

New England Region

**National Network of Libraries of
Medicine**

Annual Report

Year 01

May, 2001 – April, 2002

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Highlights/Executive Summary

This report covers the period May 1, 2001 until April 30, 2002 which corresponds to Year 01 of a five year contract (2001-2007).

Year 01 is a stirring memory. As the new New England Regional Medical Library, a plan of service had been proposed and was accepted by the National Network Office. A contract was signed that carefully outlined the expectations for work and productivity. There were myriad tasks and decisions that had to be made so that the paper plan that was submitted and accepted could change from a paper plan to a productive office. The first order of business was setting up an office and hiring people. The University was supportive of the new endeavor and assigned us to an office suite in a building location that fit our needs very well. We were able to recruit and hire creative and talented individuals who bring incredible skills and desire to their jobs. We began the year in June, 2001 with four people and office space. The staff quickly grew to eight. As Year 01 closed, we find that we are recruiting again for one position and are hopeful that a new colleague will be found soon.

Year 01 is a happy memory. Our constituents in New England were very supportive of the new office and the programs that we had discussed during the previous year. Most of the people who were approached to participate in programs, committees and subcontracts were quick to accept the responsibilities described to them. Committees filled rapidly, invitations to visit libraries and library groups throughout the region began almost immediately and subcontracts were negotiated and accepted quickly. The year went by more rapidly than anyone in the office could have thought possible, and the results have been superb.

Year 01 is a fading memory. As we begin Year 02, we look forward to building on our successes of Year 01, correcting our mistakes, continuing to learn and moving forward to serve the health information professionals, health professionals and consumers of health information in the New England Region. In reviewing the four quarterly reports of activities, the results of the year bring the eight staff members of the New England Regional office of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine a great deal of pride and a strong sense of accomplishment. We look forward to serving the people of New England and their information needs with thoughts of purpose and excitement for Year 02.

Using the format of the Plan of Service, the following report will discuss the successes of the first year of operation of the University of Massachusetts work as the New England Regional Medical Library. A Timeline of Activities for Year 01 is included in Attachment 1. As you can see, we have made substantial progress in reaching the goals outlined in the original RFP response.

The following highlights will be discussed in the body of the report:

1. Network membership was reported to be 356 in the original RFP. It is currently reported at 547. While there were not 191 new members added during Year 01, there is a cleaner database of members due to the efforts of the Network Coordinator to contact each member in preparation for the creation of membership certificates.

2. Eleven DOCLINE classes were held.
3. The Network Coordinator recorded 944 customer interactions from July-April regarding network services.
4. During the Electronic Document Delivery project between Maine hospital libraries and the UMass Interlibrary Loan Department, 1262 articles were delivered electronically from December 1 to April 30.
5. Three issues of the NER newsletter were published.
6. 296 electronic messages were sent to members of the NAHSL-L discussion list regarding NER activities and NLM announcements.
7. A fully developed NER website was implemented during June (the second month) of Year 01.
8. There were more than 30 network members and public librarians who participated in some way in the NER Regional Advisory Committees.
9. 15 subcontracts and award requests were received and awarded during Year 01 in addition to the Tufts University, Boston University and Yale University originally proposed subcontracts.
10. NER staff exhibited at nine national health care provider meetings; two of them were outside of the New England region.
11. NER staff exhibited at two state library associations, three consumer health fairs and two health sciences library association meetings.
12. NER staff hosted seven websites and thirteen electronic discussion lists.
13. 27 MedlinePlus and PubMed classes reaching more than 500 students.

REGIONAL SERVICES PLAN

Basic Network Programs

Network Structure refers to the physical infrastructure needed to deliver biomedical information services to libraries and health professionals throughout the region. It also refers to the network of libraries that have been identified to help deliver biomedical information services throughout the Region. The following priorities for 2001-2002 were used to develop new services and relationships:

1. Expand the Network Structure to provide health information contact points in all locales, particularly in all urban and rural underserved areas of the region, so that basic library services are readily available to all health professionals in the region
 - ❖ Promote NN/LM membership to librarians in the New England Region
 - ❖ Add a new category, Affiliate Libraries, to the membership structure that enables libraries that are not qualified to be Public Access Libraries to become active participants in the network
 - ❖ Recruit public libraries to participate as Affiliate Libraries of the region and establish links between the public libraries and health sciences libraries
 - ❖ Develop relationships with public libraries through the state libraries, library associations, and other state associations
 - ❖ Create a variety of partnerships between libraries, including a Sister Libraries program, fellowships, and other exchange programs
2. Establish a multi-faceted program to: promote the use of all NLM programs and services, especially DOCLINE, Loansome Doc, SERHOLD, PubMed, satellite broadcasts, and teleconferences; and train librarians in the effective and efficient use of these programs.
 - ❖ Provide feedback to NLM about its programs, products, and services from librarians, health professionals, and consumers in the region
 - ❖ Develop a long-term campaign utilizing a variety of focused strategies to publicize and demonstrate the benefits of the NLM programs, products and services
 - ❖ Promote and provide training on web-based SERHOLD updating
 - ❖ Participate in NLM teleconferences
 - ❖ Attend the Regional Medical Library Director's meetings and the Medical Library Association meetings
 - ❖ Maintain a collection of videotapes of teleconferences for use by NER members
3. Collaborate with libraries, schools, health agencies, health associations and other groups in a consumer health information initiative to ensure consumer access to health information regardless of location, socioeconomic status, local availability of resources, or lack of library services
 - ❖ Promote MedlinePlus and Clinical Trials databases to public librarians and consumers
 - ❖ Train public librarians in the use of MedlinePlus and the Clinical Trials databases
 - ❖ Exhibit at state conferences that include a focus or interest in consumer health including library conferences, health professional association

- conferences, health department meetings, public health association meetings
 - ❖ Redesign the NER website to be a “portal” for all health information in the region, with special emphasis on consumer health information
 - ❖ Inform agencies serving populations whose second language is English of the foreign language consumer health information resources
 - ❖ Publish at least one article per year in a medical or public library newsletter or journal
4. Educate health professionals on health information resources: how to find them, how to get them, and who to contact for assistance
 - ❖ Publish at least one article per year on NER programs and services in state or regional professional healthcare newsletters or journals
 - ❖ Exhibit at state health professional annual meetings
 5. Create a broad-based communication network to keep network members informed about regional activities, to involve members in the communication process, and to generate information exchange in a timely, easy-to-use way
 - ❖ Maintain a local Network Membership Database and make it available through the NER website
 - ❖ Maintain a regional discussion list and discussion lists of other network member organizations within the NER as requested
 - ❖ Produce an electronic newsletter and regular “focused” electronic mail updates, including feature articles on NER programs and services
 6. Involve more network members in the activities of the NER
 - ❖ Establish RAC Working Groups/Committees with defined charges and deadlines and a minimum of two meetings per year, one in-person meeting and one conference call meeting
 - ❖ Hold an annual RAC Planning Day to establish the Regional strategic plan and monitor progress in meeting the NER’s goals and objectives
 - ❖ Work with network members to explore and test new technologies to improve
 - ❖ document delivery turnaround time and access at the “point of care”
 7. Develop a regular educational program for health sciences librarians in the NER
 - ❖ Publish at least one article per year in a medical or public library newsletter or journal
 - ❖ Offer at least one educational program a year with MLA CE credits for librarians in the NER
 - ❖ Give NER updates, hold meetings and exhibit at state and regional medical and public library meetings
 - ❖ Sponsor a continuing education videoconference
 - ❖ Work with the library and information science programs throughout the region to promote health sciences librarianship as a career

STATEMENT OF WORK NETWORK STRUCTURE

1. **Develop and implement a program designed to provide health professionals in all parts of the region with a basic level of information services which includes:**
 - a. **Access to books, journal articles, and audiovisuals;**
 - b. **Access to online databases in the health sciences;**
 - c. **Access to reference services.**
 - d. **The RML shall establish agreements with network member libraries to provide these services to unaffiliated health professionals. For any areas where the RML is unable to establish such agreements, the RML will provide the service on a cost recovery basis.**

In order to ensure that all health professionals throughout the New England Region obtain a basic level of biomedical information services, the NER office continued to maintain the basic NN/LM structure consisting of Primary Access Libraries, Resource Libraries and the Regional Medical Library. Outreach Libraries enhanced the existing network and are beginning to provide specialized services.

There are 4 categories of membership: Affiliate Library, Primary Access Libraries, Resource Libraries and Outreach Libraries. During Year 01, the network structure was established. Network membership also increased among the category of affiliate members due to NER staff's outreach work to state and public libraries in the area. Ten new members joined the network.

Primary Access Libraries (PALS): The current number of network members is 547. Of those, there are 273 DOCLINE libraries. In this new contract period, the current 273 DOCLINE libraries were designated as Primary Access Libraries and the remaining 117 libraries became Affiliate Libraries. (The remaining 157 members are inactive members, due to recent closures or mergers.) Staff in the NER office worked with the 117 Affiliate Libraries to become DOCLINE participants and PALS. The 273 PALS serve as the entry point for basic health sciences information for many health professionals. These libraries tend to be smaller hospital libraries, corporate libraries and association libraries. They were encouraged to develop adequate resources to respond to basic information needs and cooperate with other local libraries to share resources among themselves.

