



CHRC News

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Introduction

The staff of the Treadwell Library wishes all *CHRC News* readers a very happy New Year. We look forward to assisting you with your patrons' health questions in the coming year. In the latest in our occasional series, **Massachusetts Models**, Joan Craig, from the Morse Institute Library in Natick, reports on a grant for their "Here's to Your Health" initiative. In this issue, we will identify a few selected quality web sites for the consumer on **Anthrax and Bioterrorism**.

Treadwell Staff Notes

Remarks from Julia Whelan

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Greetings. I am the new manager of the Consumer Health Reference Center and I would like to introduce myself. I began working at MGH's Treadwell Library in November. I am just learning to find my way to work on these dark mornings and to navigate the hospital's labyrinth of corridors to the cafeteria at lunchtime. My previous position was Head of Reference at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. In that job I taught many, many classes on medical informatics, supervised a busy reference desk, and enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with

colleagues at other Boston health care institutions. In addition to my background in drug information, I have worked extensively in finding information on alternative and complementary therapies.

The field of consumer health is receiving greater emphasis and support from many constituencies. Health care professionals, business leaders and public policy analysts all see consumer health information as vital to health care improvement and reform. Business reports tell us that a consumer equipped with quality health information is key to improving our healthcare system because they will demand quality care and engage their clinicians in informed, thoughtful discussion of healthcare decisions. "The underlying concept is that patients equipped with information will make better health care decisions. That in turn will lead to better outcomes and lower costs".¹ A recent report, "The Online Health Care Revolution: How the web helps Americans take better care of themselves" (available from the Pew Internet and American Life Project <http://www.pewinternet.org>), found that 52 million Americans, or 55% of those with Internet access, have used the Internet for health and medical information. Quite a change from the days when most consumer health information came directly from the doctor's office! Indeed, some health care professionals see the trend towards informed consumers as part of an underlying shift in

health care, from the specialist in a clinic or hospital model, to a new emphasis on public health with a foundation of prevention and self-help.²

Librarians have an essential role to play in this paradigm shift. Because there is a great amount of inaccurate, biased, and outdated medical information on the Internet, consumers need librarians to help them navigate to the authoritative information available. Librarians are vital players in evaluating, selecting, and collecting quality links, and then educating the public on how to find and use them. The experienced medical librarians here at Treadwell library provide a resource of advanced expertise and support. I am excited to be part of this movement. Please contact me with your questions and concerns and help me to make this the best service possible.

¹Prince M. "Information key to consumer-driven health care", *Business Insurance*. [serial online] 2001; 35:20 Available at <http://web2.infotrac.galegroup.com/> Accessed December 3,2001

² Eyserbach G. "Consumer Health Informatics", *BMJ* 2000; 320:1713-1716

Cultural Competence Issues

Martha Stone, Treadwell Library's Coordinator for Reference Services, gave a presentation titled "Using CINAHL and Treadwell Library to Research Diversity and Cultural Competence Issues" to MGH's Nursing Grand Rounds in early December. (CINAHL is the acronym for Cumulated Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature.) If you would

like a copy of the handout, including a bibliography of selected Treadwell books and URLs, please contact us.

CHRC Workshop Wrapups

In October, the MBLC sponsored five workshops covering services offered by the Consumer Health Reference Center. Approximately 84 librarians from libraries throughout the state attended and asked many thoughtful questions.

In the News

Cancer Librarians Section News

http://www.selu.com/cancerlib/2001_fall_newsletter.pdf

The Fall, 2001 issue of *Cancer Librarians Section News* contains an excellent bibliography of books written for both parents and children to "help open up the lines of communication for discussion of the cancer experience." All bibliographic references are annotated. There is also a list of videos. This 12 page newsletter includes a lengthy article about the Patient-Centered Guides series, <http://patientcenters.com>. Treadwell owns a number of titles in this series.

English in the Hospital – Point to Talk

Several libraries have asked for information about these 44-page pamphlets developed at the Massachusetts General Hospital to aid non-English-speaking patients in communicating with their caregivers. Patients point to words or phrases

depicting what they would like to say in their language and the caregiver can read the English translation directly below the non-English phrase. The procedure can then be reversed. There are also pictograms for patients who are not literate in their own language. At this time, booklets are available in Albanian, Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Haitian, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Please contact us for an order form.

MedInfoRus

<http://medinforus.homestead.com/MedInfoRus.html>

Developed by New York medical librarians, this is a collection of links to medical web sites, electronic publications, directories, and other resources available online in Russian. Patient education materials as well as a guide to searching PubMed are available.

Merck Manual in Spanish

http://www.msd.es/publicaciones/mmerc_k_hogar/index.html

Merck Sharp & Dohme de España is the producer of this Spanish-language version of the Merck Manual. It appears to cover the same topics as the English-language version.

Anthrax and Bioterrorism web sites

Treadwell Library Home Page

<http://www.mgh.harvard.edu/library/bioterror.html>

A recently added link from Treadwell Library's home page contains information for the consumer and healthcare worker, including pictures and recent key articles chosen by Treadwell staff. There is a link to **Boston Public Health Commission Communicable Disease Control**, <http://www.bphc.org/bioterror/bioterrorism.htm> that includes information for the public written in Cape Verdean Kriolu (Creole), Chinese, Haitian Kreyol (Creole), Khmer (Cambodian), Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

CDC (Centers for Disease Control)- Frequently Asked Questions About Anthrax

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/anthrax_g.htm

This is a very readable, consumer-oriented collection of information about anthrax from the National Center for Infectious Diseases and the Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases. Technical information is available, as well as links to other governmental agencies, and a brief bibliography. The consumer information is also available in Spanish.

