3:30

Members present: Mary Gillaspay, Chair, Consumer Health; Ginger Saha, Chair, Resource Sharing; Bet Ison, Chair, Technology; Mike Simmons, Chair, Communications; Barb Knight, Chair, Education; Susan Jacobson, GMR Director ex-officio.

GMR Staff present: Beth Carlin, Tammy Mays, Chris Shaffer.

Updates

The meeting began with updates by Susan Jacobson on various GMR issues.

Staff: Jacobson introduced Angel Johnson, Customer Service Representative, and Syed Hussain, Budget Analyst, to the RAC Board. The Associate Director position has been advertised, both in print and electronically. RAC Board members were urged to help in the search. The Communications & Outreach Coordinator position will be posted shortly.

Awards & Subcontracts

The following Awards and Subcontracts have been finalized. This information will be posted on GMRLIST shortly.

- Technology Improvement Award:
 - Frontier College of Midwifery and Family Nursing, Hyden, KY
- Technology Awareness Award:
 - Wegner Health Science Information Center, University of South Dakota School of Medicine
 - Library of the Health Sciences, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences
- Professional Development Award:
 - Marjorie L. Ferguson, Medical Librarian/Health Education Center Coordinator, King's Daughters' Medical Center Library, Ashland KY and Chandler Medical Center, University of Kentucky
- Access to Electronic Health Information for the Public Subcontract:
 - Iowa City Public Library, Iowa City, Iowa
 - Harley E. French Library of the Health Sciences, School of Medicine & Health Sciences, University of North Dakota

- Health Information Outreach Subcontract:
 - Library of the Health Sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago
 - University of Kentucky, Chandler Medical Center Library

The DocMD enhancement proposal submitted by Prior Health Sciences Library, Ohio State University is still under review. This is not part of the contract budget, and NLM is not sure if funding will be available for this project.

Public Health Network Models Subcontract: Two proposals were received by the November 30th deadline. These will be distributed to the Communications Committee and the Board for review and comment, as well as to Jocelyn Rankin of the CDC since the CDC is co-funding this project. These proposals will be considered for year-two funding.

Staff Activities: GMR staff have exhibited and/or presented classes at the following meetings:

- **August**
 - American Association of Diabetes Educators
 - Indiana Cooperatrive Library Services Authority (INCOLSA)
- **September**
 - North Dakota Library Association Conference
 - Northwest Indiana Health Science Library Consortium
 - South Dakota Library Association
- **October**
 - American College of Emergency Physicians
 - Minnesota Library association Conference
 - Wisconsin Library Association Conference
 - Kentucky Library Association
 - Midwest Chapter MLA
 - Michigan Health Sciences Library Association
- **November**
 - RSNA
 - Gerontological Society of America
 - Health Sciences Librarians of Illinois

Committee Reports:

Each Committee Chair reported on the committee meeting held earlier this year, on current activities, and on committee goals for the coming year.

Technology Committee: A Proposal for a Technology Forum to be held at Midwest Chapter MLA Annual Meeting in 2002 was distributed. The presented papers and panel discussion would replace the Technology Question and Answer session that has been presented as part of the GMR update at previous Midwest Chapter meetings. At the recommendation of the Committee, the Connections Award has been reissued as the Technology Improvement Award. It is hoped that this will increase applications. The Committee will be focusing on information technology developments such as PDAs, electronic document delivery, and wireless.

Consumer Health Committee: A list of suggested goals was distributed. These fell into three categories:

- Promote membership in the NN/LM to all libraries throughout the GMR, including new or nontraditional agencies and populations
- Encourage network members to apply for awards and subcontracts
- Participate in the creation of information profiles for each state in the GMR
- Create models for consumer health information service delivery

The Committee has also developed a promotional piece for state public library newsletters. This was distributed to the Board for comments and will also go to the Communications Committee for review.