A Primary Access Library (PAL) participates in DOCLINE; participates in Loansome Doc if possible; contributes and maintains its holdings data in SERHOLD; creates and maintains an accurate record in DOCUSER and creates and maintains appropriate DOCLINE routing tables. (Attachment 2)

Affiliate Libraries: An Affiliate is a library or information/resource center that is called on for health information by its users, but which does not meet all the criteria for PAL participation. There are presently 117 Affiliate Libraries. These libraries tend to be smaller hospital, corporate, association and academic libraries. NER staff is working with state, public and school libraries, as well as

other regional, state and local organizations that provide health information in the Region to join the NER NN/LM as an affiliate library. Affiliate libraries designate an individual as a contact person for the network; are listed in the regional directory and national registry of network members; and agree to provide basic information on collections and services to the RML. Affiliate Libraries are able to participate in the RAC for planning purposes.

Resource Libraries: There are currently 17 NER Resource Libraries (Attachment 3). These libraries have been selected because they have large, quality collections that add significantly to the resources in the region. Resource Libraries participate in DOCLINE and should participate in Loansome Doc. Resource Libraries provide interlibrary loan service to Primary Access Libraries, Affiliate Libraries and other Resource libraries in the region. Resource Libraries do not exceed the network maximum charge for Interlibrary Loan. They contribute and maintain their holdings data in SERHOLD and create and maintain an accurate record for their institution in DOCUSER. They maintain a routing table that reflects ILL borrowing patterns and is consistent with regional ILL policies. Resource Libraries assist the RML in linking non-health sciences libraries in the region with health sciences libraries in the network in order to improve the public's access to health information. The Resource Libraries assist the RML and NLM in testing new technologies to improve access to health sciences collections. Resource Libraries participate in the RAC for planning purposes.

During Year One of the contract, Memoranda of Understanding were finalized and confirmed. In addition, the RML is working with each Outreach Library to plan subcontracts to serve the unaffiliated for implementation in future years of the contract. Site visits were made to 15 of the 17 Resource Libraries during Year 01 (Attachment 3).

Outreach Libraries: Seven libraries from the Region serve as Outreach Libraries. These libraries provide all the services of a Resource Library. In addition, Outreach Libraries agree to: provide *advanced* level services to unaffiliated health care professionals in their locale such as training or internet access through outreach subcontracts or purchase order awards and *advanced* level services to network member libraries and librarians such as agreeing to be a host institution for a librarian exchange program or by serving as "Sister Library". They are encouraged to hold one regional technology awareness forum. They assist with regional and local exhibits. They are encouraged, but not required, to provide Internet access to hospital unaffiliated health professionals either for free or for a fee. The Outreach Libraries have representation on the RAC for planning purposes.

During Year One of the contract, Memoranda of Understanding were finalized and confirmed. In addition, the RML is working with each Outreach Library to plan subcontracts to serve the unaffiliated for implementation in future years of the contract. A sample Memorandum of Intent and list of activities is included in Attachment 4. During Year 01, three outreach libraries had designated outreach subcontracts in place : Yale University, Boston University, and Tufts University.

The University of Massachusetts Medical School subcontract was added near the end of Year 01.

Regional Medical Library: The Lamar Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts Medical School, as the Regional Medical Library serves all health care professionals and network members in the region. The Library provides interlibrary loan, document delivery, Loansome Doc and basic level biomedical information services to all health professionals and network members within the Commonwealth and throughout the New England Region. The Library is also open to the public. The Library provides onsite access on a walk-in basis to all patrons to its collection, MEDLARS databases and basic level reference services. As the Regional Medical Library, The Lamar Soutter Library develops and maintains a regional document delivery plan consistent with NN/LM Interlibrary Loan Policy in order to provide access to materials in the Region. The Lamar Soutter Library coordinates DOCLINE participation in the Region, creates and maintains a regional directory, assists NLM in communicating and training network libraries, coordinates SERHOLD updating, and provides opportunities to Outreach Libraries to obtain funding for specified programs and services under the NLM contract.

PALS: A network membership application was developed and distributed via the NN/LM NER website during Year One of the contract. It includes questions about service to unaffiliated health professionals. The application also includes questions on both free and fee-based services to the unaffiliated. The data collected on the applications is entered into a network membership database.

Signed agreements by the Resource Libraries and Outreach Libraries reflect the success of the structure in serving the unaffiliated. The number of records (547) in the membership database shows a measurable commitment of member libraries' willingness to serving the unaffiliated.

2. **Assessing the needs of health science libraries in order to develop and support programs which improve the transfer of health care and biomedical information within their institutions and throughout the network.**

In order to assess the needs of health sciences libraries a variety of approaches were started in Year 01 and will continue into Year 02.

RAC: A Regional Advisory Council (RAC) was established and consists of a number of task forces, work groups and committees. When taken as a whole, these separate entities are the RAC. One entity was specifically charged to investigate the needs of health sciences libraries and outline broad strategies for addressing those needs. The Group is the Statistics and Planning Committee. The membership of this committee includes librarians from PALS, Resource Libraries and Outreach Libraries (Attachment 5). During Year 01, the Statistics and Planning Committee focused on benchmarking activities and will continue that focus in Year 02.

NER Attendance at State and Chapter Meetings: The NER staff attended at least one state health sciences library meeting and one state/public library meeting in each state throughout this past year. These meetings provide an informal forum for NER staff to meet with full member and Affiliate Librarians to better assess their needs and to work together to improve biomedical information services to all health care professionals. The NER asked meeting planners to provide time within the program for an NER update and reserved exhibit space. We were successful at 4 meetings (New Hampshire/Vermont, Massachusetts, Maine and Rhode Island health sciences meetings). The update and exhibit booth provide members with an opportunity to hear what is new at the regional office and at NLM and to ask questions, share concerns and discuss issues. The NER shared feedback obtained through these meetings with the NNO through quarterly reports and annual reports. The NER also refers issues to the appropriate RAC committees for action if necessary.

RAC Statistics and Planning Committee: Volunteers were recruited for the RAC Statistics and Planning Committee. Members were appointed to a five year term in order to ensure continuity and progress. Hospital Librarians in the region who had been involved in the NAHSL Benchmarking project were invited to participate. The committee met in person and virtually throughout the year. As a result of the committee's work, fifty regional members submitted their benchmarking statistics to the project. This activity will continue in Year 02.

Attendance at Meetings: NER staff arranged to have time on the programs for four updates at health sciences library meeting, taught PubMed classes at three state library meetings and obtained exhibit space at state library and health sciences library meetings during Year 01.

The following activities were completed :

The RAC Statistics and Planning Committee was formed and met.

NER staff attended 12 state meetings during Year 01, attended and exhibited at the fall NAHSL meeting.

NER staff presented updates at 19 librarians' meetings and exhibited at 15 meetings.

3. Managing the NN/LM Network membership program for the region. Formal membership in the NN/LM network is an integral part of the N/LM program. The network member libraries (Primary Access Libraries and Resource Libraries) and affiliate members are crucial to the operation of the NN/LM network, providing health professionals and consumers with access to needed information resources. Formal network membership is a way of recognizing the contributions of these libraries. The contractor shall:

a. Recruit new network members and affiliates from eligible libraries in the region.

A formal and efficient network membership program strengthens the region and improves services to health care professionals. NER staff developed and refined the network membership program by renewing memberships through a

membership drive, recruiting new members, maintaining current information in the DOCUSER database and an expanded Access database. Network membership certificates will be distributed to network members in recognition of their contribution to the program during Year 02. In preparation for that, the Network Coordinator has called all Network Members to solicit updates to their DOCUSER records. **Ten new members were recruited in Year 01.**

DOCLINE/SERHOLD participants: NER staff reviewed the current network membership information in DOCUSER and confirmed with DOCLINE and/or SERHOLD participants that they continue to update data for their libraries in the online system. In addition, a network membership application was developed and made available on the NER website. Several libraries reported that they are closing or merging services with other libraries. These libraries were placed on inactive status and their holdings were made inactive in the system.

DOCUSER : The network membership database consists of active network members and resides in the DOCUSER database. Additional data about member libraries is maintained in a local Access database by NER staff.

Application: A membership application was developed that includes standard profile data about each network member as well as information on Internet addresses, services to unaffiliated, Loansome Doc service and other pertinent information. New or updated information is added to DOCUSER by local libraries and is verified by NER staff.

b. Ensure that member libraries enter profile information about their libraries into the DOCUSER database and keep it up-to-date;

The Network Coordinator monitors the DOCUSER database to verify that member libraries are using the DOCUSER database to enter profile information about their library and keep it up-to-date. The DOCUSER database is available to individual users for them to make their own online updates as information about their libraries changes. The Network Coordinator ensures that each member library is comfortable with the use of DOCUSER through newsletters, fact sheets and telephone calls. The network members database maintained by the RML reflects the information in DOCUSER. Information gathered in the local, RML database complements information gathered in DOCUSER. This database records contacts and interactions with each member and prospective member library.

489 calls were made to or received from Network members in Year 01.

c. Actively involve network members in the NN/LM network and outreach programs, including obtaining feedback on regional and NLM programs on a periodic basis.

