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Health libraries present and future:

The global health library perspective

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Library is a living organism

- It is affected by its environment;
- It follows the socio-economic model in which it exists;
- The socio-economic inequality results in disparity in status of health library;
- Health library’s status mirrors the digital divide locally and globally;
- Health library’s status mirrors health status in a country.
Disparity of library situation

• Within the country:
  – Capital;
  – Major cities;
  – Districts;
  – Towns;
  – Villages;
  – Communities

• Within the Region;
  – Rich
  – Poor

• Globally
Public Library books per capita.

Red represents areas with less than one book per citizen.
Medical Schools (per 10,000,000)
Red represents 1.3 or less schools/medical libraries
The Library and Information are influenced by the healthcare scene
A combination of factors

- **Intrinsic** factors related to the healthcare delivery “business” or “profession”;
- **Extrinsic** factors related to the environment in which the healthcare delivery services are provided.
Health care is an information-based service

• Health care is an information-driven service;

• Information is a major resource in health;

• Health information systems should be viewed on a continuum;

• Quality of data and their transformation into information are basic to the efficiency and effectiveness of all information systems.
Healthcare delivery model

- Patient/citizen centered healthcare services;
- Managed care services:
  - More control by the patient on course of action of medication;
  - Challenging medical decisions;
  - More informed patients;
  - Legal issues;
  - Cost.
Healthcare delivery model

- Community participation;
- Private vs. public services;
- Highly specialized medical service centers;
- Evidence based;
- Technology based diagnosis and treatment;
- Gene therapy;
- Individualized medication;
- Problem based medical education;
- Community based medical education.
Change in disease pattern

• Elimination of communicable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, measles, etc. The state was and still is the major player to combat diseases;

• Emerging of non-communicable or chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, blood pressure, etc. The individual is and will be the major player to combat diseases.
• In many countries the double burden of diseases is evident and will continue for some time. **Shared responsibility and collaboration between the state and the citizen.**

• A disease in a country is likely to transmit to another in no time. **Trans-border and global impact.**
Emerging of the Information Society

• **Information Society**: An evolving social environment characterized by a global free flow of knowledge and information in key domains such as education, business, government, health, environment and others.

• **knowledge economy**: an economy in which knowledge acts as the main engine of growth.
Emerging of the Information Society

• **An Informed population**: Easy and open access to information meant more awareness of global, national and personal issues;

• **An educated population**: Better ability to formulate more informed opinion on health issues, better participation and enforced transparency.
Information technology and telecommunication

• Increased and endless storage capacity;
• Data transfer rate and quantities allowed closed to unlimited flow of information;
• Multilingualism and computer-assisted translation;
• Open access to information;
• Mobile services anywhere anytime;
Information technology and telecommunication

- Ownership of **personal health data**;
- Anyone can **publish**;
- Information **quality** assurance;
- **Personalization** of services;
WSIS Plan of action: Access to information and knowledge

• Support the creation and development of a digital public library and archive services, adapted to the Information Society, including reviewing national library strategies and legislation, developing a global understanding of the need for “hybrid libraries”, and fostering worldwide cooperation between libraries.
The World Bank says:

• With the increased information flows, ICT availability and usage tends to allow greater transparency, accountability and accessibility in the delivery of public services, \(\textit{including health}\). In addition, the public becomes informed of their rights and increases their awareness of political and development processes that influence their lives. WB Group, 2003.
Future of the health library

Part of the future is present
The shift in libraries

- Passive
- Active
- Analogue
- Paper-based
- Support education
- Standalone
- Active
- Proactive
- Digital
- Electronic
- Support learning
- Networked
The shift in libraries

- Isolated
- Availability
- Ownership
- Support scientists and researchers

- Connected
- Accessibility
- Locator
- Support citizens, patients and consumers
The shift in libraries

- Information dissemination/diffusion
- Single format
- Provide information
- Information exchange and communication
- Hyper, multimedia
- Deliver knowledge
The shift in librarians

- Gatekeepers/curators
- General librarians
- Support medical staff
- Trainers of library skills

- Knowledge workers/ facilitators
- Subject specialists, marketing managers, webmasters, etc
- Part of medical team
- Mentors of users
What do we do?

Think globally, act locally
Country and Regional Actions

- Needs assessment;
- National Policy and Strategy Development;
- Capacity building and human resources development;
- Institutional development: ICT and connectivity;
- Development of the EMR Virtual Health Sciences Library;
- Provision of health literature: printed, electronic;
- Development of systems and tools.
Globally

Global Health Library
The Global Health Library aims to:

- point to reliable information collections and systems
- facilitate and enable access to information contents produced by key providers
- support communities of practice and training
The Global Health Library will strive for:

- universality
- a focus on developing countries
- a role as resource locator for print format in areas with no ICT
# OPPORTUNITIES FOR EQUITY

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Note: This is a schematic to show how different opportunities can be prioritised and does not reflect any current focus.

Well Served  Moderately Served  Poorly Served
Thank you