(FTC) Federal Trade Commission

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/bioalrt.htm>

Produced in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration, the FTC's fact sheet, **Offers to Treat Biological Threats: What You Need to Know**, warns

consumers against purchasing antibiotics or other drugs over the internet and includes links to other government agencies.

Healthfinder en español

<http://www.healthfinder.gov/espanol/>

Click on **ántrax** or **bioterrorismo** for government documents in Spanish on these topics. The English equivalent is readily available.

MEDLINEplus

Anthrax

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/anthrax.html>

Biological and Chemical Weapons

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/biologicalandchemicalweapons.html>

The always-excellent Medlineplus now offers wide-ranging information about Anthrax, continuously updated with news from sources such as Reuters, and including an interactive tutorial, treatment options, information in Spanish, and more. The **Biological and Chemical Weapons** site provides information about specific conditions such as botulism and food safety.

USACHPPM - U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine

<http://chppm->

www.apgea.army.mil/HomelandSecurity/anthrax.asp

This web site provides very readable fact sheets available in PDF format as well as many links to government sites.

It can be difficult to sort through all the information available on such topics as anthrax, smallpox, and bioterrorism, and find those that are understandable to the general public. Please don't hesitate to ask us for assistance with these or any other topics.

Massachusetts Models

Joan Craig, Community Relations Coordinator at Morse Institute Library in Natick, reports on a recently awarded \$95,000 grant from the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation.

The Grant: The Morse Institute Library in Natick received a \$95,000 three-year grant from the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation to establish a consumer health education library called "Here's to Your Health." The goal of this grant is to help individuals who wish to educate themselves on their personal health and medical options. The consumer health library and reference services will support the needs of the community for information on health and wellness and options for informed decision making. This grant will enable the library to offer up-to-date resources as well as programs regarding consumer health issues. Planned programs are expected to include stress management, women's health through the lifespan, the media's role in reporting on women's health, a healthier cooking demonstration, health literacy speakers specializing in patient education and health care communication, and computer classes on "Finding Health Resources on the Web." During the school year, a minimum of one program per month will be offered. The Morse Institute

Library's "Here's to Your Health" initiative will include a consumer health library operated by a well-trained, sensitive staff, and a part-time medical librarian has been hired to consult with Morse staff. Continuing their tradition of mutual cooperation, the Library will work with other Natick-area health, human services and community service agencies such as the Massachusetts Prevention Center in Framingham to build activities for patrons.

The Foundation: The MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation was established when two local hospitals, Leonard Morse Hospital in Natick and Framingham Union Hospital, merged and were sold to a for-profit organization. With the sale, funding was earmarked to set up the Foundation. The Foundation is an independent health care philanthropy serving the unmet health needs of the twenty-five communities in the MetroWest area of Massachusetts. More information about the foundation is available on their web site <http://www.mchcf.org>

The Costs: Initially, the first installment of the three-year grant will be used to purchase books and materials. Some of the guidelines used in submitting this grant proposal reflected an increase in requests from the Adult and Children's Reference Departments on such subjects as hygiene, diet, mental health, medical and nursing education, medical conditions and diseases, learning disabilities, treatment and drug options, nutrition, exercise, alternative medicine, autism, attention deficit disorder, child development and parenting materials. A PC for the consumer health library will be added

and the collection will be housed in a designated area.

For further information about "Here's to Your Health": Morse Institute Library Director, Paula Polk, 508-647-6523 or ppolk@mln.lib.ma.us.

Location: The Morse Institute Library is located at 14 East Central Street, Natick, Massachusetts, 01760, one block east of the intersection of Routes 27 and 135. The library is accessible to all. The MBTA train stop, NATICK, is 1 1/2 blocks from the library.

Hours: Mon.-Wed., 9 am to 9 pm; Thurs., 1 pm to 9 pm; Fri.-Sat., 9 am to 5 pm; Sun., 1 pm to 5 pm. Closed on all legal holidays.

Contact information: Article author Joan Craig can be contacted at 508-647-6524 or jcraig@mln.lib.ma.us.

Library information: Reference Department, 508-647-6521.

Web site: <http://www.morseinstitute.org/>

IN PRINT

The Complementary and alternative medicine information source book / Alan M. Rees, editor / Westport, Conn.: Oryx Press, 2001.

This book, another excellent title by Alan Rees, is helpful for collection development in the area of complementary and alternative medicine

(CAM). Twelve sections cover topics ranging from best sources of information (books, serial publications, web sites) to associations and institutions, book reviews, sources of pamphlet material, and more. Numerous appendices contain information from reputable sources.

Instructions for pediatric patients.
Spanish. Instrucciones para pacientes de pediatría / Barton D. Schmitt / translated by Daisy Alas-Robinson / 2nd ed. / Philadelphia, PA : Saunders, 2001.

This book covers the most common health problems in infants, children, and adolescents, and offers instructions written for parents and caretakers. The Table of Contents is in Spanish and English. The instructions themselves are entirely in Spanish and the index is in English.

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