Surveys/Needs Assessment: NLM-directed surveys and needs assessments are distributed to network members as a way of obtaining systematic feedback on NLM and NN/LM activities and programs. Surveys to network members on

various subjects are sent to network members via the region's electronic lists. Programs based on the data can be developed to further enhance network member services. As an example, the information gathered during Year 01 regarding library service to public health officials will be used to develop a public health outreach subcontract in Year 02.

Project Participation: The information gathered from NLM-directed surveys and needs assessment are also used as a way of identifying network members for various regional and NLM projects. Network members are encouraged to participate in outreach services to unaffiliated health care professionals in their community. All network members are eligible to sit on regional committees, taskforces and working groups. These groups are designed to actively involve members in the region in the ongoing planning of programs. They are also a way to obtain feedback from members.

Membership Database:

A new network management tool developed in Year 01 by NER staff is the membership database. The Membership Database is used to manage information about all of the member libraries within the Regional Library's territory. The database is in Access and is available to NER staff via the local network. The membership database is used to record any contact that is made with the member library and the resulting actions. Data includes: questions asked, date and time, the format in which the question was submitted (web, phone, fax, in person), who took the question, how the question was resolved, any follow up actions, the date and reason for any trips to the members site and training provided (formal and informal).

The success of the membership program is based on the retention of current network members and the recruitment of new members. Success is also based on the maintenance of an up-to-date database, the assistance given to NLM in regional assessments and the involvement of network members in regional programs. The membership database has increased from 356 (the number available and used in the RML proposal, June 2001) to 547. Each member has been called and data in DOCUSER has been verified by the Network Coordinator.

4. Implementing that portion of the Regional Services Plan concerned with document delivery in order to provide health professionals in the region with efficient, rapid access to the health science information resources they need. The plan for the region shall conform to the NN/LM Document Delivery Plan.

NER staff worked to improve the efficiency of DOCLINE and Loansome Doc in the region, created linkages to National Library of Medicine document delivery information on the NER website, and monitored electronic publishing and its effect on document delivery.

NER staff assists in the gathering and reporting of serials holdings data for the New England Region using the online SERHOLD product by working with member libraries to keep their records updated.

Document Delivery Plan, NER. The Interlibrary Loan Plan for the New England Region of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) established a framework for the effective utilization of the region's health science library collections in order to provide health care professionals with timely access to and delivery of health information. Mechanisms for delivery may take the form of paper or electronic delivery.

The Document Delivery Plan is implemented in the NER under the guidance of the National Library of Medicine, and with the participation of NN/LM member libraries. In carrying out this Plan, objectives for the RML are to:

- a. Obtain the support of major health sciences libraries in promotion, training and communication about document delivery issues to all libraries in the NN/LM.**

The seventeen designated resource libraries in the NER have a strong commitment to the process of Interlibrary Loan. NER staff work to support that commitment through training sessions (11 DOCLINE classes were taught in Year 01), programs at regional and state meetings (an ILL update at NAHSL), visits to libraries, electronic lists and personal communication with member libraries. NER staff work with Primary Access Libraries, affiliate members and other member libraries to train and support the ILL activities of participating libraries.

- b. Coordinate the contribution, review and maintenance of serial holdings data to the DOCLINE/SERHOLD database in a manner that is timely, efficient and accurate.**

Mark Goldstein was hired in Year 01 to serve as the Network Coordinator for the New England Region. Included in this staff member's duties are the coordination of regional activities, the oversight of NLM activities, attendance at DOCLINE and SERHOLD meetings at MLA and the conduction of and participation in informational sessions at regional and state meetings. Additionally, the staff member assists network members with their routing cell tables. Telephone assistance and e-mail assistance is also available for new DOCLINE applicants.

- c. Provide standardized policies and procedures to ensure appropriate regional consistency within the NN/LM.**

The Network Coordinator at the NER worked with member libraries to assure that a consistent process is followed throughout the region. Using training materials developed by NLM, by the Network Coordinator and by other RML's, network staff offer training sessions, programs at regional and state meetings, visits to libraries, electronic lists and personal communication with member libraries throughout the year. Between July, 2001 and April, 2002, 944 calls regarding network services were logged by the Network Coordinator.

- d. Promote and facilitate the use of technologies to enable document delivery via the Internet.**

A patient's length of stay has become shorter as managed care has impacted the workflow in clinical settings. Documents requested via interlibrary loan need to arrive at the requesting library in a very short amount of time in order to have an impact on patient care. Ariel is a commercial product which has become an important means of improving document delivery.

Electronic delivery of journals via subscription or interlibrary loan is becoming the norm in resource libraries. New England libraries have incorporated technological changes in their workflow to varying degrees. It is important that NER staff work with the region's libraries at their current technological level and help them to become more comfortable with new technologies. NER staff works to remain current with technological changes in the interlibrary loan and document delivery areas. Recent changes such as Ariel enable librarians to deliver materials electronically to the user's desktop.

During Year 01, the Maine Electronic Document Delivery project was planned and implemented.

The Annual ILL meeting featuring speakers on the latest uses of technology was planned. The actual meeting took place in Year 02.

e. Assist the National Library of Medicine (NLM) in testing and implementing new technologies for document delivery.

As an example of the commitment to implementing new technologies for document delivery, a collaborative project between the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Lamar Soutter Library and six libraries in Maine was implemented. For six months between December 1, 2001 and May 31, 2002, the use of Ariel software's electronic document delivery option is being investigated. As patient stay times in hospitals have decreased, libraries have become more concerned about the speed of document delivery and continuing to have an impact on patient care. This project enables 24 hour turn-around time for document delivery through the use of Ariel software, scanners, storage space on a library server and the internet. Libraries were awarded up to \$1,000 to purchase hardware and/or software to support their participation in the project.

Participants:

Central Maine Medical Center, Lewiston, ME

Eastern Maine Medical Center, Bangor, ME

Husson College, Bangor, ME

Jackson Laboratories, Bar Harbor, ME

Maine Medical Center, Portland, ME

Mercy Hospital, Portland, ME

Penobscot Bay Regional Hospital, Rockland, ME

University of Massachusetts Medical School, The Lamar Soutter Library, Worcester, MA

1262 articles were delivered between December 1, 2001 and April 30, 2002.

f. Assist NLM in communicating with and training network libraries.

During Year 01, a staff member was hired to serve as the Network Coordinator for the New England Region. Included in his duties are the coordination of regional activities, monitoring NLM activities, attending DOCLINE and SERHOLD meetings at MLA and conducting and participating in informational sessions at regional and state meetings.

The Network Coordinator is responsible for providing all programs and services related to the management and expansion of DOCLINE in New England. To assist network members with their routing cell tables, instructions for completing the online forms are included in the DOCLINE training manual and on the NER website. Telephone assistance and e-mail assistance are also available for new DOCLINE applicants. **Eleven DOCLINE classes were taught in Year 01; 944 customer interactions were recorded via phone and/or e-mail by the Network Coordinator.**

5. Establishing and maintaining channels for effective communication with current and potential NN/NLM participants, other RMLs, NLM and other state and multi-type networks within the region. All print and electronic communications should include the NN/LM Logo using the National Network of Libraries of Medicine Graphic Standards dated July 1992. Communications shall include:

- a. Publishing and distributing an electronic newsletter to communicate important information about regional and national programs, policies and procedures to current participants in the region**

The most formal communication between member libraries and the RML is through the web-based quarterly newsletter, the NER'eastah. In addition to the quarterly newsletter, a short message or alerting service highlighting upcoming events or information was initiated in Year 01 and is distributed as needed electronically to network members. The newsletter is available through the NER website.

Distribution: Announcements of the newsletter's availability is made through the region's electronic mailing list (NAHSL-L@list.umassmed.edu). All member libraries and other users of the RML receive a copy of the announcement. Users are directed to the NER website where the newsletter is posted.

Content: The newsletter contains a regular message from the director of the RML, one or two topical articles, a technology update section discussing hot topics and other pertinent information. Regular news from RAC committees, task forces, and working groups are highlighted. Network members are invited to submit articles for the newsletter that are of interest to others in the Region (i.e. progress reports on outreach projects, etc.).

The Technology Coordinator and Administrative Assistant have overall responsibility for the production of the newsletter. Three issues were published in Year 01. 296 electronic messages were distributed to members via NAHSL-L during Year 01.

b. Establishing and maintaining a regional listserv for sharing information with network members, affiliates and other partner organizations, and health professionals.

The NER maintains a regional electronic discussion list for sharing information with network members, affiliates, other partner organizations and health professionals. NAHSL-L provides timely updates of NLM news as well as regional information. More than 296 messages were posted by NER staff in Year 01.

c. Developing and maintaining a regional website as an integral component of the NN/LM website.

One of the major early accomplishments of the new NER was rapid development of its website located at <http://nnlm.gov/ner>. A fully developed website was available by June 15, 2001, only six weeks into the contract. The NER website is the primary method used to provide information to medical libraries, health professionals and consumers. Each of these groups is considered a customer of the Regional Medical Library, and the web site was designed to meet the unique needs of each group. The Technology Coordinator is responsible for the NER website.