Communications Committee: The major topic was developing a new State Profile that would incorporate a broader range of information than the current GMR state profiles. The Board discussed the audiences for the profiles, what information is currently included, what is needed, and how to best to organize and present this information.

Education Committee: The Committee report highlighted several items

- Adding information about interactive video networks from each state to the state profiles
- Methods of delivery of education materials, especially examining different methods for different populations such as low literacy and targeted populations
- Creating tools to help link learning objectives to evaluation tools

The Committee is also considering sponsoring panel discussions on outreach at state library association meetings. The approach will be to develop an outline for these panels, which could then be organized locally by committee members.

Resource Sharing Committee: The Resource Sharing Committee is continuing to monitor trends in licensing and document delivery. Users have become "web expectant". They expect everything to be available on the web, particularly full-text journals. Resource sharing is a difficult arena during this time as licensing has complicated restrictions on who has access and what libraries can provide on interlibrary loan.

Some common threads in Committee reports: Making use of State Library publications. The audience for these publications is primarily non-health sciences librarians. The GMR can publish articles on health sciences resources, promote the advantages of GMR membership, publicize awards and subcontracts, and advertise GMR events. Discussion of how we can keep affiliate members engaged in the GMR; once they join, how can we get them involved in GMR activities. The recommendation to develop the GMR lending library to include more tools for librarians e.g. materials about consumer health librarianship, evaluation materials, etc.

Promoting Awards & Subcontracts

The GMR office is concerned about the low rate of applications for awards and subcontracts. Board members questioned whether this was unique to the GMR or if other RML's had noticed the same problem; Shaffer noted that the GMR tends to offer more awards and subcontracts than other regions, so they may not have seen this yet.

- **Some suggestions:**
 - Build online application forms
 - More frequent announcements
 - Different venues for announcements, especially to reach affiliate members e.g. State public library newsletters, State health sciences library newsletters
 - Make samples of successful applications available online
 - Provide a checklist for applicants
 - Provide tools for proposal writing (and also for report writing)
 - Present a Grants Writing workshop (GMR has done this in the past)
 - Promote the fact that GMR staff will consult with applicants as they draft their proposals (This is now promoted as "proposal review"; "consult" is a preferable term.)

Evaluation

Jacobson pointed out that according to the RML contract, "evaluation of the GMR" is scheduled for Year 2 of the contract. Although NLM has not yet provided guidance on what they are expecting from this process, this does not preclude the GMR from developing models for this process. The national Outreach Evaluation Resource Center is focusing on outreach evaluation, and although some of the concepts and tools they have developed (e.g. "Measuring the Difference") have broader application, evaluation of an outreach project is not the same as program evaluation.

Evaluation is not a new concept for the GMR; we already evaluate many of our activities e.g. classes, exhibits, the evaluation component in each subcontract. What is required now is a broader perspective.

Possible Models:

If evaluation is defined as determining how well we measure up to established criteria, then we need to have a statement of goals and objectives that we can use. A statement of goals and objectives that had been developed under the 1996-2001 GMR contract was distributed. This could be used a model for a similar statement incorporating the goals for the current contract.

For example: One of the GMR goals for the current contract is "To increase public awareness of access to health information via the Internet." An objective under this goal would be to increase the number of network members who serve consumers.

Issues to be considered:

Do our activities fall within these goals? Why are we doing a specific activity? If it does not meet a goal, why do it?

The need for baseline data and the difficulty of obtaining this. How to obtain data given the fact that we cannot do surveys? One suggestion is to obtain zip code information for participants in GMR programs and training and correlate this with census data, to determine how effectively we are in reaching out to minority populations. Another suggestion was that the Outreach Report be revised to note minority attendance, rather than the current "significant number >50% minorities present."

It was also suggested that objectives use the verbs "increase" or "decrease" so that the data obtained is measurable.

The outcome of this discussion is that the GMR staff together with the RAC Board will work on

developing measurable objectives for the GMR goals stated in the contract, as a first step towards an evaluation process.

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