The website is tailored for librarians, health professionals, and consumers. The website contains the following information:

General Data: Information about the RML, staff directory, location, contact information, and committee information.

Libraries and Librarians: Libraries and librarians have a special relationship with the RML. The RML is there to assist libraries and librarians and to help the local library fulfill its mission. The RML can aid the local library in many ways. One way is to serve as a clearinghouse of pertinent library information.

Newsletters & List Servs: The RML website provides information on regional electronic newsletters and e-mail lists relating to library and information sciences. The NER newsletter and lists are highlighted.

Training Materials: Materials developed by NER, NLM, or MLA and any local materials developed by member libraries, especially those funded by NER training awards and outreach subcontracts, will be made available. Topics include: PubMed, the Gateway, MedlinePlus and the Internet. Training classes offered throughout the region are also advertised.

Document Delivery: Overviews of the DOCLINE, SERHOLD and Loansome Doc programs are provided. ILL policies of regional consortia and libraries are also posted. Links to NLM and RML facts sheets describing these programs are available.

Funding and Grant Opportunities: The website is used to promote all of the funding and grant opportunities sponsored by the NER. Full descriptions and announcements of all awards are publicized through the website. Award winners are announced on the site along with abstracts of funded projects. In addition, information regarding NLM funding opportunities and award winners from New England are provided.

Information for Health Professionals:

Training: The website is used as a method to advertise training classes geared to health professionals and as a mechanism to deliver training classes.

Referral Database: The RML provides services directly to health professionals or it may refer the health professional to a local library. Using the membership database, a search can be performed by location and services offered and a list of local libraries generated that the health professional can consult.

Exhibits: The NER uses the website to promote the National Library of Medicine's programs and services at local and national health professionals meetings. If a health professional wishes to have a member of the NER staff or a representative from a member library exhibit at a meeting, they may consult the site for details on how to arrange such an exhibit. A list of scheduled exhibits for which NER staff will be present is also advertised on the site.

Important Links: A collection of links relevant to health professionals is maintained.

Information for Consumers:

The NER's website serves consumers (the lay public) by providing data on local libraries, such as depth and breadth of services offered to the public and contact information. Consumers are also directed to the databases and resources offered through the National Library of Medicine that are geared towards consumers (i.e. MedlinePlus). Training materials on MedlinePlus and how to evaluate health information on the internet are also provided.

d. Participating in monthly teleconferences with NLM and the other RMLs to discuss topics of importance to the overall management of the NN/LM program

During Year 01, NER staff participated in all monthly teleconferences with NLM and the other RMLs to discuss topics of importance to the overall management of the NN/LM program. The NER staff views the conferences as an opportunity to share program ideas, avoid duplication of effort, coordinate services across regions when appropriate and keep the NN/LM program office informed. These were especially helpful to us as we were starting up our program as a new RML.

Telephones equipped with speakers are available in NER staff members' offices. These teleconferences are an important form of communication between NLM's network office and the other NN/LM regional offices.

During Year 01, NLM called an additional (outside the MLA format) meeting of RML directors and associate directors at NLM on March 21-22, which Debbie Sibley and Elaine Martin attended. The meeting at NLM in addition to MLA was particularly helpful because we were able to hear from others within the NLM who are working on projects related to RML activities. We would welcome the opportunity to do this again.

e. Attending an RML Directors meeting once each contract year in conjunction with the meeting of the Medical Library Association.

The director, associate director and two staff members attended the RML Directors' meeting in 2001. Funding is budgeted for staff to attend the RML Directors' meeting once each contract year in conjunction with the meeting of the Medical Library Association.

1. **Developing and implementing a mechanism for selecting a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC). The RAC must include health professionals and health science librarians from hospital libraries and other large and small medical libraries in the region. The RAC should also include representatives of state library agencies, public and school libraries, health information consumer groups, as well as representatives of other organizations with which the RML has partnerships. The RAC need not be structured as a single body, nor is it necessary for it to meet in a physical location, as long as mechanisms are developed which enable the RAC to function effectively. Responsibilities of the RAC include:**
 - a) **Advising the RML on appropriate mechanisms within the framework of the NN/LM contract for developing and implementing programs to improve health professionals' and consumers' access to biomedical information**
 - b) **Advising the RML in establishing regional priorities, policies and procedures**
 - c) **Conducting review and evaluation of RML programs in the region at the end of years 2 and 4**
 - d) **Developing plans to encourage health professionals and health science librarians to participate actively in regional and national programs affecting the delivery of health information**
 - e) **Assisting the RML in identifying health professionals without access to health information and recommending ways to assist them through NN/LM programs**

A Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) was established to: assist the RML in identifying health professionals without access to information and recommend ways of helping them; develop plans to encourage health professionals and librarians to participate in regional activities; assist in conducting a review of the RML; and advise the RML within the framework of the NN/LM contract. The RAC for the New England Region does not consist of one body; there are a number of working groups, task forces and committees in areas where expertise and guidance are especially needed to fully implement the Regional Services Plan. The membership of these groups include more than fifty network members, health care professionals, public librarians, consumers and representatives from other groups that either may be effected by RML programs or share our common mission and goals. The Chairs of these working groups, task forces or committees form the RAC Steering Committee. The Steering Committee met twice during Year 01, once to participate in a strategic planning day and the second time to assess progress during Year 01. The planning day was used to establish committee charges, set overall direction and suggest general objectives for each group to accomplish in the coming year. (Attachment 5)

Establishing a number of working groups, task forces and/or committees decentralized the region and provided the RML with a broader range of knowledge and expertise for developing and implementing goals and objectives. The NER encouraged Resource Libraries, Outreach Libraries and Affiliate Libraries to actively participate in regional planning and the implementation of regional programs, services and initiatives.

RAC Steering Committee: The NER held a RAC planning day retreat in September, 2001 to review the NER goals and objectives and to discuss the methodology for implementing objectives based on recommendations made by the working groups, task forces and/or committees. The RAC Steering Committee recommended methods for assessing member needs and evaluating NER program effectiveness and customer satisfaction. The NER included a report from the Steering Committee as part of its annual budget proposal to NLM (Attachment 6). A follow-up meeting was held in April, 2002 to report on progress in Year 01 and determine goals for Year 02. Membership includes the Chairs of all committees and task forces and at least one member of a consumer advisory group; a total of 5 members were appointed in Year One.

Committees: A committee is defined as an ongoing group with a specific charge, defined Chair, and set number of members who may rotate on and off the committee throughout the five years. Five standing committees were established. The committees include: Education and Training Committee; Technology Awareness Committee; Outreach Committee; Resource Sharing Committee; and the Statistics and Planning Committee.

Education and Training Committee: This committee provides guidance and makes recommendations to the NER regarding the education and training needs of health care professionals, health sciences librarians and public librarians who provide health information to consumers. The committee consists of six members including: one representative from NAHSL, one representative from a state library association (not necessarily health sciences), an Outreach Library representative, an affiliate library representative from a public library, one representative from a PAL, and one health professional. Based on recommendations from the Education and Training Committee, the NER designs training awards, library exchange programs, and other programs that enhance "onsite" or "hands-on" experiential training for health sciences and public librarians in the region. The committee also makes suggestions for outreach proposals for training for health professionals. During Year 01, the Committee met virtually and reviewed and evaluated all educational awards and subcontracts and recommended acceptance.

Technology Awareness Committee: This committee monitors and identifies new developments and new applications of health information technology in libraries or elsewhere. Findings of the committee are reported in the newsletter and electronic list and recommendations are made to the NER for planning technology awareness programs. This committee also reviews and recommends responses to the Requests for Proposals for Technology Awareness Conferences awards to be given throughout the region. The committee consists of three members: one representative from a Resource Library and one representative from a PAL and one representative from NAHSL or another group

with similar goals as NER. Representatives are expected to have some experience with designing websites and/or responsibility for integrated library systems or similar activities. During Year 01, the committee reviewed the Technology Awareness Conference proposal from the University of Connecticut.

Outreach Committee: This committee makes recommendations for potential outreach projects to be conducted by Outreach Libraries and others in the region. They exchange ideas about lessons learned during the various outreach projects. They share training materials, successes and failures and communicate them to the network office. During Year 01, the committee met once in person and several times virtually. They reviewed all subcontracts for outreach and exhibit awards and recommended acceptance, modification or rejection. 8 Outreach subcontracts were awarded during Year 01. Membership consists of 3 liaisons from the Outreach Libraries and at least one representative from an affiliate public library or organization with similar goals to those of NER.

Resource Sharing Committee: This committee monitors and identifies new developments in document delivery and resource sharing on a local, state, regional and national level. The committee also provides guidance and recommendations to the NER office in devising and implementing regional policies for resource sharing including DOCLINE and Loansome Doc. The committee works closely with librarians in the region to determine resource sharing needs and the impact of providing loans to the public. The Committee assists the NER in promoting DOCLINE and Loansome Doc to network members. The Committee includes one PAL representative, one representative from a Resource Library, one representative from an Affiliate Library and one representative from a state or regional library network in New England. During Year 01, the committee consisted of the Network Coordinator in planning the annual ILL meeting to be held May 10, 2002.

Statistics and Planning Committee: This committee advises the NER office on ways to assess the needs of the health sciences libraries in the region. Committee membership will include: one representative from the NAHSL Benchmarking Task Force; one Library Director from an academic health sciences library; two representatives from PALS (one from Maine), and the President of NAHSL. During Year 01, the committee focused on benchmarking activities.

Working Groups: Libraries that have been awarded outreach subcontracts targeting health professionals or consumers are encouraged to form local advisory working groups. These groups are comprised of affected members of the community and are asked to give constant feedback and advice about the ongoing nature of the project. They may be part of focus groups or called to meet irregularly throughout the project. During Year 01, the Boston University HIV/AIDS outreach subcontract project director and coordinators met with several HIV or AIDS consumers in conjunction with Department of Public Health officials about this outreach project.

Communication: Committees and task forces are encouraged to meet regularly by conference call, electronically or in person. Standing Committees met once, face-to-face, during Year One. Some also met virtually in order to review

subcontracts and awards. A NER staff member was assigned as liaison to each committee or task force to assist with arranging meetings, phone calls, general questions and meeting minutes.

2. Monitoring and evaluating the region's programs in order to assess their effectiveness in meeting NN/LM goals and identify and resolve problems, which impede effective delivery of health information services. This includes:

a. Developing a formal mechanism for evaluating regional programs in consultation with the NN/LM Outreach Evaluation Resource Center and the Regional Advisory Committee

There is a direct relationship between mission and goals, activities and the continuous assessment of performance. Planning for the allocation of resources and services requires ongoing evaluation. The NER keeps NLM informed through quarterly and annual reports, outreach subcontracts reports, and any special evaluation reports generated as a result of this program.

All NER staff attended the NN/LM Outreach Evaluation Resource Center course on evaluation entitled "Making a Difference Through Outreach" developed and co-taught by Catherine Burroughs and Nancy Press from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region in October, 2001 at NLM.

The NER views evaluation as an ongoing process that should be incorporated at the early stages of program planning.

b. Developing a mechanism to provide NLM with regular feedback about NLM and NN/LM products and services from individuals and constituent groups

Ongoing evaluation provides constituents the opportunity to provide feedback on the value of the services provided to them by NLM and the NN/LM. The NER takes a multi-pronged approach to obtaining feedback from constituent groups. The office provides feedback to NLM through regular e-mail correspondence, by participating in monthly teleconferences, by attending the RML director's meeting, by submitting quarterly and annual written reports, and by submitting special reports as needed.

Exhibits: NER staff exhibited at a number of health professional, librarian and consumer-health related meetings. Exhibits pose an excellent opportunity for demonstrating NLM databases and obtaining user feedback on NLM services and products. The NER provides a completed exhibit report form to NLM for each exhibit it staffs. The NER exhibited at nine national meetings, two regional meetings (NAHSL and NELA), and four state meetings (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire).

NER Updates at Meetings: NER staff gave updates at the annual NAHSL and at each state health sciences library association meeting.

Site Visits to Libraries: NER staff made site visits to 23 libraries in New England.

RAC Committees: The RAC consists of five committees, the Resource Libraries Directors group and several subcontract task forces. These groups meet on a regular basis via conference calls and/or once a year in person. A NER staff member serves as a liaison to each committee. Outreach Library librarians convene their respective advisory group for their subcontract. NER staff and Outreach Librarians obtain feedback from these groups and relay information back to the NER office. The Steering Committee met face-to-face twice during Year 01. Members of the Steering Committee received an update from the NER office staff about progress on goals and objectives at the meetings and were encouraged to provide feedback and guidance on future directions for the program. All committees, task forces, and working groups record meeting minutes.

3. Obtaining ongoing feedback from users about their information wants, needs and uses, and recommending ways of improving health professional and consumer access to information

Obtaining ongoing feedback from users about their information wants, needs and uses is a fundamental and integral part of establishing the NER's programmatic activities. Without knowing user needs, there is no link between the activities of the RML and the communities it serves. Obtaining feedback ensures that the RML will be able to strategically focus its services and programs to achieve the most benefits for its users. The information obtained is used to recommend ways of improving health professional and consumer access to information. The NER employs a user-centered approach that identifies the present situation (what the RML says are user wants, needs and uses), obtains feedback from the user groups themselves, identifies and records the gaps between what the RML does and what users say they want and need, creates a prioritized list of unmet needs for each user group (librarians, health professionals, consumers) and proceeds with the development of a regional plan for meeting those unmet needs in conjunction with the RAC and the NLM. Through yearly planning days and ongoing mechanisms for obtaining user feedback, the NER is committed to an ongoing process of identifying needs, reviewing the gaps and determining regional goals, objectives and priorities.

During Year 01, the associate director and director began making plans to interview "opinion leaders" within the network during Year 02. Interviews are scheduled with Lucretia McClure and Judy Messerle during early June, 2002. IRB approval to conduct the interviews is in process through the University of Massachusetts Medical School Office of Research.

4. Promoting and encouraging the submission of applications for NLM sponsored grants.

The NER worked hard to promote and encourage the submission of well written applications for NLM sponsored grants by publicizing the availability of grants,

providing examples, mentoring applicants, reviewing and assisting with grant writing, and supplying letters of support. NER staff sponsored two "grants sharing" sessions at the NER office in January, 2002.

NER staff provided two letters of support for grant applications being submitted by network members for NLM Internet Connections Grants. NER staff will read applications prior to submission and offer suggestions for improvement. A total of 12 people attended the classes. Staff continues to work with attendees and encourage them to submit the proposals they started during the classes during Year 02.

Outreach Programs

NER Outreach Programs include Outreach to Health Professionals, Consumer Health Information Services, Training to Support Electronic Access to Health Information, Exhibits and Presentations at Meetings, Technology Awareness and Integration, Library Improvement and Connections. Each program answers a specific and identified need and responds to the mission and goals set by the NLM for the NN/LM.

Outreach to Health Professionals brings biomedical information resources similar to those available at the best academic medical centers directly to those health professionals without easy access, especially in rural and inner city areas. The program also includes gathering data about where unaffiliated and underserved health professionals are located and assesses their information needs. Demonstrating PubMed, MedlinePlus and other information access tools to health professionals and holding training sessions for them are key elements of the program.

Accomplishments for 2001-2002 included:

1. Worked with outreach librarians and committees to identify needs and provide service to underserved health professionals.
2. Initiated and monitored several outreach subcontracts.
3. Distributed information about NLM programs and services to member libraries and potential members at exhibit booths at conferences, at training sessions and on request.
4. Provided Loansome Doc, reference, collection access, training and mediated searching referrals to health professionals.
5. Held 44 NLM systems training classes and demonstrations.
6. Hosted the National Training Office staff for a three day training session at University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Consumer Health Information Services (Health Information for the Public) is a primary initiative of the National Library of Medicine to improve the organization, information technology, networks and training that will be needed "to ensure that all people in the U.S. have a publicized accessible, understandable, and affordable source of current, authoritative health information." To begin implementation of this goal, the region's public needs for health information were identified. Resources for public and health sciences librarians were selected. Instruction materials for onsite training of public librarians and consumers were developed. A regional website of local health information resources was developed.

Accomplishments for 2001-2002 included:

1. Worked with the state libraries, associations and networks to identify consumer health information needs. Taught 3 classes at state and regional meetings.
2. Established 15 subcontracts and advisory boards of targeted consumers for implementation and evaluation advice.
3. Participated in 4 state library association meetings. More than 250 attendees stopped at the booth.
4. Exhibited at 9 national association meetings. 3000 attendees stopped at the booth.

5. Developed a MedlinePlus Workshop. The class was taught 11 times to more than 200 participants.
6. Developed a website of state and local resources for NER consumers.
7. Regularly contributed health information for the public articles to NER newsletters and publications.
8. Promoted NLM programs and services to public librarians. Attended and exhibited at the Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and New England Library Association conferences.
9. Provided training to support access to health information and in the effective use of electronic health information resources on the Internet for health professionals, public, school and other librarians and consumers was provided. Training was focused on PubMed, MedlinePlus, and other NLM databases as well as finding and evaluating information resources on the internet. 44 classes were taught, with more than 800 participants attending.

Exhibits play an important part in getting the word out to health professionals about NLM services and products. This year, the NER staff exhibited at health care professional meetings and meetings geared to public librarians and consumers. The NER also offered awards to network members who wished to exhibit at health professional meetings.

Accomplishments include:

1. Exhibited at nine national healthcare meetings. 3000 participants visited the booth.
2. Assisted NLM with three exhibits outside the region when needed (Public Library Association in Phoenix, AZ, Radiological Society of North American in Chicago, and IFLA in Boston).
3. Exhibited at 4 state library association meetings and 3 consumer health fairs in the region, featuring MedlinePlus. Nearly 700 people visited the booth.
4. Developed 5 exhibit awards for members to exhibit at health care professional meetings in their state or local area.
5. Provided materials (bookmarks, pens, posters and other NLM premium gifts) to network members for use at local health fairs and meetings.

Technology Awareness provides Internet and related technology assistance to health science librarians, health professionals, and consumers through training, funding opportunities, technical publications, conferences, referrals, and direct technical support for member libraries. The program also incorporates new ways of reaching network members through technology such as the web or videoconferences.

Accomplishments included:

1. Provided one training award for development of a class on internet nursing resources (Berkshire, MA AHEC).
2. Hosted MLA videoconference on PDA's (Worcester State College, 22 participants).
3. Provided information on connectivity options.
4. Distributed NLM Connections Grant information.

5. Provided one Technology Awareness Award for the support of health technology fairs sponsored by member libraries (University of Connecticut Health Sciences Library). More than 100 people attended.
6. Hosted seven websites and thirteen discussion lists for health science library organizations in the region.
7. Investigated new technologies for communicating with members.

The **Library Improvement and Connections** program identifies libraries in the region which have no library Internet connections, do not participate in DOCLINE, but meet minimum criteria for the program. Once identified, the libraries are provided with the necessary equipment, software and training to access NLM databases, join DOCLINE, and provide other online services. Frequent follow-up contact is provided to assist the library manager. In addition, the connections program strives to enhance the connections of the “under-connected”.

Accomplishments include:

1. Identified 3 sites for library improvement and connections and plan for follow-up. The sites were Inland Hospital, Maine, the AIDS Information Library, Boston, MA and Falmouth Hospital, MA.
2. Install equipment or upgrade connection.

Outreach to Health Professionals

The contractor shall continue to develop, implement, and evaluate targeted outreach programs to bring biomedical information resources within easy reach of U.S. health professionals who still do not have access, with special focus on those in rural areas and inner cities. The RML outreach program shall enlist the assistance of network member libraries, through the use of subcontracts, agreements, and other mechanisms, to carry out projects with the following foci:

- a. **Special populations or subject disciplines that have been identified as priority initiatives (e.g. AIDS, Health Services Research, Public Health) and that target the health professionals serving those populations or working in those disciplines;**
- b. **Unaffiliated health professionals and health professionals in inner cities and rural areas;**
- c. **Local/state public health departments with particular emphasis on Internet access and collaborations with other organizations/institutions that work with public health professionals;**
- d. **One or two inner city institutions per year which shall include identifying what the RML can do to improve or enhance the institution's access to biomedical information and developing and implementing a program that responds to the identified needs;**
- e. **Institutions whose objectives are to train minority health practitioners or those who serve minority populations; to develop specific linkages so that their health professionals and students have full benefit of the resources of the network.**

The NER develops, implements and evaluates targeted, special outreach programs to bring biomedical information to the health professionals who serve

special populations, to health professionals in rural or inner city areas, to public health professionals in New England, and to institutions whose objectives include training minority health practitioners. The NER outreach program focused on providing these services via the establishment of designated Outreach Libraries and provides subcontracts to these libraries to perform outreach work in the region during Year 01.

Outreach Libraries: The libraries at Tufts University Medical School, Boston University Medical School, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Yale University Medical School, Dartmouth College, Brown University, and the University of Vermont serve as outreach libraries. Outreach Libraries provide all the services of a Resource Library. In addition, they will receive at least one subcontract during the five year period to perform outreach to health professionals.

Outreach Subcontracts: The outreach subcontracts are tailored for the group served. However, certain elements remain consistent among the projects such as: a focus on providing Internet connectivity and hardware/software if needed, the development of training programs for [How to Use the Internet](#), PubMed and MedlinePlus as well as other MEDLARS databases as appropriate. Optional elements of the subcontract may include: training on how to use electronic mail and other applications software; computer literacy training; and, web-site development or HTML training.

During Year One, the NER awarded two subcontracts focused on Outreach to health professionals – one at Tufts University and one to the University of Massachusetts Medical School Library. Descriptions of each follow.

During Year One, the Health Sciences Library at Tufts University implemented a project with inner city clinic health professional staff at the multiple locations of the South Cove Community Health Center in the greater Boston area, including Chinatown. The project was designed to increase participants' ability to search and use health information, with special emphasis on NLM's databases. Clinic staff number 160 including physicians, dentists, dieticians, nurses, psychologists, teachers and social workers. The medical care focuses on the medically underserved Asian American population. The subcontract award will be completed in 18 months; the award is \$22,374. (Attachment 7)

Also during Year One, the Lamar Soutter Library at the University of Massachusetts Medical School submitted an outreach subcontract targeted to both rural and inner city health professionals who are part of the state-wide AHEC. The AHEC system in Massachusetts is decentralized with 6 center offices in the following areas: Eastern Massachusetts with 2 offices in Boston, Western Massachusetts with an office in the Berkshires, Central Massachusetts with an office in Worcester, Northern Massachusetts with offices in Pioneer Valley and Merrimack Valley and Southeastern Massachusetts in Cape Cod. Neither the health professionals nor the center directors and staff have adequate access to e-mail or the Internet; none have access to library and information services. The technology infrastructure and training in information seeking and management skills throughout the system has been woefully lacking. The

audience will include primary care physicians, nurses and allied health professionals throughout the Commonwealth. (Attachment 7)

Model Program for One or Two Inner City Institutions Per Year: During Year One, the Tufts project in inner city clinic within Boston's Chinatown was the NER inner city institution model outreach project.

2. Consumer Health Information Services

The contractor will develop, implement and evaluate outreach programs to reach members of the public who are not aware of how to access electronic health information or who lack direct access to health information. In carrying out these programs, the contractor shall work with a variety of intermediaries, including network libraries, health care providers, public health professionals, librarians, educators, community organizations, health advocacy groups, churches, and self-help groups, through the use of subcontracts, agreements and other mechanism. The NN/LM consumer health outreach program shall include:

- a. Developing the region's consumer health information goals and objectives and working with a variety of organizations to accomplish them**
- b. Developing programs that focus on reaching minorities, senior citizens, and low income populations**
- c. Working with NLM, the NN/LM and other organizations to develop tools and linkages to improve access to electronic consumer health information at the local, state and regional levels**
- d. Developing programs to promote MEDLINEplus to all health professionals as a resource for them and their patients.**

The NER worked to develop, implement and evaluate special outreach programs targeted to improve the organization, information technology, networks and training that are needed to ensure that all people in the U.S. have a publicized, accessible, understandable, and affordable source of current, accurate and authoritative health information. Resources to facilitate electronic access to biomedical information such as internet connectivity, computers, software, etc., for public and health sciences librarians are offered through subcontract mechanisms to designated Outreach Libraries. Also, instructional materials for onsite training of public librarians and consumers as well as online tutorials are being developed as part of these subcontracts. Programs to promote MedlinePlus as a national resource for health professionals and their patients are also being developed and presented. The Tufts and UMass subcontracts focus on developing interactive programs targeted to health professionals while the Boston University and Yale projects focus on developing consumer health programs targeted toward minorities and low income populations.

- a. Developing the region's consumer health information goals and objectives and working with a variety of organizations to accomplish them**

The NER is involving a number of network members and community advocacy groups throughout the region in the process of developing its consumer health information goals and objectives and implementation plan. Outreach Libraries who are awarded consumer health information outreach subcontracts are

collaborating with public libraries as well as a variety of consumer groups in order to accomplish the goals and objectives of the subcontract.

RAC: The RAC committees and the consumer health working groups established by the subcontractors are groups within the network structure that provide the NER with input into developing the region's consumer health goals and objectives. In Year One, the Planning Day agenda focused on establishing the NER strategic plan based on NN/LM missions and goals. A portion of each RAC planning day is devoted to discussing the region's consumer health program.

Exhibits at State-wide Meetings: The NER exhibited and/or attended 2 state-wide library meetings (where public librarians would attend) and 6 state-wide health sciences library meetings during Year 01. The NER also gave regional updates at many of the meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss their consumer health initiatives and resource needs with NER staff.

Exhibits at Health Fairs: The NER exhibited at 3 health fairs during Year 01. These health fairs are attended by the general public and give the NER an opportunity to talk about programmatic areas with passersby.

b. Developing programs that focus on reaching minorities, senior citizens, and low income populations.

During Year One, the NER funded two outreach subcontracts targeted to minority populations in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Of all the New England states, these are two of the fastest growing and largest number of minorities, low income and senior citizen populations. Descriptions of each follow:

The Alumni Medical Library at Boston University Medical Center in collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission is facilitating access to biomedical information on HIV/AIDS by providing information skills training and document delivery services to the consumers of the Boston Eligible Metropolitan Area and those patients using the services of 60+ Title I and City of Boston Prevention, Education, and Care funded programs. The targeted population includes: HIV+ African American, Hispanic, Haitian, Portuguese, Gay, Lesbian, Trans-sexual, and Deaf clients as well as women with infected children. The Library plans to work closely with the advisory boards of the 60+ Title 1 clinics to design its program. The subcontract is funded for \$40,000. (Attachment 7)

The Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, Yale School of Medicine, in collaboration with the Epidemiology and Public Health Library and the New Haven Free Public Library have established the New Haven Consumer Health Information Center that operates in partnership with the Medical School, the Medical Library and the main public library, its branches and its two satellite centers at two New Haven Health Clinics. This collaborative project involving health sciences librarians, public librarians, and public health/community-clinic workers, brings accurate, current and extensive health information resources, services and training to the general public of New Haven, especially underserved minority groups, primarily African Americans and Hispanics. The project encompasses access to information as well as teaching PubMed and MedlinePlus to public librarians and

library users. A cooperative agreement for ongoing services between the Yale Library and public library was established to ensure continued linkages to NLM services and products. The subcontract for \$43,885 is funded for 18 months. (Attachment 7)

c. Developing programs to promote MedlinePlus to all health professionals as a resource for them and their patients

NER staff developed a multi-faceted program for promoting MedlinePlus to health professionals.

Demonstrations and Training Sessions: NER staff scheduled 11 MedlinePlus demonstrations and training sessions in partnership with the Outreach Libraries and Resource Libraries in the region and invited health professionals to attend. More than 200 people attended.

Exhibits at Meetings: NER staff exhibited at 9 national health professional meetings with seven of them located in New England. One meeting was sited in New Jersey and one in New Orleans. NER staff at the exhibit booth demonstrated MedlinePlus to those who stopped at the booth. Every attempt was made to arrange a more in-depth training session or speaking engagement in conjunction with the meeting.

Technology Awareness Conferences: The University of Connecticut Health Sciences Library organized a one day technology awareness conference at the Public House in Sturbridge, MA. The consumer health conference fostered collaboration between public health departments, public libraries, major health organizations, AHEC outreach librarians, and health sciences librarians in using the appropriate technology, resources, and referral patterns to effectively answer consumer health questions in a timely manner. It was funded at \$6400.00. More than 100 librarians, health professionals and public health workers attended the day-long conference.

3. Training to Support Electronic Access to Health Information

The contractor shall support training in the effective use of electronic health information resources on the Internet. Emphasis should be on reaching health professionals, public, school and other librarians and other intermediaries who do not have access to such training or who intend to train others including consumers. Before developing any training materials, the NN/LM National Training Center and Clearinghouse will be checked to identify training products, tools, materials or classes that can be used or adapted to service identified needs. Copies of all training materials developed will be made available on the NN/LM web server and will be registered with the National Training Center and Clearinghouse. Training should focus on topics not available through other sources and should include but not be limited to:

- a. PubMed, MedlinePlus and other specialized NLM databases**
- b. Finding and evaluating health information on the web**

Training to support access to health information and in the effective use of electronic information resources on the Internet for health professionals, consumers and librarians was provided in Year 01. Classes are tailored to meet the specific information needs of these user groups. Training focuses on PubMed, MedlinePlus and other NLM databases as well as in finding and evaluating information on the web.

The NER training program included a variety of training options: demonstrations and exhibits; formal classes; and distance learning opportunities. Training is offered by NER staff in partnership with network members. Curricular materials are designed by NER staff in collaboration with network members.

The NER offered network members an opportunity to assist in planning, developing and teaching NER classes to health professionals, public and state librarians, and consumers by providing a Course Development Award during this past year.

In addition to formalized classes for health professionals, state and public librarians and consumers, the NER training program offered individual network members the opportunity to advance in personal career development goals by providing "sister library" or "library exchange" training awards and NER "research" awards.

Demonstrations:

Exhibits: The NER provided hands-on demonstrations of NLM services and products while exhibiting at 9 national meetings, 2 state library association meetings and 6 health sciences library meetings. In addition, the NER provided demonstrations while exhibiting at 3 consumer health fairs or events.

Requests for Demonstrations: The NER provided demonstrations upon request. It is anticipated that contacts made at meetings, exhibits and site visits will generate follow-up demonstrations for specific groups. The NER Outreach Coordinator and/or Consumer Health Coordinator brings a portable computer and projector to the requestor's office to demonstrate the databases and brings printed materials explaining NLM's products and services.

MedlinePlus Demonstrations/Training Sessions for Health Professionals: The NER taught 10 MedlinePlus demonstration/training sessions in order to promote MedlinePlus as a resource for both the professionals and their patients.

Formal Classes:

In addition to providing the demonstrations outlined above, the NER developed formal classes for NLM 's electronic databases and access to health information resources for those health professionals, librarians and consumers who may have no other access to such training.

Foundation courses: Foundation courses provide a basic level of understanding. They provide an introduction to the topic and are designed for

the novice computer user. Examples of Foundation courses include: Introduction to PubMed, Introduction to MedlinePlus, Introduction to the Internet, and Introduction to Finding and Evaluating Health Information on the Internet. These courses may also include some basic computer literacy skills training (such as how to use a mouse or Windows) as part of the curriculum. NER staff taught the Foundation courses to fifteen medical librarian students at Simmons College in Boston MA on April 26.

Advanced courses: Advanced courses provide the next level of skills training. They do not include any computer skills building but focus on more advanced searching features. It is assumed the attendees have mastered the basic searching skills. Examples of advanced courses include: Advanced Searching Techniques using PubMed and Using Clinical Filters to Find the "Best Evidence."

Specialized Modules: Specialized modules are designed to highlight resources within a specific subject area or discipline. Basic computer literacy may need to be covered in these courses, depending on the audience. Examples include: Finding and Evaluating Public Health Information on the Internet; Finding and Evaluating Consumer Health Information; How to Conduct the Reference Interview to Answer Questions from the Public; How to Search for Toxicology Information Using NLM Databases, etc.

Schedule of Formal Classes: The NER Outreach Coordinator taught 16 classes in Year One with more than 300 attendees. They were scheduled in conjunction with the needs of network members and their constituents. NER staff taught the Foundation courses to fifteen medical librarian students at Simmons College in Boston MA on April 26.

Requests for Formal Classes: The NER Outreach Coordinator and/or Consumer Health Coordinator conducted formal, hands-on, in-person, training class adapted to specific user group needs, at the UMass Medical School's computer classroom or at the requestor's site, upon request throughout the year.

Course Development Award:

The NER issued a course development award designed to assist network members who may want to develop an electronic method for teaching PubMed, MedlinePlus or related NLM service to a specified audience. The purpose of this award is to develop a class that will improve the information retrieval and management skills of NER constituents.

Development options include the design of a website, design and implementation of a web-based class or tutorial, or developing a long distance learning program using videoconferencing technologies. The course must include aspects of technology and some aspect of hands-on training using NLM's products and services.

Two awards are proposed each year. The NER Outreach and Technology Coordinator and members of the Education Committee and Technology Committee reviews and recommends awards.

A Request for Quotation for the Course Development Award is in Attachment #8.

One award was made during Year 01. Five hundred dollars was awarded for the program, Locating and Evaluating Health Resources on the Internet, Berkshire AHEC. The purpose of this training program was to provide nurses who live and/or work in Berkshire County (MA), with an awareness of the numerous nursing and health resources that are available to them via the Internet. This program has been developed to serve the unique needs of nursing professionals in Western Mass.

Sister Library or Library Exchange Award: The "sister library" or "library exchange" program is specifically set aside for health sciences librarians working with public libraries in their area. Money is allotted for a public librarian to spend a week or two in a health sciences library or vice versa in order to learn more about ways to improve access to electronic information to the public. This program offers the health sciences librarian an educational opportunity if he/she goes to the public library or a mentoring opportunity if he/she serves as the host. The Outreach Libraries have agreed to become host sites for this award.

Two awards are proposed for each year. A portion of the award will go the trainee and the remainder to the host institution. Funds for the trainee may be used to cover expenses such as travel, hotel room, food, etc. Trainee funds may not be used to reimburse the individual for salary. Host institution funds may be used to provide equipment, supplies, etc. for use by the trainee while onsite.

One award was given during Year 01. Len Levine, New England Baptist Hospital visited the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York City for two days to see first hand the programs and services that are being offered at the nearest musculoskeletal center of excellence. His award was \$362.00.

A Request for Quotation for the Sister Library or Library Exchange Award is in Attachment 8.

Research Award: The "research" award is designed for a health sciences librarian interested in focusing on designing a research project around NLM outreach, training, library improvement, document delivery, or RML-related programs. A librarian may want to explore the information needs of a particular group of health professionals, design a study on the use and satisfaction of consumers with the information services provided by the library, etc. Collaborative research projects involving health sciences librarians and health professionals and/or health sciences librarians and public librarians are encouraged.

One award a year is available. None were made in Year 01. The NER director and a member of the Education and Training Committee will review and recommend the award. Monies may be used to fund survey design and analysis, postage for mailings, clerical support, etc. Funds can not be used to take courses or pay the salary of the individual researcher.

4. Exhibits and Presentations at Meetings

The contractor shall promote NLM and NN/LM programs and services at national, regional and state meetings of health professionals and health organizations with a consumer focus. NLM will provide each RML with an exhibit backdrop to be used at national exhibits. The national exhibit schedule will be set for October-September, ten to twelve months in advance. Responsibilities shall include the following:

- a. In conjunction with NLM, providing full support for a minimum of ten meetings (six national and four others) for an exhibit technology game area presentation, program presentation, or course offering, including making all arrangements (scheduling, fees, shipping, logistics, equipment and publications). Coordination of course offerings, program presentations and other offerings at meetings should be in line with national initiatives and promotion activities identified by NLM.**

Exhibits play an important role in spreading the word about NLM services and products. In Year 01, NER staff contacted national associations as well as local, state or regional groups of either health professionals or those with a consumer focus and offered to exhibit and/or provide a training session at their meetings. Most of the national meetings were held in Boston, only an hour's drive from Worcester. Many of the state or local meetings were also held in cities and towns within driving distance of the NER. The NER used the exhibit backdrop provided by NLM for national meetings.

- b. Enlisting the assistance of Resource Libraries and Primary Access Libraries in exhibiting at national, state and regional meetings.**

The NER invited network members to exhibit at national, state and regional meetings held in their geographic area. Outreach Library Liaisons were contacted by the NER office staff to assist with exhibits. During Year 01, the librarians at Tufts University Veterinary School assisted at the American Veterinary Medicine Association conference exhibit booth.

- c. Attending state library association meetings and exhibiting or making presentations to promote NLM and NN/LM programs and services**

The NER exhibited at all state library organizations meetings who held sponsored exhibit space. In addition, NER classes on Searching the Internet for Health Information or some aspect of PubMed and/or MedlinePlus were made available to meeting planners for their programs. NER update sessions were offered, as was an offer to speak on a related topic to NN/LM services and programs. Potential speaking topics of interest were panel discussions about consumer health collaborative outreach projects being held in the region, information about NER network membership and awards for affiliate members, document delivery and resource sharing issues and the NER "library exchange" or "sister library program".

5. Technology Awareness and Integration

The contractor shall develop a technology awareness program which includes the following:

- a. **Holding regional showcases or forums focused on the use of information technology to improve access to biomedical information for health professionals and consumers**

Technology awareness and integration provides assistance to health sciences librarians, health professionals and consumers through training classes; funding opportunities for regional showcases; writing technical publications; hosting conferences; and offering referrals and direct support for member libraries. The program also incorporates new ways of reaching network members through technology such as the web or videoconferencing. The NER held Internet training classes for health professionals, consumer groups, and librarians upon request during Year 01. In addition, the NER provided a Technology Awareness Award for the development of a technology awareness showcase, fair, conference or forum to be held at a different location each year throughout the region and coordinated by a network member library. The NER hosted several websites and electronic discussion lists for library organizations or groups with similar goals as NER, on request.

Technology showcases: The NER provided a Technology Awareness Award for support of health technology fairs, conferences, forums or showcases sponsored by member libraries. Formats may vary from site to site but consist of exhibits by the RML and invited vendors, demonstrations, speakers and workshops. Although the emphasis is on NLM services and products, there is no limit on what other technologies can be demonstrated or exhibited. Speakers are selected for their ability to explain how new information technologies can be of direct use and benefit to health professionals and consumers. Workshops may be offered in conjunction with the event. The program format may include a large conference, small workshop(s) or information fair. The program must be at least 6 hours long. Potential topics include: consumer health information on the Internet, telemedicine in health care; technology applications in public health. Other possibilities include hosting videoconferences to train public libraries in the region or videoconferences to train health professionals in remote areas.

The Technology Awareness Committee and NER staff reviewed all proposals, made recommendations for funding, and assisted with program planning. One award, to the University of Connecticut, was made during Year 01.

A copy of the Technology Award RFP is in Attachment 8.

- b. **Monitoring current technological advances and trends to identify those that may improve access to biomedical information. In cooperation with the National Network Office the contractor may propose to design, test or implement projects which use new or evolving technologies in innovative ways in support of network goals.**

The NER monitored relevant websites, scanned journal articles, and attended technology focused meetings such as ALA, PLA, the Consumer Health

Conference in Seattle, and MLA in order to identify trends and track current technological advances in support of network goals and improve access to biomedical information.

Electronic Document Delivery Project: During Year 01, a collaborative project between the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Lamar Soutter Library and six libraries in Maine, the use of Ariel software's electronic document delivery option was initiated. As patient stay times in hospitals have decreased, libraries have become more concerned about the speed of document delivery and continuing to have an impact on patient care. This project enables 24 hour turn-around time for document delivery through the use of Ariel software, scanners, storage space on a library server and the internet. Libraries were awarded up to \$1,000 to purchase hardware and/or software to support their participation in the project. 1262 articles have been provided electronically during the project from December 1, 2001 until April 30, 2002.

Participants :

Central Maine Medical Center, Lewiston, ME

Eastern Maine Medical Center, Bangor, ME

Husson College, Bangor, ME

Jackson Laboratories, Bar Harbor, ME

Maine Medical Center, Portland, ME

Mercy Hospital, Portland, ME

Penobscot Bay Regional Hospital, Rockland, ME

University of Massachusetts Medical School, The Lamar Soutter Library, Worcester, MA

The RLG's Ariel software has incorporated the application, *Prospero*. *Prospero* is an open source software solution which enables the electronic delivery of documents to libraries via the Internet. Based on Acrobat software and work done at Marshall University, it was developed at Yale University and implemented at Ohio State University. The software developers won MLA's prestigious Frank B. Rogers Award for efforts to advance medical information. *Prospero* may be used in conjunction with Ariel or as a stand-alone software program.

During the project period, requests for articles were made via DOCLINE. The lending library (University of Massachusetts Medical School) scanned the requested article and sent them to an in-house server. The article text (data) is in a PDF file. *Ariel* software creates a unique PIN and e-mails the information to the requestor that the article is available for pick-up. The requesting library then sent the e-mail to the requesting patron that the document was ready for pick-up and the associated PIN.

In order to remain in copyright compliant and to ensure effective use of server space, files are purged every 2-3 weeks. The patron can look at the article 5 times before the link is disabled. At the requesting library's request, the link can be easily reinstated. Allowing for 5 uses of the PIN keeps files from being distributed on electronic lists. *Prospero* files can be printed but not downloaded to a local server.

The NER's home library houses the server on which articles for the Maine group are placed for pick-up. During Year One, the library's server was adequately sized for the project.

The pilot has been very successful. Statistics may be found in Attachment 9.

NER staff attended the HSLIC November meeting in Bar Harbor, ME to discuss the project with potential participants during Year One. The Network Coordinator was the project's contact person, answering any follow-up questions which came up during the test.

Success of the Electronic Document Delivery project is being measured through ongoing feedback from the hospital librarians in Maine and document delivery staff at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Measurable objectives such as turn-around time, speed of connection, quality of copies, number of articles requested and filled, etc. were defined at the project kick-off meeting. Early participants were asked to keep a log or diary of their experience in using the software. NER staff will track the number and type of calls for help once the project begins. Results of Year One are pending (the test ends on May 31, 2002) and will be used to modify and design an expansion of the Electronic Document Delivery project to other network members during future years of the NER contract.

6. Connections

The contractor shall develop, implement and annually update a plan to encourage connectivity for network member libraries and health professionals in the region. This shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Reviewing the adequacy of the Internet connection of Primary Access Libraries on an annual basis, reporting results to the region and to NLM, and assisting the "underconnected" in maintaining and upgrading their connections**

A 1997 and 1999 follow-up Internet Connectivity survey conducted by the National Library of Medicine indicated that a number of NER members are "under-connected" to the Internet. NER members are connected to the Internet but the quantity and quality of connections is limited. NER responded by making funds available to assist network members in adding or upgrading existing connections.

During Year One, the NER staff issued a call for applications for Connectivity awards. Three awards were given:

Falmouth Hospital Library, Massachusetts – purchased a Panasonic Network Fax (\$2995)

Inland Hospital Library, Maine – purchased one computer to replace out of date hardware (\$1392.00)

AIDS Outreach Library, Boston, MA -- purchased two computers to replace out of date hardware (\$3921.00)

The goal of the Connections Program is to identify network libraries that have no Internet connection or a limited Internet connection, obtain or improve the connection and then provide access to, and training on NLM's Internet based resources, such as PubMed, MedlinePlus, DOCLINE, etc. A Connections Award will be provided in order to carry out the program.

The Connections Award will be applied in the following ways as necessary:

- *Purchasing new hardware (PC, scanner, fax, high speed modem)
- *Purchasing new software (Ariel)
- *Obtaining an ISP provider or processing a change in providers
- *Group or individual training

Each award is for a maximum of \$5,000 per site. Three awards were available to PALs in Year 01.

Conclusion

Year 01 has provided many opportunities to work with libraries across New England. The Contract Summary (Attachment 10) provides a blueprint for activities in future years that will allow NER staff the flexibility needed to provide excellent communication, services and outreach support to our constituents across New England. The NER staff looks forward to the challenges and rewards. This report clearly indicates that NER has made substantial progress toward the specific goals outlined in detail in its original RFP.

Staff

Elaine Martin, RML Director, May 1, 2001-April 30, 2002

Debbie Sibley, Associate Director, May 1, 2001-April 30, 2002

Javier Crespo, Consumer Health Coordinator, May 1, 2001-April 30, 2002

Shawn Klejmont, Technology Coordinator, June 1, 2001-April 15, 2002

Mark Goldstein, Network Coordinator, July 16, 2001-April 30, 2002

Nicole Vernon, Financial Manager, July 19, 2001-April 30, 2002

Rebecca Chlapowski, Administrative Assistant, July 23, 2001-April 30, 2002

Donna Berryman, Outreach Coordinator, October 8, 2001-April 30, 2002